

We found love and we weren't even looking

I LOOKED MY WORSE BUT HE FANCIED ME

I WAS looking my worst when I met Leo. I was covered in mud from head to toe, soaking wet and freezing cold. But I knew from that first day he was "The One". I'd been going to British Military Fitness sessions for a few months before I even laid eyes on Leo. He was in the top fitness team and I was in the lowest. It was a dark night in December 2005 when our teams arrived for a workout in Hyde Park. So few people turned up that the teams had to merge.

Our trainer asked us to make groups of three and Leo wandered over to join me and my friend Lindsay. Like us, he was covered in mud – but through the muck I saw he was absolutely gorgeous. We ran relays, did push-ups and exhausted ourselves. There was no way he could fancy me looking this terrible. At the end of the class, Leo asked the group if anyone wanted to go for a drink. No one wanted to go but Lindsay and I didn't hesitate.

NINA CLARKE, a textile designer, and Leo Govan, who works in finance, both 30, fell in love at a boot camp exercise group. They live in Forest Hill, south London

We dashed to a pub in South Kensington and, while Leo got the drinks in, Lindsay and I ran to the ladies. "I look like a tramp," I moaned to Lindsay as I saw my bedraggled figure in the mirror. There was nothing for it but to change into my work clothes and put on as much make-up as I could. When we emerged, the three of us got chatting. After an hour, Lindsay left us alone – which he told me was what he was hoping for. It was a perfect first date without being an official first date.

We chatted for hours and, at the end of the night, I knew he was the right man for me. From then on we were inseparable. He moved in with me about six months later and last New Year's Eve he proposed at my parents' home in Jersey. I think about how close I came to skipping that session in Hyde Park when I met Leo. Perhaps it was fate I went along.



WORKING OUT: Leo Govan and Nina Clarke met at an exercise class