A DENTIST'S LIFE

I get up at 7.30 am at home in Manchester. For breakfast I have oats with honey, a protein shake, fruit and a Nespresso Latte, and then I drive to work. I usually start work at 9 am; clinically, I work four days in practice as a GDP – three weekdays in a mixed practice and one weekend day in private practice either in Manchester or London. I travel fortnightly to see my London patients and visit family and friends.

I particularly enjoy prosthodontics and oral surgery, which were my choices of discipline during my term as senior house officer at Guy's and St Thomas' in 2009–2010. I have thus developed an enthusiasm for implant dentistry. I was due to commence my MSc in implantology in September 2013, but had to delay these plans in light of my boxing commitments. I also used to teach undergraduates in primary dental care one day a week in London under Professor Stephen Dunne, which I really enjoyed, but stopped as a result of moving to Manchester when boxing opportunities arose.

I first laced on a pair of boxing gloves at the age of eight. My parents wanted me to focus on my academic studies and encouraged me to fulfil my deep desire to work in dentistry, but I continued training and also taught boxing to other students at university. After graduating, I was excited to finally commence my amateur boxing career but was stopped in my tracks by new rules set by the Amateur Boxing Association of England that banned participants from sporting a beard on health and safety grounds. This came as a huge shock and a massive disappointment for me, and led to my participation in exhibitions, white-collar and semi-professional bouts. I am now fully licensed as a professional boxer with the British Boxing Board of Control.

As a boxer I am known as Dr Hitman. This was inspired by Tommy 'Hitman' Hearns, a great boxer from the 1980s; the 'Dr'

I AM KNOWN AS DR HITMAN

Arthif Daniel qualified as a dentist in 2008 and practises in Bolton, Manchester and London. Originally from London, Arthif is a former honorary clinical teacher at King's College London Dental Institute and a professional licensed boxer with the British Boxing Board of Control.

part was inspired by the heavyweight champions, the Klitschko brothers, who both hold doctorates. They are known as Dr Steel Hammer and Dr Iron Fist.

I am still awaiting a date for my professional boxing debut and planning to appear on the same card as Amir Khan's younger brother, Haroon. We train together with the renowned Oliver Harrison, and there have been talks of dates and venues in May and June. In the meantime I keep myself busy in the gym, listening to my coaches and staying sharp. I have also spent time training in Las Vegas with Eddie Mustafa Muhammad of the Floyd Mayweather Boxing Gym and trained alongside Floyd Mayweather himself – a truly inspiring experience.

I go to the gym most days and on some days go for a run or swim in the evening. I also do light shadow and bag sessions during lunchtimes and on Saturday might do hill sprints or runs. Sunday is a rest day! At the moment I balance work with training; at a later stage I may have to reassess my current timetable according to my boxing. However, I love dentistry and would never like to leave it; I am as passionate about my dentistry as I am about my boxing.

To support my training, I generally aim to have a diet low in carbohydrates and fats and high in protein; this means lean meats, good carbs such as brown pasta, rice and sweet potatoes, good fats such as nuts and healthy

oils, and plenty of fruit and vegetables. I am very fortunate that my amazing wife, who is also a practising dentist, is a great cook who tailors my meals to my diet. The hardest part of keeping within my boxing weight limit is that I am a man who loves desserts! My absolute favourite in the US is The Cheesecake Factory! A moderate cheat day once a week in your diet is forgivable though, and is in fact good for your body and its performance.

I usually finish work by 5 pm – I have very efficient dental nurses – but the time I get home depends on my session at the gym afterwards and whether I have a light or hard session. People usually think as a professional athlete, you just spend hours on end in the gym and do nothing but eat, drink and sleep gym. However, it is always about quality rather than quantity and doing the right things at the right time. You should always be careful of burning yourself out and over-training – especially as a professional who competes. You don't want an injury affecting your performance.

In addition to boxing, I enjoy cricket and football and am a Man Utd supporter. I also enjoy an evening with a film – but these days I love to spend my spare time with my beautiful newborn daughter, Grace.

I would certainly recommend that other dentists take up boxing to keep fit, rather than to compete! It is one of the best sports to get fit and in shape, and to help instil both physical and mental discipline. With the dentist's lifestyle of prolonged sitting and so much emphasis on posture, boxing is a great help in burning calories and to prevent and reduce potential back problems with good use of the musculoskeletal system.

My ultimate goal is to work hard and dedicate myself to the sport of boxing and see what happens. My saying is: do your best and let God do the rest.

INTERVIEW BY KATE QUINLAN