

Amateur athletes using hypoxic tools to train

By Erin Beresini, Outside

Altitude training—it's not just for elite athletes anymore. What with the rise of altitude chambers and hypoxic workout rooms in your local gym, oxygen-deprivation hypoxicator masks, and even hypoxic bed chambers (Michael Phelps slept in one in his run-up to the 2012 London Olympics), amateur athletes are now using these tools to try and train just as well as their professional idols.

“The ‘us and them’ division is slowly being eroded away,” says Richard Pullan, founder of London’s hypoxic gym, The Altitude Centre, which works with Hypoxico (the leading manufacturer of all things hypoxic) and has about 60 members who train daily in its 2,700 meters and 14.9 percent oxygen environment. “Increasingly, amateur athletes are styling their training around that of elite athletes. And many want to see how good they can be if they have access to the same tools that elites and professionals do.”

Yet despite the availability of new hypoxic toys, most recreational athletes have yet to really transcend the level of elite times that altitude training would seem to suggest is possible. And much of the reason for this has to do with how hypoxia is used at the amateur and professional levels.

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