



Ezequiel Olaque

Coach Sam Colonna

Tony LaRosa, a novice heavyweight from the 3F boxing team, made it to the Semi-Finals, but lost a tough split decision.

German Benhur who did not participate in the Chicago Golden Gloves Tournament, did participate in the Peoria, Illinois Tournament and took 2nd Place in the 125 lb. open division.

Ezequiel Olaque, who is in the 125 lb. open division, stopped all three of his opponents in all three phases of the Competition. He now adds another Golden Honor, which include: 2 time CYO Champion, Chicago Park District Champion, and Illinois ABF Champion. This qualifies "Ziggy" (as he's known to friends), to fight on the Chicago team that will participate in the National Golden Gloves Tournament in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on May 5th thru 10th.

The Valentine Chicago Boys and Girls Club would like to extend a special congratulations to Coach Sam Colonna, because of the great performances by the Valentine Boxing Team. Sam has been chosen by the Chicago Park District and the Amateur Boxing Association, to be one of the two head coaches to accompany the Chicago team to the National Tournament.

We wish them all the luck in the world!

Valentine Boys Club Week Winners

The Valentine staff is proud to announce the Grand Prize Winners who earned the most points during last week's Boys Club Week Celebration. The Winners are as follows: Cadets: First Place, Kelly Considine, 90 points; Second Place, Louis Cornelio, 63 points; Third Place, Raymond Haynes, 57 points. Preps: First Place, Missy McDonnell, 49 points; Second Place, Matthew Lesser, 48 points; Third Place, Gina Calderone, 46 points. Juniors: First Place, Hector Jimenez, 110

Boxing Show

The Valentine Chicago Boys Club will hold its annual amateur boxing show Friday, December 9, at 7:30 p.m.

Some of the boxers featured this year are, 1983 Silver Gloves Champion, Ricky Rivera. The CYO Champion in the 112 lb. weight class, Ezequiel Olaque, Former Park District Champion, "Tough" Tony Perez, will be trying to make a comeback for his fans and for himself. A newcomer who will be boxing is Al Gonzales. Also featured is Ozell Robinson, a hard hitter who will try to box his way to victory. Making his boxing debut in the heavyweight division is Vince Colao, Jose Calderon who is this years Spanish Gloves champ, and also CYO champion will show the crowd his stuff.

Join coaches Sam Colonna and Bob Capocy in cheering on their champions.



Pictured: (top row) Al Gonzales, Vince Colao, Jose Calderon, Bobby (middle row) Tony Perez, Ricky Rivera, Ezequiel Olaque, Ozell Robinson (bottom row) Sam Colonna with two aspiring youths.

St. David's News

Valentine Boxing Show, It's A Winner!!

Fight fans!!! On December 9, at 7:30 p.m. the Valentine Chicago Boys club presents its 7th annual Boxing Show, in the Valentine gym.

A few of the boys from the area to be featured in this year's show are: Ricky Rivera, Tony Perez, and Al Gonzales.



RICKY RIVERA

If you missed last year's show, you definitely won't want to miss this year's. Come watch boxing at the Valentine Chicago Boys club.

Tickets will be available at the door. \$3.00 for adults, \$2.00 for children. See you on December 9th, at 7:30.

P.S. Congratulations to Ezequiel Olaque (6-1) and Jose Calderon (8-0) for win-

ning CYO titles in their respective weight classes. These two boys will also be in this year's boxing show.



TONY PEREZ



AL GONZALEZ

Attention Fight Fans



Left to right—"Tough" Tony Perez, Bob Aguinaga, Giacomo Colao, Pete Lujano, Ricky Rivera, Mark Rollin, Coach Sam Colonna, "Fighting" Frankie Gonzalez.

Fight fans!!! On February 11th at 7:30 p.m. the Valentine Chicago Boys Club presents its 6th annual Boxing Show, in the Valentine gym.

A few of the boys from the area to be featured in this year's show are: Giacomo Colao, "Fighting" Frankie Gonzalez, current Silver Gloves champ Ricky Rivera, Dave Hill, Dave Howard, "Tough" Tony Perez, Bob Aguinaga & Pete Lujano.

If you missed last year's show, you definitely won't want to miss this year. Three week's before fight time. Don't miss it. Tickets will be available at the door. \$2.00 Adults, \$1.00 for children. See you on February 11th.

Finley Youth Foundation Boxers

The Valentine's Boys Club will host the "Louis Valentine Chicago Boys and Girls Club Boxing Show" January 18th.

The boxing matches will begin at 8:00 p.m. and will feature boys aged 11 years to 19 years from the Club, being matched with boxers from the Chicago Park District, the Matador Boxing Club and the Mt. Prospect Boxing Club.

This year's ticket prices are: students (14 years and under) \$1.00; adults \$4.00 and reserved seating (ring-side) \$10.00, reserved ringside seating also includes refreshments for the entire evening.



Front Row, L to R: Russell Ferro, Patrick Botica and George Finley. Back Row, L to R: Sam Collona, Rudy Bandemer, Luke Capuano, Tony LaRosa and Pat Finley.

The Patrick M. Finley Youth Foundation has sponsored 5 boxers this year who will fight under the 3-F Boxing Club. 3-F will fight representing the Valentine Boys Club and the match-ups promise to be exciting. Neighborhood residents are encouraged to attend and support this worthwhile project of the Boys Club.

Former Chicago Boxing great Luke Capuano, and members of the 3-F Boxing Club, will be fighting for the Valentine's Boys Club January 18th. Representing 3-F Boxing are Anthony LaRosa, George Finley, Russell Ferro and Rudy Bandemer.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting Larry Nawrot at the Valentine's Boys and Girls Club at 3400 S. Emerald, or by calling 927-7374.

Colao-Perez-Fratto



From left to right; Giacomo Colao, "Tough" Tony Perez, Russell Fratto, and Coach Sam Colonna.

Three Young men from McGuane Park emerged victoriously from the Chicago Park District Junior Boxing Championships, held April 14, 15 and 16th at Clarendon Park.

Under the coaching of Sam Colonna, Giacomo Colao took the first place trophy in the Heavyweight Division. Anthony "Tough Tony" Perez, who defeated three finalists, took the first place trophy in the 119 pound weight class.

These two skilled young boxers trained long and hard for eight months in preparation for the Championships.

Russell Fratto, who took the first place trophy in the 98 pound weight class, is coached by "Scrubby", and Frankie Coe.

Boxing From Valentine "Good Luck"



Jose Calderon



Ezequiel Olague

The Valentine Chicago Boys Club would like to wish Ezequiel Olague and Jose Calderon all the best of luck. These two young men will be fighting Thursday in the Catholic Youth Organization's Boxing Championship. They will be fighting in the 112 lb. weight class with a record of 5 and 1. Jose fights in the 165 lb. weight class and has a record of 7 and 10. The CYO Tournament is one of the major boxing events of the year on the amateur level. Highlights of the tournament will be televised on Sports-
vision, Thursday Sept. 24th at 7:30 p.m.

Also the 7th Annual Boxing Show will be held December 9th at 7:30 p.m. at Valentine Boys Club. These two fights and more will make for an exciting nite of boxing. Tickets are on sale at Valentine Chicago Boys Club at the cost of \$3.00 — adults and \$2.00 — children.

For more information call Bill Sanderson, Athletic Director at Valentine Boys Club 927-7373.
GOOD LUCK BOXERS AND SEE YOU AT THE SHOW DECEMBER 9th.

"Education makes a people easy to lead; but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave."
Baron Broughham

"He who finds himself, loses his misery."
Matthew Arnold

7th Annual Boxing Show



On April 14, 1978, McGuane Park 8901 So. Poplar will hold its 7th Annual Boxing Show. Boxers of various ages and sizes will compete against one another with the first bout starting at 7:30 P.M. in McGuane Park's Field House. Don't miss the excitement, tickets are \$1.00 for adults, and 50 cents for children.

Boxing Team, top row l-r, Rich Canavespi (coach), Paul Impaleria, Jimbo Terrazas, Tony Oberlin, John Rodriguez, Tony Vero, Sam Calao-(Rocky), Tom Distefano, and Frank Coe (coach).

Bottom row l-r, Joe Okeefe, Eddie Happ, Tom Hillock, Vic Roa, George Finley, Mike Smith, Mike Tobar, Russel Fratto.

BOXING

Just a little gym to call home

At trainer Sam Colonna's club, boxers are like family

By Bob Sakamoto

Von Bean was a boxer on the ropes, and he knew it. He was about to make his last stand when his trainer, Sam Colonna, provided inspiration.

"You know, your mother is probably watching you right now," Colonna told Bean, 16, whose mother had died last year. "If you're going to win this for anyone, win it for your mom."

Tears trickled down the tired teenager's face. In an emotional rage, Bean came from behind in the final round to capture his Golden

■ Results in Scoreboard

Gloves semifinal bout in the 178-pound novice division Tuesday night at St. Andrews gym.

"I guess I just know my kids so well," Colonna said.

Yes, he knows them like family. Colonna, 28, has dedicated his life to turning would-be street kids into disciplined fighting machines. Word of his caring but strict regimen has spread throughout the city. His Valentine Boys Club in Bridgeport is one of the few boxing programs that simultaneously draw blacks, whites and Hispanics away from this town's meanest streets.

They get along famously. Maybe their togetherness began in the garage that Colonna first used as his training site. It certainly was solidified when the kids lost their training room at Valentine four years ago and worked together to erect a homemade gym in the club's dingy basement known as "the Dungeon."

The boys lost their boxing ring when Colonna almost lost his legs. The Italian-born trainer was shot in the side during a holdup and was off his feet for almost three months. Doctors feared he would never walk again.

Colonna proved them wrong. He walked into Valentine one day to discover his boxing site had been replaced by a playroom. Undaunted, he and his band of boys 14 to 16 years olds rented out a couple of dumpsters and proceeded to construct a gym from the ground up.

Colonna's patience and dedication is paying off. Fourteen of his fighters qualified for the Golden Gloves semifinals and at least



Sam Colonna tapes the hands of Anthony LaRosa, one of the teenagers who train at Colonna's Valentine Boys Club in Bridgeport. Tribune photo by Chris Walker

seven are headed for the finals March 23 at the Rosemont Horizon.

"I think I can change a lot of lives through this," Colonna said. His rewards are not financial; the 36 hours a week he puts in at the club are voluntary.

But money can't buy the feeling Colonna gets when former boxer Ozell Robinson calls weekly from prison in Ashland, Ky. Or the twice-a-month letters Colonna receives from another former boxer, Ricky Rivera, now in the Marines.

Rivera lived four doors down from Colonna and became his little shadow. He was a paper boy for the news agency Colonna owns, like many other Valentine boxers. Then, Rivera would tag along with Colonna to the gym, eventually learning how to fight.

"Ricky's mom used to call me and ask, 'Am I going to see my son today?'" Colonna recalled with a smile.

Rivera saved up his delivery money and put himself through St. Rita High School.

Johnny Lewis, 17, is an Irish kid who also began hanging around the Colonna household. Before long, he was an accomplished fighter. Lewis even accompanied Sam and his family on a vacation to the Wisconsin Dells three years ago.

That will make it all the tougher for Colonna to watch Lewis on

March 23. He and fellow Valentine boxer Joe Zapata, 22, will clash for the 112-pound title.

"They both feel bad," Colonna said. "They didn't want to have to fight each other. I'm going to sit back and I don't think I even want to watch this fight."

Colonna arrived in Bridgeport from Calabria, Italy, with his family at the age of 6 and grew into a fair boxer until surgery cut his career short. His little garage gym produced two Park District champions in 1981 and his career as a trainer was launched. Two of his fighters, Phil Scott and Ziggy Olague, have turned pro.

"I do all this out of a love for the sport and for the kids," he said. "I'm the type of guy who, once he starts something, he stays with it. I never had a trainer teach me, and that's why I'm so involved with these guys. It's something I couldn't do and I want them to have it."

Bridgeport's Pat Gironi, a successful member of the Board of Trade, buys equipment and pays transportation costs for the boxers. Community support is growing. More than 500 residents showed up at a recent club fund-raiser.

It's somehow fitting that Colonna work out of a club called Valentine. After all, much of his work comes straight from the heart.