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# THE FIGHTING GAME OF 914 KRAV MAGA



When I stepped into 914 Krav Maga for the first time, I wasn't expecting to learn how to defend myself against an unanticipated knife attack. But along with a satisfying hour of exercise, I received a valuable lesson in self-defense.

I admittedly felt apprehensive when I skimmed the class roster of the small studio, located in Hartsdale. With a full schedule of 45-minute to one-hour training

sessions in Krav Maga, Muay Thai, Brazilian and Japanese Jiu Jitsu, mixed martial arts (MMA) and wrestling, the workouts suggested a level of stamina, strength and agility that I — a regular at a standard local gym — wasn't accustomed to. But I was pleased to discover that after taking the one-hour Krav Maga/MMA class on a Wednesday evening, I wasn't at all intimidated by the trainer, the equipment or even the other, more experienced students.

That's no doubt because the friendly atmosphere of the family-owned business, which opened in October 2015 and to which WAG introduced readers a year ago, seeps into its workouts. No matter the skill, the staff is dedicated to ensuring that all members do their best, understand the movements, remain safe and have fun throughout.

Though the camaraderie doesn't end there. According to Marty Fareri, co-owner, the studio has become a hangout of sorts for its members, who frequently chitchat before and after workouts and congregate to watch Sunday football.

"It's like a family here," Fareri said.

He and co-owner and cousin Greg Melia focus on the experience that their clients have at 914.

"The priority for me is culture, commitment to your customer and delivering good services," he said. "It's not boring. The classes are high intensity — oh, and by the way — you learn self-defense, which is key."

Fareri, who came out of retirement to open the studio, works 16-hour days, six days a week and enjoys every second of it, he said. He offers one-on-one training sessions for mature adults, ages 50 and up, who have injuries, mobility challenges and strength issues. The sessions, which are one-third of the price of those offered at similar facilities, he said, are his way of giving back to the community.

"It's about helping these people to live a full life," he said.

The particular class that I took was on the intense side. It began with intervals of warm-up exercises — jumping jacks, mountain climbers and sit-ups — followed by combinations, like open-hand strikes and leg kicks against a punching bag. These all came together for the final combination, blocking a knife strike while counteracting with a punch to the face, then securing the weapon behind the attacker's back and responding with consecutive kicks to the groin, forcing the attacker to step back and, ultimately, surrender.

Luckily, instructor Melia — who has 20 years experience of combined training — broke down each step for us.

In addition to the adult classes, 914 Krav Maga offers Jiu Jitsu for children and teens, ages 5 and up, emphasizing discipline, perseverance and dedication. The studio features a knee wall, which separates the exercise mats from the break area, allowing parents to watch from one side while their children practice on the other. For young adults, the studio also has a fight team — ranging in size from eight to 10 members, four of whom are champions —that competes in the tristate area.

914 Krav Maga has approximately 165 active members. The studio offers a month-to-month flat rate, which allows you to take any class, as often as desired, with the option to freeze the membership at any time.

***914 Krav Maga is at 303 Central Park Ave., second floor, in Hartsdale. For more, call 914-437-5353 or visit [914kravmaga.com](http://www.914kravmaga.com)(<http://www.914kravmaga.com>).***