



What started out as training two young hockey players transformed dramatically into Hustle Athletic Training, the close-knit exercise facility owned and operated by Aaron Dawson.

Originally from Illinois, Aaron began his fitness journey as a hockey player in the OHL, where he spent five years playing in Ontario. Later, a business degree at UPEI brought him to the Island where he first began realizing his dream of becoming an entrepreneur. However, still keen to pursue

his athletic dreams, Dawson went on to play professional hockey for a few more years after graduating from university. Post hockey career, his job at Vector Aerospace reignited the desire once again to work for himself. Yet, at the time, he did not know what kind of enterprise to pursue. Coincidentally, two weeks into his new position at Vector, a couple of dads approached him with a proposition to train their own hockey playing sons. Although not initially into fitness – besides playing hockey, this side gig quickly grew as did his passion for helping others achieve their goals. Aaron eventually went on to work at the tax centre, but in the meantime, he transformed his garage into a gym and took on more clients. In time, Dawson then had to extend his garage to create an even larger gym.

At long last, Aaron arrived at a tipping point where he could rely solely on his business and let go of his position at the tax centre. This is when he purchased a building in Summerside, renovated it into a gym, and then officially opened Hustle Athletic Training in May of 2019. Today, the facility hosts private training sessions and group classes such as boot camps, aerial yoga, yin yoga, hatha yoga, spin, MMA cardio, barre, step aerobics, and Zumba. In total, the training facility offers around 25 hours worth of classes and 20 hours worth of private training per week, with multiple teachers hired to run the variety of classes. Additionally, the facility has saunas and a body scanner that helps clients to view their progress over time. Unlike a regular gym where customers swipe in as they please, Hustle focuses on creating a comfortable environment where individuals can have the whole gym to themselves when training privately or in one of the group classes. This focus on comfort is also carried out in the class sessions themselves, as Aaron described “its built around comfort, so if anyone needs any exercises modified the instructors can do that”.



According to Dawson, Hustle Athletic Training now exceeds anything he had initially set out for, “I was never sure that this could be what it is today...a lot of that has to do with CBDC, I wouldn’t have been able to do that on my own” he explained. Aaron received a Youth Loan from the CBDC to help as a second mortgage on the facility. This funding also went towards building renovations, “everything was gutted and then we added everything, the floor, the turf, bathrooms, saunas, some of the money went to equipment as well” he described. With the amenities now all in order, Aaron has been able to focus more on the rewarding work of supporting clients with reaching their goals, as well as living out his dream of being his own boss at the same time. This perfect combination has led to him developing a keen passion for continuously building the Hustle Athletic brand, which now also includes a fitness apparel line. Overall, however, Aaron’s dream is to continue creating an enjoyable and relaxed environment for his clients to work out in where they feel supported in every way possible.