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PURPLE TUESDAY
CALLS FOR **DISABILITY**
INCLUSIVE FITNESS

INTRODUCING
EP GYM AND
CROSSFIT BANBURY

FRANCHISE VS
NON - FRANCHISE

THE
EXCLUSIVE

WE CHAT WITH

DANIEL GODIA

PARTNER OF

AFROFIT GYM
NAIROBI, KENYA



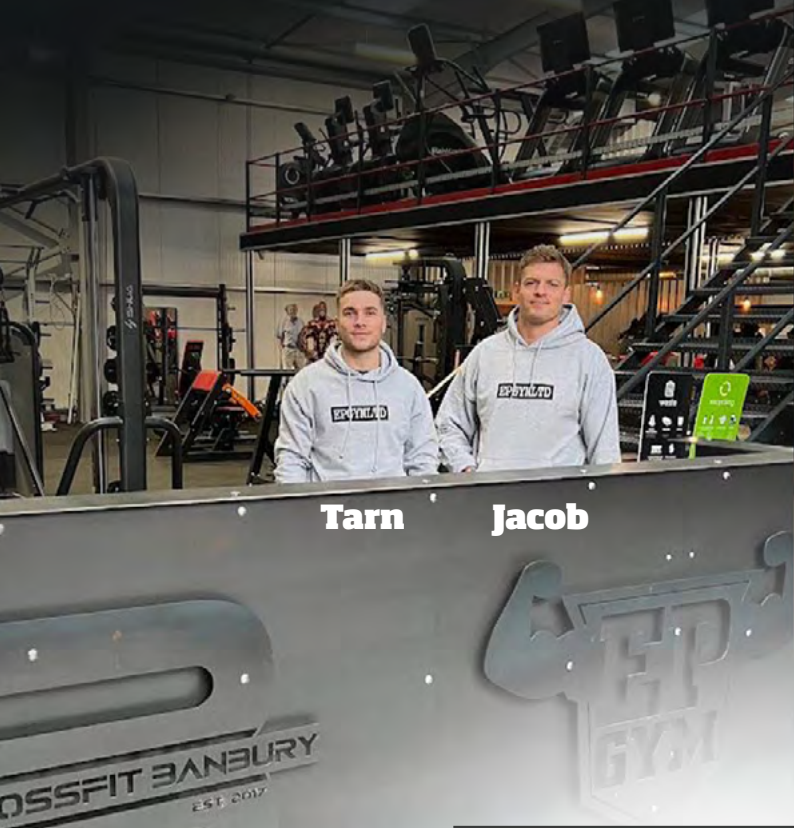
**FROM LEFT
TO RIGHT**

DONNAH ATIENO
YVES PRESSLER
DANIEL GODIA

**PREVENT DEVELOPING
LIFESTYLE DISEASES**
BY ADRIANA ALBRITTON

GYMNASIUM
BECOMES THE
FIRST GYM IN THE UK TO
BECOME A **B CORP.**

Introducing EP GYM AND CROSSEFIT BANBURY



Tarn

Jacob



I'm Tarn Cannon. I started at EP Gym in 2015. I was young, clueless about fitness and loved training arms. During my first 2 years at EP, I learnt a lot about the fitness industry and how to run a gym. I started off just as a receptionist, I would sign members up and do general cleaning most evenings after school. In 2017 we decided to expand the gym and opened CrossFit Banbury. CrossFit Banbury was the first of its kind in the area. This was when I first delved into the function fitness world. I started off very nervous, I remember in my first class I was scared to death, but along the way, I learnt a lot about CrossFit. I'm now very confident when coaching and I actively compete in CrossFit.

We put a lot of hard work into both gyms. Over the years we've had ups and downs, fallouts and frustrations. We've had global pandemics and commercial gym chains taking over. But despite all this, we've managed to continue to grow both EP gym and CrossFit Banbury. Both gyms are like having a big extended family and we got a lot of love and support from our members over some tough times.

2021 was the year that changed my life in the fitness industry. In 2021 I was asked by Jake if I would like to become a partner of both gyms.

I said YES...

That was when our biggest project started. In 2021 we decided to expand again. To a newly built industrial estate. We spent a lot of time looking into expanding. Some days we thought we wouldn't be able to do it. Then next thing you know I'm building a gym with no building experience. Jake took me under his wing during the building experience and I learnt a lot of life lessons.

Hopefully, over the next few years we will continue to grow and who knows there may be an EP gym pop up near you!

My name is Jacob Stevens and from an early age, I have always been involved in sports. Starting with football and rugby, later getting into BMX and mountain bike racing, with the latter getting sponsored and riding for a team in national 4x competitions.

Following a few major injuries, I started going to the gym which led to my passion for weight training. I had been going to the gym for 6-7 years in my local area and felt like each facility offered something but not the complete package. For me it felt like they didn't suit the way I wanted to train, so I set about building a gym that had it all i.e. conditioning machines, weights, functional fitness with a friendly community feel.

Growing up my dad was a builder so I've always been a practical person. In my early twenties, I went into fabrication which got me a job in a local classic car motorsport team taking me around Europe. This ended in 2018 when the economic crash happened, I lost my job, so I went travelling to Asia and Australia.



Using my Dad and my background in fabrication and building, I started to buy second-hand gym equipment that I'd fix up to make my own functional training rig and strong man equipment. Because of this, I was able to generate money to buy some luxury items from Watson gym equipment e.g. specialist bars.

I found the right location in Banbury that fitted my criteria, a newer unit that was clean and easily accessible for the public. The first unit was 1340 sqft, so every inch had to be optimised to ensure it fit everything I wanted, I still had to compromise but it was a great start.

For the first 1-1.5 years I worked 6-7 days a week, due to putting every penny into starting the gym, I had no vehicle so I would sleep at the gym Monday to

Saturday. Using a pushbike to get around when I needed it.

In the first year, the business grew better than I had planned. Consequently, at 6 months, I put in a mezzanine floor that spanned 50% of the building size, growing my floor space meant more kit, more capacity and more members.

I organised an Oxfordshire strongman event for members and people from other gyms which had a great turn out creating an annual event that helped to build a great community at the gym.

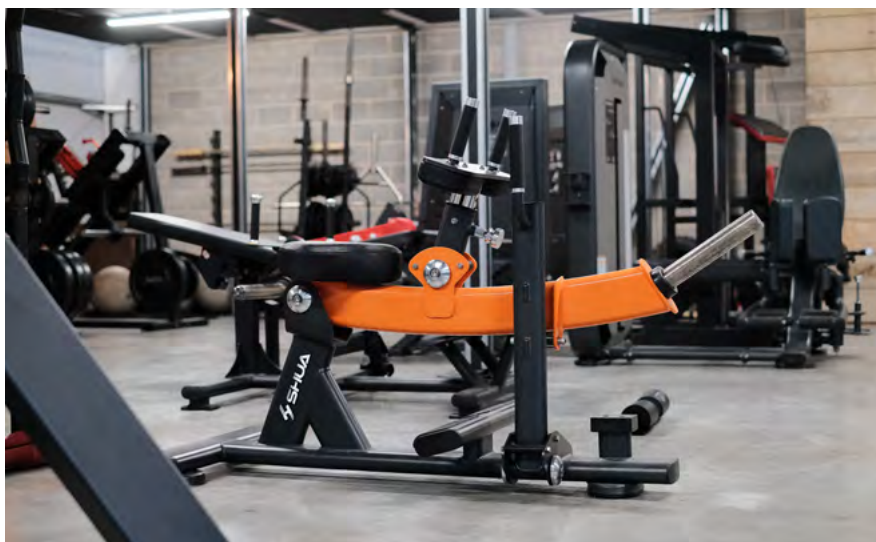
Into the second year, I was still growing well. Instead of taking profit, I choose again to reinvest in the gym by expanding the mezzanine floor, essentially doubling my floor space in the first 2 years of opening.

With even more kit and members, I could finally take on some part-time staff. Being a one-man-band, I found it hard to trust people with my business. Asking around my members, a group of teachers were telling me about a young teenager who was very good.

This lad was Tarn Cannon, starting with some hours after school/college times and weekends. He was able to take on far more than you would think at his age, growing and taking on the gym roles and responsibilities required. This gave me more time to focus on growing the gym. We were able to take on the unit next door which already had a mezzanine floor, taking our floor area up to 5,360 sqft.

Once again, I had to sacrifice any luxuries and used my skillset to build and fabricate what was required to get the gym better changing room facilities and more kit and this all added to the running cost.

In this time, I was also fortunate enough to take on a full-time employee, William Blackshaw. Who was a local PT. He was great for the gym, hardworking, trustworthy and easily built great rapport.



This enabled us to grow our member's community, by arranging regular nights out and social events that the members look forward to.

Over the following years, the gym really became established as the premier independent gym in the area. Offering the full package I originally set out to create, from strongman to cardio and the specialist.

One niche I flirted around with for years was CrossFit, we had a good following doing "functional training classes". I had done my level 1 some years previous and creating 'CrossFit Banbury' was the next thing to add to our package, to really stamp our identity as a unique fitness facility to the Oxfordshire area.

So once again, I had an opportunity to take on another unit next door adding another 1340 sqft. And in 2018, I created CrossFit Banbury with Tarn Cannon.

Tarn had been working for me for 4 years part-time then full time and had proven a very hard working and loyal person so I put my faith in him as head CF coach at 19!

He grabbed this opportunity with both hands and took CF Banbury from a handful of members into the 100s as it stands today.

CrossFit was another re-investment, once again using my skill set and ability to stretch any funds I had to the max. I built the CrossFit rig in the carpark.

From 2018 to 2021, we built a strong community in both gyms, which then helped us through the pandemic. Some of our members supported us by being generous enough to pay membership whilst we were closed. Further, to keep our heads above water we rented kit out to our members, trying our best to spread the kits out so everyone could do something.

I used my fabrication skills to make squat racks and pull up bars to sell, as most will know the demand for gym equipment during the lockdowns was insane. I also made new squat racks to renegotiate the CrossFit space into individual pods to allow classes to go ahead to keep





everyone safe and within the government guidelines, once we were allowed to re-open.

Unfortunately, we did lose some members but had a good base to rebuild from. We once again grew and a new opportunity had come up to increase our floor space yet again.

Near our current location, some units were being built. I had viewed but was unsure whether we should commit as they were bigger, more costly and we were in and out of lockdowns. With the pandemic far from over it was a case of weighing up the options of a brand new unit which was 12,000 sqft, almost 50% bigger than our current gym and CrossFit site.

The idea of a brand new unit in our current location which would give us room to expand and grow couldn't be missed.

Funding was going to be a big issue. Tarn had far more than proved himself as a great employee, so I gave him the option of being business partners.

He loved the idea and brought it in. I used this money to then invest in new equipment, flooring and infrastructure we needed to colonise this new 12,000 sqft unit and turn it into Ep gym and CrossFit Banbury, but bigger and better than ever.

For this unit, this time I wasn't alone, this time I had Tarn and my Dad to help. Tarn, with not a lot of building experience, got stuck in and at one point during the build, we realised we had worked 6 weeks straight!

It was a slog but it's a case of getting it done the best we can with what funds available.

We had great support from our members who helped out in their own time for free, which once again shows how the gym was more than a training facility but a big part of their lives.

With the new unit I really felt like I needed to be updating my kit, it was all

in good condition but felt like we needed something new to stand out.

I hunted around several new companies for quotes, to buy new quality kit. I stumbled across a company new to the UK called Motion Fitness (www.motionfitnessstore.com) They are exclusively distributing Shua fitness equipment in the UK. Shua Fitness had been the official supplier to the Beijing Olympic and winter Olympic games for the training facility for the athletes.

One of the most unique points was that the strength equipment was pin and plate loaded. This is great as members who want an easier usable machine could just jump on. Then for the more serious trainer, they could plate load it and also use the pin at the same time.

This meant the machine had a stack of 100kg and could be pin-loaded on top. Or, what I find better, plate load it then use, then pin stack weight @25% of the load, it creates tension like using bands. Some of our bodybuilding members can't get enough of this kit.

I have also started renting a space to a new Personal Trainer app called Circle, the developer has created a studio at the gym for personal trainers to record content to post on the app for potential clients to see and use.

Now we are fully set up in our forever home, after a continual expansion over 9 years we are looking at building our brand further outside our catchments day want to make it a destination gym that people want to travel to on the weekends. We are just in the process of organising our strongman event for this year but we are going to include a CrossFit throw-down and run it as a fitness festival.

