

# Connar Hotene-Wilson

## Class of 2019

### Personal Trainer and Kickboxer

update May 2024



## Connar's Story

Connar entered St John's as a Y9, started kickboxing in his hometown Morrinsville in Y10, and competed in his first fight 6 months later. Although he always played sport - in social teams and basketball under Mel Young - he found his passion in kickboxing. Training hard and the raised arm to announce a win became his addiction.

Whilst at St John's College, Connar was involved in a near fatal crash. For the next 12 months, he had to work hard to regain his strength, his speech, and had to learn how to walk again. His class sent him notes of encouragement; some of them are still on his bedroom wall. Connar credits his recovery to faith, the support of his family and the entire SJC community and the belief that God was not finished with him yet.

*"Hard work beats talent, when talent fails to work hard."*

After leaving the College in 2019, he studied at Wintec's Centre for Sport Science and Human Performance and became a personal trainer. The qualification gave him the tools to help other people with their fitness and overall health, and better their lives. But not only that, a big part of the training focuses on building mental strength; and that goes hand in hand with kickboxing and training for a win.

The long path to regaining his health tested his resilience, but also made Connar fully appreciate life. He's excited about the opportunities that are ahead

of him but remains grounded. Training is hard and requires mental strength; "your mind can be your biggest enemy". He reckons the work ethic, the power of community and the confidence of believe instilled in him during his years at St John's College continue to play a major part in his daily life.



When we first spoke to Connar, he'd competed in 21 fights and walked away with 4 titles. In November 2022 he'd represented Aotearoa at the WKA (World Kickboxing and Karate Association) World Championships in Wales and came home with a silver and a bronze medal in two different divisions for his age and weight class.

Connar moved to Australia in 2023 and has been giving back to the sport. As the head Muaythai instructor/coach he is preparing the next generation of fighters. Alongside that, he still actively competes and trains. He's now got 26 amateur and pro fights under his belt. His hope is to go to Thailand and immerse himself deeper in muaythai and the Thai culture.

*"I've made life-long friends at St John's College. It has given me a brotherhood like no other - we are Johnnies Boys."*