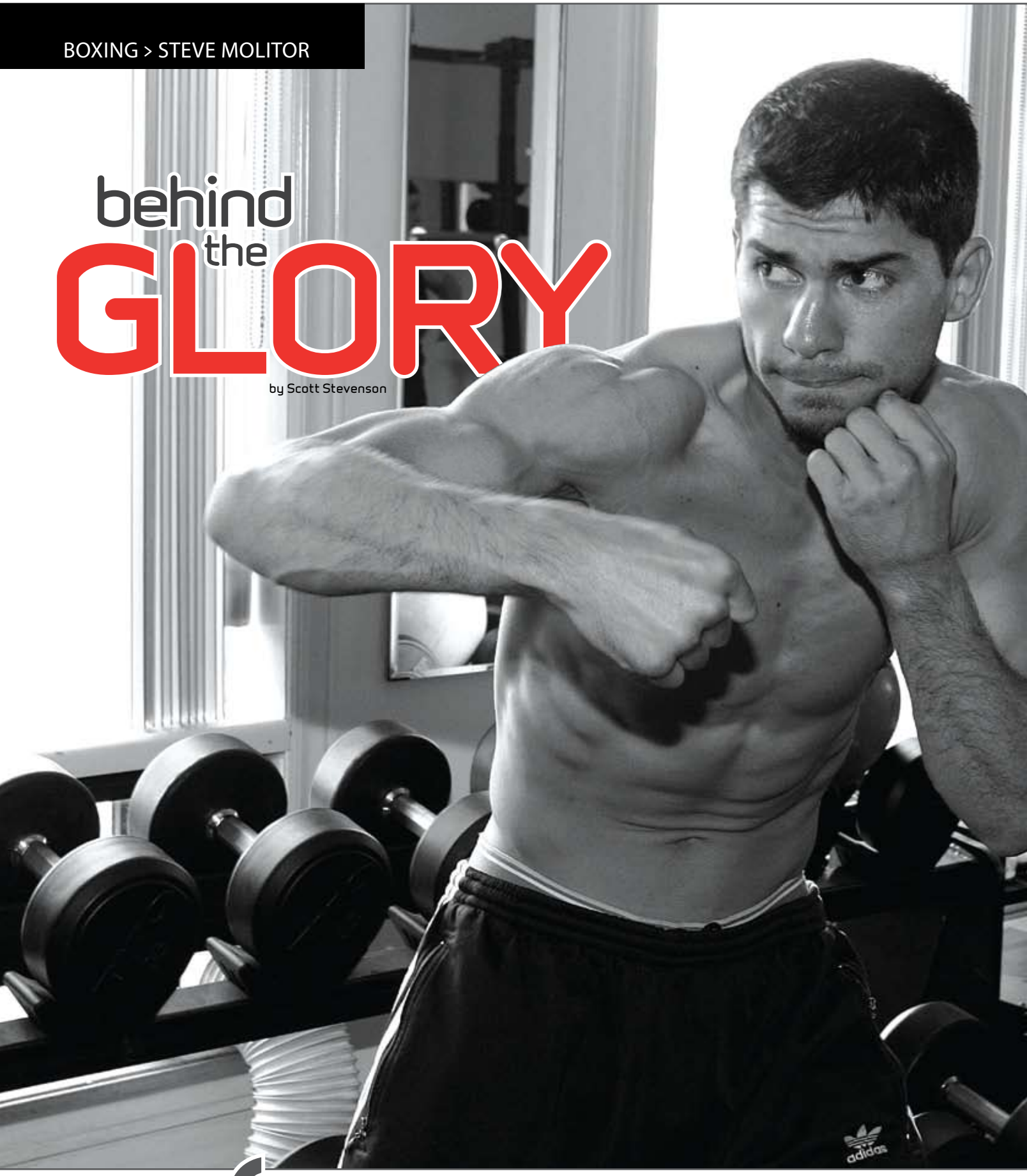
behind the GLORY

by Scott Stevenson



"I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN LOSE"

MOLITOR'S FAVOURITES

MOVIE: Heat

MUSIC: Hip hop and heavy metal. While training, Metallica and Linkin Park

PROFESSIONAL BOXER: Floyd Mayweather

TV SHOW: CSI: Miami

FOOD: (while training) Rice and vegetables (not training) Pizza

SPORT TO WATCH: Hockey and boxing

TEAM: Toronto Maple Leafs

All photos courtesy Richard Sibbald

Catch Steve in action Saturday, April 5, when he'll return to Casino Rama to defend his I.B.F Junior Featherweight Champion Title against Mexico's #1 ranked contender, Fernando Beltran Jr.

The fight will also be broadcast live, coast-to-coast, on TSN HD.

The fame, the money, the luxurious lifestyles and the glamour. When we look at the lives of celebrities, those are usually the aspects we focus on. But, what we don't see is the struggle it takes to make it big. The blood, sweat, sacrifice, and hard work.

LIFE BEHIND THE GLORY.

Eager to find out, CHILL™ sat down with undefeated boxing phenom, Steve "The Canadian Kid" Molitor, and found out what he had to do, to get where he is.

WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WANTED TO BE A BOXER?
The first day I sparred with my big brother and I got my butt whooped. I was bleeding everywhere, but I jumped on my bike to race home, and had a huge smile on my face. I woke up the next day and raced back to the gym and I knew right then, that I loved boxing.

WHEN WAS THE 'AHA' MOMENT, WHEN YOU SINCERELY BELIEVED YOU COULD BE THE CHAMP IN YOUR CLASS?
After I lost a fight. It was at the Pan American games and I just turned 19. My opponent was a 29-year-old Cuban, undefeated, Olympic bronze medalist, world champion, and the Cubans were renowned as the world's best amateurs. I lost a close decision on computer scoring 5-4, and everybody around me said it could just as easily have been called in my favour. I knew right then, 10 years younger than the world champion, far less ring exposure, and inferior training (my present trainers never had the international exposure I would need), that once I was given the tools to bring my game to the next level, I would absolutely be the best in the business.

WHEN WAS THE FIRST MOMENT SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOURSELF POSSESSED THE EXACT SAME BELIEF? WHO WAS IT?
My brother. Even when he was kicking the crap out of me in the gym, he could never put me down. He couldn't believe my perseverance and told me I was a fighter who never understood the word "quit".

DID YOU EVER WANT TO QUIT?
Oh yeah, there were a lot of times I wanted to quit. It's a hard life, and the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel never seemed to shine. Following in the footsteps of my brother who was continuously in the limelight was tough, and success in this game is very distant. Sleep-eat-train-pain, sleep-eat-train-pain, that is my life in a nutshell. I think the >>>

CHECK OUT THE FULL INTERVIEW WITH STEVE MOLITOR EXCLUSIVELY AT **CHILLONLINE.CA**

Team Molitor celebrate the latest victory. Left to Right - Marty Smits, Chris Smits, unknown, Steve Molitor, Lenny de Jesus, Chris Johnson and Allen Trembly.

lifestyle professional boxers are required to live and the daily pain (physical and mental) they are required to absorb, is what creates the rage. It makes them mad and drives them to win at all costs. I knew all of the hard work would pay off eventually, but like wl said, it's a hard life.

DO YOU FIGHT FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE, OR IS IT ALWAYS FOR YOURSELF?

It changes. Five years ago I had five close friends, and I still have the same five friends. I fought for my family and them. Today there are obviously more Steve Molitor fans and friends, but the people that I can trust my life with today, are the same people I trusted my life with five years ago. But most of all it's for my family. I take pride in watching them reap the benefits of my success today and that is who I fight for. My brother dedicated a large part of himself to my success and I love to win for him.

Rumour has it, Tyson went to a city for a few days, **bought a Lamborghini,** then left the **car there when it was time to fly home.**

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS A TRUE FIGHTER MUST POSSESS?

It's a mentality. I would rather die than lose! Ask my trainer, my stepson, anybody who knows me. Losing makes me sick! The word 'lose' is forbidden, in my household. If you ask my 6-year-old stepson what lose means, he would say 'lose?' We don't understand that word, that is Chinese, and we don't speak Chinese in our house.

My father ran a disciplined household, and my training philosophy naturally stemmed from that. When I lived in Sarnia, five days a week, I would run everyday before school, come home, then do my homework. When I came to Toronto that was nothing, it all intensified. If you ask me, that is one of the reasons Canadian amateur boxing doesn't enjoy the success it should; because the kids of today don't put in the work, and that is the only way a boxer will develop superior stamina. Today training is more or less 24/7. When I am not training physically I have to train mentally. There's never down time. I'm constantly rehearsing my opponent's strategy even when vegging in front of the T.V. If he does this, I'll do that. The thinking never stops, the training is my life. What often looks like a glamorous life is a very hard life, full of sacrifice.

BETWEEN FIGHTS, AFTER A FIGHT, WHAT IS THE REGIMEN?

It depends on the timing of my last and next fight. There are a couple of advantages to spacing your fights closer together, for example, you retain a lot of the training residue from your previous fight, and don't have to go full tilt as quickly as if you spaced your fights out more. After a fight though, I usually take two weeks off and live on junk food. McDonald's three times a day and a late night Wendy's run to cap it off. It makes people sick to watch me eat in this two week period, but after months of sacrifice, I need to do it. Then it's back to business.

WHAT DOES 'BACK TO BUSINESS' MEAN?

Six days a week of 10K runs, starting at 7 a.m. at the Y.M.C.A. Once I finish running, I do a lot of stairs and then round out the endurance routine with swimming. Then we proceed to medicine ball work, and end with the heavy bag. After that routine I head home for breakfast and a nap and then put in 3-4 hours of boxing at the gym. On Tuesdays and Thursdays I head downtown to work with the Smits brothers who are highly regarded kinesiologists, and tailor my strength training. This is extremely tough work. On my day off (Sunday), I'll go for a long 15K run and then chill before the weekly routine starts again.

WHAT ABOUT THE MENTAL TRAINING?

It's 24/7. I'm always thinking, forever anticipating my opponents every move. I never stop training mentally, whether I'm walking the streets, picking up groceries, whatever, it's crazy. It's really hard to go the gym everyday and possess the killer instinct, and learn to hate, and then come home to a civil life with my wife and stepson. It's a fine line to be a pro athlete and put it all on the line, especially when you realize, with one wrong move, it could all be over. It's also hard to have friends, because the attitude you need to maintain to stay sharp and keep the edge, and the grueling schedule prohibits you from having a beer with the boys or a night out at a club.

WHAT IS SPECIFIC ABOUT YOUR DIET?

Lots and lots of protein. It's extremely important. For example, I drink a bottle of E3 Live everyday, which is like algae. (Passes the bottle around - all three CHILL™ team members collectively gag). It helps build your

> MY HANDS GET SO SORE, SOMEDAYS I CAN'T PLAY WITH MY STEPSON, JETLEY.

immune system, which is under constant pressure from the continuous strain of training. They give it to people with AIDS to help boost their immune systems. Protein shakes, etc. to aid in the reparation of my muscles which are trained to exhaustion each day. I don't need to bulk up, so my diet is highly focused on proteins and lots of organics.

I UNDERSTAND YOU WERE TOO KIND AT ONE STAGE AND WERE INVITED TO TRAIN WITH ERIC MORALES IN MEXICO IN VERY AUSTERE CONDITIONS. APPARENTLY IT WAS A WAKE UP CALL, DESIGNED TO TEACH YOU TO HATE IN THE RING. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THAT?

That isn't exactly true. They actually brought me to Mexico for their benefit, as Eric's next opponent was a southpaw with a similar style to mine. But I did learn a lot about what it took to win at the next level, and learned what it was like to have absolutely nothing. I've travelled to very poor nations and witnessed fighters fighting for bread and water. This was the same experience, and I lived it and I did come out far more prepared as a fighter. Truth be told, the accommodations they provided, although pretty minimal, were a step up from where I was living. I lived above two rings in a boxing gym for two and a half years, and could never sleep in, even if I wanted to, as there were at least 20 boxers training from dawn to dusk. My room was around 50 square-feet with a bed, a window, a little desk with a lamp, and my hockey bag full of my clothes. That's it. I drive by that old gym which is now a shoe factory, just to remind myself where I came from. Looking back, my life as a professional boxer was pretty horrible at the beginning. I had no money, took the subway to my part time job at Casey's, and had to shower in a boxing gym everyday. It was embarrassing; I couldn't even afford a haircut.

WOULD YOU TRADE THOSE TOUGH TIMES FOR A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE?

Absolutely not. That period helped define me and was obviously part of the grand plan.

SUMMING UP ALL THE SACRIFICES, WHAT STANDS OUT THE MOST?

All of them, really. You have to miss a lot of life, miss all the parties, graduations, going to school, giving up hockey, friendships, travelling in meek conditions to fight. I'm not complaining. I've been fortunate to experience success, especially seeing kids I trained with, who've made the exact same sacrifices but are trying to scrape together a living today, and are nearing the downturn in their careers.

SHAWN O'SULLIVAN, MUHAMMAD ALI, JOE FRAZIER AND A LITANY OF OTHER BOXERS, SUFFER FROM DIFFERENT FORMS OF HEAD TRAUMA. HOW DOES IT HAPPEN, AND DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO AVOID THAT?

Poor management, bad investments, and holding on far too long. Even a guy like Mike Tyson who made $540 million, although not punch drunk, lost everything. Now he is an old man, and still tries to get back in the ring, even though he has no speed and lost his timing, he has to do it to simply survive. It's sad. Boxing is full of deceit and that's why it is important to understand out of the gate who has your best interests at heart. Tyson would enter a ring with hoards of people who all had their hands out. Rumour has it, Tyson went to a city for a few days, bought a Lamborghini, then left the car there when it was time to fly home. Foolish. But it's stupid decisions like that, that create the fall.

GOLDEN BOY (OSCAR DE LA HOYA) AMONGST OTHERS MANAGED TO REMAIN UNSCATHED AND REMAINS IN THE LIMELIGHT. HOW DO YOU THINK HE WAS DIFFERENT?

He's a smart guy. Brings the right people around him, and in this business it's all about the people you have around you. He also manages his time and leads a smart lifestyle.

When the time comes that I know I cannot compete with the young guys, I will walk. Making a few more bucks at the expense of my health is a bad decision.

WHAT DOES BEING CANADIAN MEAN TO STEVE MOLITOR?

It means everything! I was born and bred Canadian, and take considerable pride in the red and white, and being able to represent and promote our great country every time I step in the ring.

WHAT MAKES YOU CRY AND/OR ANGRY, AND ARE THESE THE MOMENTS THAT YOU DRAW ON WHEN ULTIMATELY NECESSARY?

Basically the fact that my brother is not here with me on a day to day basis. (His brother, Jeremy Molitor, Commonwealth Games gold medalist, and seven-time amateur boxing champion is currently incarcerated). It makes me cry and it makes me angry. I use this situation to motivate me every round.

HOW DOES STEVE MOLITOR CHILL?

I eat a lot of junk food, stay up late, have a few drinks, watch the Leafs, go to the movies and get tattoos. I plan on taking a vacation soon, probably take my family to Florida.

RECORD TO DATE

WINS 25
KOS 10
LOST 0
DRAW 0
NC 0
ND 0

WEIGHING IN...

Birthdate: April 04, 1980
Birthplace: Sarnia
Hometown: Mississauga
Division: Super-Bantamweight
Weight: 122 lbs
Height: 5 ft 7 in
Reach: 68 in
Style: Southpaw