

SPORTS

International Muay Thai kickboxing tournament in Phoenix on May 13-14 featured the Nation's members

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

YAN members excelled in a kickboxing tournament which was held at the Sheraton Crescent Hotel in mid-May where Camp Verde fighters took to the mats and showed their prowess in kickboxing.

This event drew over 300 competitors nationwide and some as far away as Puerto Rico and Europe.

Clifford and Pita Larson, husband-wife coaches who own the Larson Boxing and Fitness Center in Camp Verde have produced such fighters as Shayla Murdock (15 year old fighter) who went to Thailand last year with the Larson Gym. She is on her way to Des Moines, Iowa to compete against some of the best fighters in the sport.

Ms. Murdock garnered a championship during the recent event in Phoenix.

Other fighters at the Phoenix event



Shayla Murdock gives reassurance to Ruby Rocha



Larsons with Ruby Rocha.

included Ruby Rocha, wife of Buddy Rocha, Jr. who also trains at the Larson Gym in Camp Verde.

Unaffiliated with the Larson Gym, Adam Hines (although Hines and another brother, has been coached by Mr. Larson for a long time in the past),

son of Dawn Beauty, fought at this tournament.

The Larson Gym also has a cooperative training program for the Nation's Diabetes Program which is directed by Robin Hazelwood.

Larson Gym of Camp Verde participates in International Muay Thai Tournament

BY DON DECKER,
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Clifford and Pita Larson, husband and wife coach for kick boxing and 7 of their trainees attended a weekend kicking boxing tournament on May 20 & 21 at the Sheraton Crescent Hotel in north Phoenix.

This 2-day grueling tournament brought some of the best fighters from across the country and places such as Puerto Rico.

Over 400 kick boxers competed against one another by kicking each other with their bare feet, plummeting light weight boxing gloves into the body areas, the head and faces of opponents.

The more kicking and punching thrown against an opponent increases the scoring for points that determines the winner.

Take a walk down the corridor adjoining the main event area which features 2 boxing rings,

you can smell the penetrating balm that relaxes the muscles on the arms and legs. It has a distinct odor, sort of like the Bengay that grandma use to put on her tired muscles long ago.

The balm used generously and the overwhelming smell drifts out of the door way into the main hallway where it penetrates the rest of the area where fans are mingling with their fighters. In the main lobby, there are small recreational tents that serve as display for various products used by the fighters. This includes specialized trunks, bandaging tapes, specialty t-shirts, name-brand head gear and various other assorted items used in kick boxing.

Inside of the main event, there is seating for 200 hundred people in straight-back chairs that would break anybody's back. It is here where the boxers get their team's sup-

port from fellow-boxing friends or just plain jo's yelling at the top of their lungs, "On the head!", "Inside!, the inside!", "Now!,Now!" or other helpful hints to the fighters in the ring who are really oblivious to the shouting from outside of the ring.

What seems like an aggressive head-pounding, clenching and kicking of the body including the leg area and after the fight is concluded, each fighter goes to the opposite end of their corner to thank the coach and their fighter from the other side. There is even a ritual of sorts at the beginning of a round where some of the fighters perform a brief meditation in their own corner by cupping their hands in a prayerful stance and shut their eyes.

For 3 rounds of 2 minutes each, it's basically a free-for-all including body-slammng your opponent on the mat and landing a punch

anywhere above the belt. There are knock-outs in some cases and the referees closely monitor the fight with an immediate halt in the event of some unforeseen move by the boxers. There are extensive rules for kick boxing and each age category has their own time limits for the duration of the fight.

The Larsons, Clifford and Pita, are seasoned kick boxers and perhaps some people you do not want to ever mess with because they will make mincemeat out of you. Mr. Larson has won several national titles in his career before he retired. With their expertise, they can get a person in shape, make you lose pounds and most of all, shape you into a physically and emotionally fit person—with proper training. The Nation's diabetes program now has some of their clients enrolled in their training program with some astounding results. Of course, not a one of

them is ready for the Muay Thai tournament.

About the tournament, Mr. Larson says that, "It's good that Native Americans have become a part of the contest. It gives them (the fighters) someone to see and they see what others are doing. It inspires the younger kids, young adults and teenagers to get out and do their stuff. Any Native American can make it and they are just as good as any other group."

Dawn Beauty of Yavapai-Apache Nation and a mother of 6 children was at the kicking boxing event waiting with 3 of her younger children and older son, Avery Hines, a kickboxer, who was waiting for his brother, Adam Hines, an 8th grader at Camp Verde Middle School to enter the ring.

Avery is a 7th grader at the same school as his brother and is the grandson of the late Rozella Hines and he

follows the basic tenets of kickboxers: don't brag about yourself. He answers in simple answers, "Yes" and "No". Young Hines states that he is involved because "It's fun". Soon, his oldest brother will kick box inside of the exhibition hall.

Mrs. Beauty is employed by the Nation's casino and says that her salary pays for the \$200 entry fee for her son and that these expenses pay off in different ways. "It helps to motivate them, to shape them into adults and helps them with prioritizing," said Mrs. Beauty. The other benefits include the awareness of maintaining good grades as the stipulation for participating is to be in good academic standing.

Nation members participate in regional water conference

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

'The Verde River: State of the Watershed Conference.'

The stated goal of the workshop on May 10 was to "Bring together a broad network of partners, restoration practitioners, community members and all other river enthusiasts who have an interest in the health of the Verde River

Watershed'.

A morning tour of the Nation's lands was hosted by the Nation's Agriculture Resource Department under the direction of Yolanda Trujillo, manager of the Nation's farm/ranch.

This workshop consisted of visiting the Nation's water ditch that flows through Middle Verde.

Mrs. Trujillo arranged

for stops at the ditch below the administrative office in Middle Verde where several presenters spoke about the history of the ditch dating back to the turn of the century.

These representatives included Tribal Chairwoman Jane Russell-Winiecki, Chris Coder, the Nation's archeologist, Vincent Randall with the Nation's Apache cul-



Vincent Randall, Apache elder and long time resident of Verde Valley shares a historical perspective on water used on Yavapai-Apache Nation to visitors.

ture department, Greg Komrump Water Rights manager for SRP and Bill Moore from the Nation's Agriculture Resource Department, the Nation's EPA department with Vivian Stevens and Bob Kavanagh of the OK Ditch whose family has provided the Yavapai-Apache Nation community with water for over 75 years. Mr. Kavanagh

gave a historical overview of the water allocation and recalling the historical developments of how the OK Ditch has been managed over the years.

Other workshops participants visiting the Nation's land were interested parties from the surrounding areas such as Prescott Valley, Sedona, Gavasupai Nation, Gila River

Indian Community and Yavapai College with Linda Buchanan.

Mr. Randall spoke of the cultural connections to the water as there were many water users on the Nation's lands in the historic irrigation system that is 18 miles long and serving over 520 users in the Verde Valley with 1400 acres.



Bill Moore, (L) son of pioneer family who is employed with Agriculture Resource Department talks about the importance of water on Nation's lands.