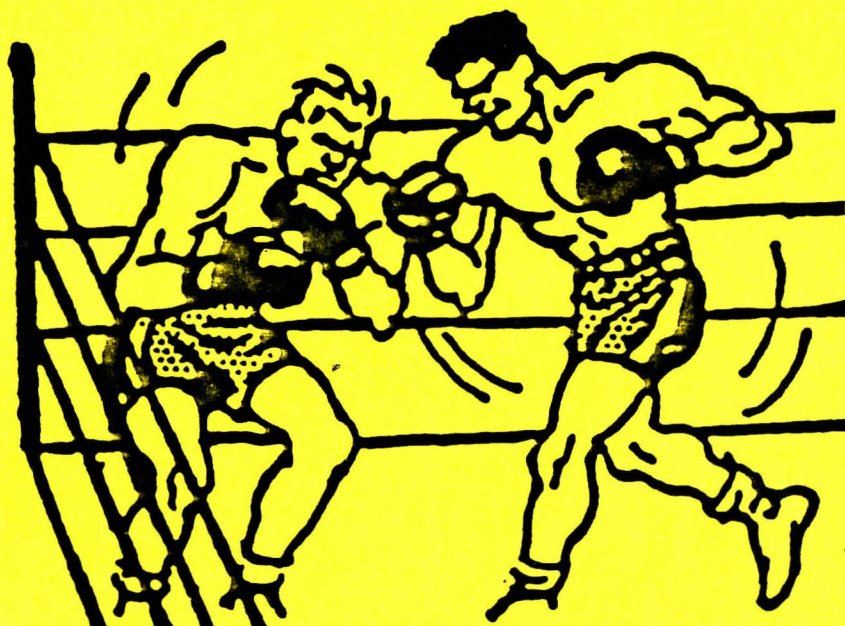


DANCE PARTY

\$ 2.00 ADMISSION

SPECIAL BENEFIT



FOR ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE
COLLEGIATE BOXING
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

TIME: 10:30 pm

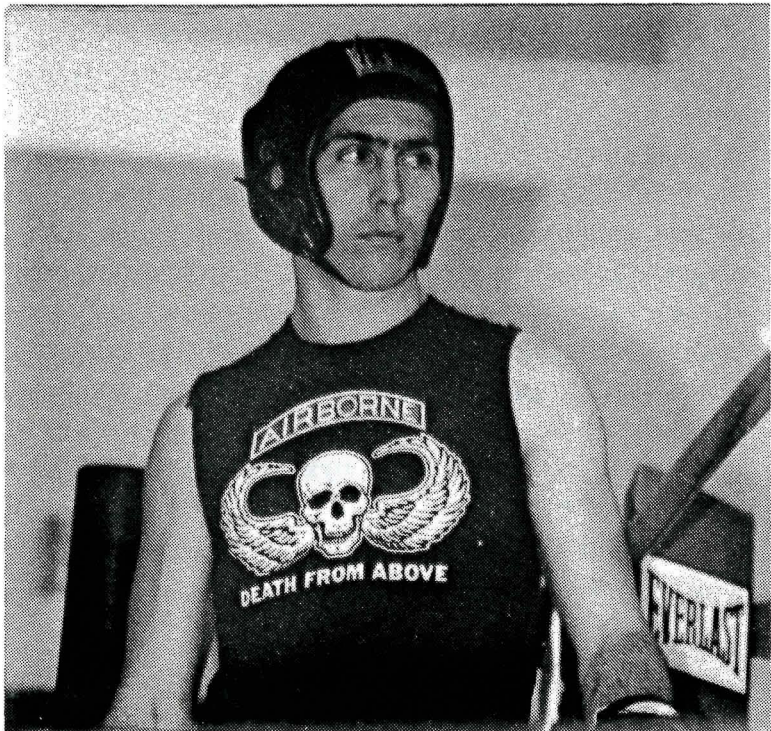
PLACE: The Great Hall

DATE: Friday April 5th

COST: \$ 2.00 per person

TONIGHT

st. john's
PUGILIST SOCIETY



ἀντικρὺ χροῶα τε ῥήξω σὺν τ' οὐτέ' ἀράξω.

ILIAD, XXIII. 673

BOXING
CLUB

St. John's College, Annapolis, MD 21404

Toward a National Championship: The Metaphysics of Boxing

ἀντικρὺ χροῖα τε ῥήξω σὺν τ' οὐτέ' ἀράξω.

ILIAD, XXIII. 673

A mighty ugly boast that the Homeric boxer throws down to his challenger in the Funeral Games ("I shall rend his flesh and crush his bones"), and seemingly a far cry from the emphasis on out-pointing one's opponent which characterizes the point-system of inter-collegiate amateur boxing. That system emphasizes safety and serves to distinguish the amateurs from the more violent ranks of professional boxing. However there is a line of truth that runs through the boxing tradition, from Homeric warriors through such modern-day giants like Dempsey, Robinson, Ali and Tyson, and remains infused in the Olympic and inter-collegiate amateurs as well: that truth involves the metaphysical aspect, the Will and Oneness. The two-thousand year connection is held within the intangibles—the commitment, desire and intensity necessary to win despite the Fear.

This challenge, both physical and metaphysical, is finally being answered at St. John's College. The small liberal arts community in Annapolis is more noted for croquet and books than physical rigor, yet finally has returned to its Homeric roots with a commitment to boxing. The art of pugilism, first touted in Homer's *Iliad* and Vergil's *Aeneid*, has a long tradition, only recently resurrected at St. John's. Last year, January 1990, a few freshmen got together and started a boxing program on campus. The emphasis was on physical conditioning and training in basic techniques. A group of twelve students worked throughout the spring and closed out the semester with a banquet featuring special guest Mr. Emerson Smith, who coached Navy boxing for 25 years, and Mr. Stewart Umphrey from St. John's, who, before embracing the intellectual life, boxed for eleven years.

During the summer a handful of boxers stayed in Annapolis and took the opportunity to do some sparring in a gym. In September there was a program shift, taking into account that half the club members rowed crew and that season lasted through November. Conditioning continued for students, staff and alumni in the early morning, the afternoon workouts were for those two students, B. Good ('93) and J. Yulo ('93), who remained committed to inter-collegiate competition.

B. Good was first introduced to the USNA boxing program when he met Coach Smith and Charlie Holloway at the 1984 NCBA Championships. Following Coach Smith's retirement, B. Good trained under Dr. Tom Virgets, President of the NCBA and current trainer of professional heavyweight Tommy Morrison. When Dr. Virgets was replaced by the current Navy Head Coach, Jim McNally, both he and the assistant coach Ron Stutzman remained generous and encouraging of the St. John's program. Coach Stutzman was especially helpful in guiding B. Good in an exhibition bout last November, which he won with a 3rd round TKO.

The stage is now set for the Eastern Regionals at VMI this March and then on to the NCBA National Championships in Reno, Nevada. Training is right on schedule with roadwork and gym time. Coach Stutzman, who keeps an eye on overall progress and fine-tuning, is now being assisted by former St. John's student Pete Maillet. Pete handles the day-to-day task of directing merciless bag drills. And along with the increased physical strength and skill, the real edge is manifested psychologically: "I have complete faith in myself and my trainers. Both Coach Stutzman and Pete are perfect. I am inspired each and every day that I leave that gym because they work me so hard. They take me to the edge. I get to a point where I feel I am going to collapse and then they turn it up a

notch and force me to a higher level. I become more energized, more powerful. Inspired. You know what I like about boxing? That it is about indomitable Spirit. It is about Will. That in the final face-off it is the man with the stronger will who shall prevail. And it is about punishment. I know that Coach Smith, who is on the Safety Committee will disagree with me, especially about amateur boxing- so I'm just speaking for myself, but as far as I am concerned boxing is about punishment. I love dishing it out and I don't mind taking it. I'm a work-horse, not a race-horse. I will out-work my opponent. I will punish my opponent. I'm not flashy, I'm strong and hostile. Sure there is a metaphysical angle, and I appreciate this: the fighter must transcend his instinct because the initial instinct is to run and hide- but real success is in channeling that fear into a ferocious, forward motion. A passion that is simultaneously detached. Detached enough to be calm and focused, yet paradoxically impassioned enough to be relentless.

I create my own openings. If the opponent protects his head then I hammer his body, when he drops his arms then I hammer his head. Hit 'em high, hit 'em low. Create the openings. This success demands all aspects: focused intelligence to remain calm and read the opponent, physical prowess to dominate him and the spiritual fortitude to follow through all the way. Woven together there is the Oneness, the transcendent moment, and that is the way that I probably experience the fight on an abstract level. But the real level, the level that engages me, is all about punishment. I will simply out-work and out-punish my opponent. That is how I will defeat him. That is how I will win.

WILL TO WIN ALL THE WAY!