

# Gorilla Strength & Fitness: All-in mentality, commitment to clients makes this more than just a gym

**NUTTER FORT** — When COVID-19 swept through the country and shut down businesses across the state and country, many faced a scary reality: Find innovative and creative ways to adapt or potentially shut their doors forever.

Among the hardest-hit businesses were gyms, which of course rely on patrons coming in and training regularly. For Wes Brown, the owner and operator of Gorilla Strength and Fitness in Nutter Fort, the spring months should have been a boom time for many local athletes going through their respective offseason training regimens.

The pandemic presented a myriad of new challenges, however, and Brown did what he could to keep his clientele training and continuing to develop physically when his gym's doors were shut.

He quickly adapted to using various apps to do online training, sending three workouts a week to his local athletes.

"We still sent 90-minute workouts based on stuff that our athletes have learned while being here. A lot of them had a lot of stuff at home and if they needed to borrow equipment they came in and took jump ropes and things they needed before they shut us down.

"Everything was tailored around whatever they had," he said. "Most of it was body weight training and circuit style training — push-ups, sit-ups, ski hops, jump ropes — I have been in this business so long that I could make a workout with a stick, so that's basically what we did. For those that had equipment, we sent out certain workouts to those that didn't have certain equipment.

"It was a grind. It was a daily process of me sitting down and churning stuff out. I was game planning as much as I did when the kids were walking into the building. It took time to set up workouts for kids that had weights and kids that didn't have weights. Some kids told me they had sand buckets and stuff, so if you had it, I wrote a work-

out for it."

Had it not been for the technology available today, Brown admitted his businesses would have been in a much more dire position. But more than that, his athletes would have felt abandoned.

You see, Brown remains a coach first and foremost. And his commitment to the student-athletes and adults he works comes with an all-in mentality.

With Brown, that's as important as any bottom line.

He and his



athletes or the high-profile sports. Some of his best performers have been females, including

help her reach her goal.

"I began going to Wes my freshman year. I looked up to Freddie (Canary) and McKenna (Smith) and I knew they went to Gorilla. My first session was with them, from that point on I have not trained anywhere else.

"I put all of my trust into Wes and his methods and because of that he helped me to become a four-event state champion. I have continued and I am now signing to go to college on an athletic scholarship.

"I was blessed with a

their goals.

"Wes Brown has helped me in every aspect of my game," Goff said.

"When I started going to Wes I had two main goals — to get stronger and faster. He knew I had a goal to play baseball at the next level, and he always goes above and beyond to help you reach your goals.

"I like how he individualizes workouts for each athlete and makes the workouts sport-specific. Over the pandemic he emailed me individualized workouts. He is always very approachable and he does his best to make you not only a better athlete but also a better person.

"When I go to camps, he always checks in to see how I did. I would not be where I am today without his guidance.

The thing I like best about Wes is that he really cares about you as an athlete and as a person."

Brown was happy when he recently was able to open his doors to hundreds of local athletes again, and although the COVID-19 pandemic presented a myriad of issues, Gorilla Strength has been able to add to its repertoire and come out of a potentially dark period stronger than ever.

"It was an absolute grind to do these things, but I think I'm better for it because now I have gotten to the point where I'm sending videos to people in California and all sorts of places," noted Brown. "It actually opened up another branch of the gym with online training.

"I have a couple of guys that will be playing professional basketball in Europe or China, and I'll be able to train them while they're out there now. It's kind of a blessing and a curse at the same time, because it forced me to step outside my comfort zone and do something I'm unfamiliar with."

Something Brown challenges his players and adult students to do every time they step into the gym.

To see if Gorilla Strength is the program for you, contact Brown at (304) 685-2108 or visit the gym at 2 Cherry Tree Drive in Nutter Fort.



staff push-ups, consoles and engrains themselves with their clients, who become more like family.

And the results speak for themselves.

His past "kids" include the Stills brothers from Fairmont, now stars on the WVU football team, as well as Jarrod West, an all-conference basketball player at Marshall.

But Brown isn't just for male

WVU basketball commit Marley Washenitz and recent Glenville

State track signee Janna Ferrell.

Ferrell, a much heralded track star even during middle school, saw Brown's success with some of the state's top track athletes in the region and knew he could

lot of athletic ability but it was someone like Wes and his training that made me the athlete I am. I thank him and will continue to train with him in the future."

Bridgeport High baseball standout Ryan Goff said Brown's commitment to student-athletes is what leads people to the gym.

They learn quickly Brown cares about them, Goff said. And that Brown and his staff adapt programs to fit every athlete and

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Wes Brown with Zac Frazier, who was just named best male athlete in WV by Maxprep

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