



Interview with Zach Ruffo, Speed Bag Phenom



Jedd: Folks, I bring you an interview with **Zach Ruffo**, one of the most talented speed bag practitioners in the world. If you have been over to [Napalm's Corner](#), you have seen the very impressive exhibitions this gentleman has performed on his youtube.com page with the speed bag!

Zach, first let's start off with a little bit about yourself. Where are you from and what is your athletic background?

Zach: Well my name is Zachary Alan Ruffo and I am from Lake City Florida. I'm 21 and I am a salesman at Easy Street Auto Brokers. I get lots of video tips and advice from Alan Kahn (speed bag king), Shaun Parker and a few others I know. I have done every sport and have done my best to become good at what I do.

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Jedd: How did you get into hitting the speed bag?

Zach: Duh! Like everyone gets into the speed bag. Seeing Rocky tear it up! I heard the beat in my head so strong that when I put my first speed bag up it just came natural. All I had to do was hear the beat.

See Rocky work the bag like it owes him money in the following clips from Youtube.com:

Rocky I - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cavFoyYJwPQ>

Rocky II - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fndKRjNYLIY>

Rocky III - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdYnOmDwz1g&NR=1>

Rocky IV - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7Kg_w-0y_w

Rocky VI - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdYnOmDwz1g&NR=1>

Jedd: How long have you been hitting the speed bag?

Zach: I have been hitting the speed bag for about 2 ¼ years, I'd say. I was hitting the bag at first just very fast - no trick hits as some people call them - but just a basic rhythm but fast and I mean smoking fast. I thought I was the king and no one could compare to my speed. Then a buddy of mine sent me a video on youtube.com of the speed bag king, Alan Kahn, and I was hooked. I had to learn the moves - that was about 9 months ago. So a basic rhythm of 18 months maybe some doubles and stuff but that's about all and then the last 9 months has been just learning and tearing it up.

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Jedd: I've noticed you have quite a collection of ink. What is the story behind some of your tattoos?

Zach: Well let's start with the first one I got - the spider that's on my back. I was 17. It was my first tattoo and wasn't really thought through because I hate spiders. But I got it at the time because I was facing my fears. Took a hole year for me to get another one, my parents wouldn't let me. When I turned 18 I got my next tattoo - the first ever 4:20:47 in the middle of my back. The next one was the RUFFO across the stomach.



On 6/6/06 I was in need of the lord. So I went and had a cross put on my shin to show my love for our lord on a day that was full of evil. This year 7/7/07 I will be getting the angel wings behind it. The next was the speed bag skunk portrait put on my other shin. Finally finished my 8th tattoo which covered up my 1st and 2nd tattoo, well not the first cause u can still see the spider perfectly. Then was a dedication to the 4:20:47 crew I started when I was like 17. Now there are like 15 to 20 people with the numbers 4:20:47 tattooed on them so I had to incorporate it into my back vest. I've had a great artist, Wayne, at Body Tech in Alachua, Florida. I still have much more room and I plan on doing a lot of other tattoos.



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Jedd: I have noticed in your videos that you hit on several different bags and platforms. How many do you have?

Zach: I have 1 in my bedroom next to my bed, 3 in my laundry room, 1 in my office that I work from 9-5:00 everyday, and 2 at the gym I go to. They don't make me pay for a membership because I always fix their swivels and put up new bags, so that's cool. And the other gym I go to has 1 speed bag. So anywhere I go I usually have a speed bag to hit. I think I'd go crazy if I didn't hit one.

Check out Zach's innovative style:

Bent Over: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ut3m3VX9Mzw>

Multiple Bags: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRga-bn_WM8

Jedd: You hit the speed bag at angles that I have never seen anyone hit the speed bag at (sit-up bench, unattached platform, hanging from the wall, etc). Tell us a little bit about your innovative speed bag styles.

Zach: Well I just enjoy hitting the bag different styles and different ways. I just made a new one of me kicking the speed bag. I have created a few but lots have already been done. I usually just do them to show that they can be done by others.

Sit-up Bench: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mG9_qCOBNeM

Punching Pair: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSjG8IJritM>

For Wrist Strength: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWZB3_jEC20

Jedd: Your speed on the speed bag is almost unparalleled. How did you become so fast in your conventional technique (conventional bag hanging from standard platform)?

Zach: If you're going to tell someone you're fast then you better be FAST. So at first I just blew up on the bag and pounded away at it but later on I learned to control the bag. I learned that speed would come as I got better so I slowed down and learned the movement of the bag. After

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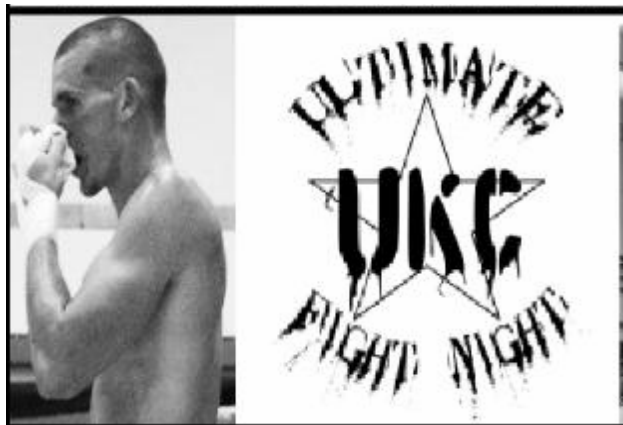
that I knew I had hand speed but once you learn coordination and mix speed in with your skills well you get CRAZY with it!

Jedd: Who do you most look up to in speed bag athletics?

Zach: Alan "The Speed Bag King" Kahn

Jedd: Do you fight in combat sports (boxing/MMA etc)?

Zach: I fight in the www.UKCfights.com. I'm 1-0 so far so I hope to keep it going. I have trained in boxing for about 6 months and for the last 2 months I have been training with my crew Billy, Rocky, Tim, and a couple of female fighters.



See Zach's first fight - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOHuvrm04Bo>

Jedd: Do you feel your speed bag practice has carried over well to your combat sport?

Zach: I believe it has. My speed helps me a lot whether it's punching or blocking. Speed bag training teaches you the number 1 rule in the book "Keep your hands UP"

Jedd: Tell us about your competitive history.

Zach: I grew up as a show off and I enjoy getting very good at the things I say I can do. So learning the speed bag and getting really good was my goal. Now I'm extending my goal to teaching others these skills.

Jedd: Have you seen your speed bag performance carry over into any other endeavors?

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Zach: Yeah I do. Ever day I have at least 3 or more comments on my videos I place on you tube. I always put at least 1 or more new videos up a week because lots of people enjoy watching. I get questions all day about the speed bag and I do what I can to help everyone even if it's making them a video to show them how to do something.

Jedd: Are there any articles, websites, books that you would suggest the readers of DieselCrew.com check out if they are interested in picking up a speed bag?

Zach: www.speedbagcentral.com and www.speedbagforums.com .

Jedd: What speed bag manufacturer do you prefer?

Zach: Title boxing bags are very soft and good to keep your hands in good shape but I also enjoy the top contender bag as well.

Jedd: What speed bag size do you prefer?

Zach: I'm all about the extra small speed bags: 6x4, 5x8, or 4x7



See more at www.TitleBoxing.com

Jedd: Do you collect speed bags?

Zach: I do. I have lots of them. Some popped and some just deflated. But I mostly have the title 5x8 red speed bag probably like 8 or 9 of those.

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Jedd: Do you have any impressive speed bags in your collection?

Zach: Yeah I do as a matter of fact I have a 5x8 Title bag signed by Alan Kahn and it says "To the fastest man I have ever seen on the bag." Definitely made me feel good watching him sign that.

Jedd: How long do you practice on the speed bag?

Zach: I do a lot of training with my friends and hit the speed bag at least 1 hour a day. I also go to the gym and run and do a lot of stomach work outs and bench press. But mostly I train with partners with combos and kicking. Next we will start take downs.

Jedd: What Speed bag trick or feat are you most proud of?

Zach: I don't know I have to say probably the speed. Everyone wants to see it go fast. But I enjoy slowing things down a little bit and just working the bag.

Jedd: What's next on the horizon as far as speed bag training?

Zach: TEACHING!! I want to have a room full of people with like 20 or more bags being able to just follow the lead of the person next to you. As far as new tricks - well I have a couple I am learning but just keep your eyes open to see the skunk back in action.

Jedd: What trick was hardest for you to learn?

Zach: The continuing fist elbow fist-fist-elbow-fist - very hard to control.

Check out some sick fist and elbow combinations from Zach:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slb6Zh-YSo8>

Jedd: Zach, thanks for taking your time to conduct this interview today. All the best in the future with your speed bag training and fighting.

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