



SUN-TIMES/Phil Velasquez

Boxing trainer Arthur Moore with his charges at Fuller Park.

Boxing trainer offers kids a chance at bruised glory

Boxing trainer Arthur Moore survives in a world of broken bones and busted hopes—where life is constantly on the mend and a split decision is always called in the other guy's favor.

If only the fight game were run by Robert's Rules of Order, Moore figures he would be a millionaire. And the kids he has trained would be world champions.

But the South Side ain't Hollywood; boxing ain't croquet, and Moore ain't Rocky.

So at 66, all he can do is sell bruised glory to youngsters hungry for a chance. Thrown in the deal are discipline, self-respect and maybe a ticket out of the ghetto.

"I'm sitting on a black gold mine," said Moore at Fuller Park, his place of boxing business. "There's a lot of young talent here waiting to be developed. Not everyone can be a champion. But everyone can be a winner."

The renovated park is a haven from the insanity of the streets and the projects, and it offers one of the city's most comprehensive boxing programs.

The quality of boxing is so good, in fact, that even white, suburban kids make the trek to 45th and the Dan Ryan. The place has "good vibes."

Mike Joyce, son of state Sen. Jeremiah Joyce, uses Moore as his corner man. "He's a great guy," said Joyce, a three-year Fuller Park veteran. "He's the best. That's why I come here."

In Laurel, Miss., where he was born into what he calls the "semi-slavery" of the deep South, Moore read stories about heavyweight champion Joe Louis that fueled his imagination and encouraged his escape to Chicago in 1941, where he sought boxing legend Larry Amadee.

Moore tried to make a go of it as a fighter, but soon discovered that his tal-

ent lay in developing the savvy of the ring in others.

"Amadee was the greatest trainer of them all," said Moore. "He taught me everything I know." But Amadee didn't teach him how to survive in Chicago's savage boxing scene, where Moore sorely needed an MBA—a master's degree in boxing administration.

NEIGHBORS



John Stebbins

"I had so many prospects, but lost them. I didn't have contracts on my fighters," Moore lamented. "People with a line to tell and bull to sell would steal my boxers. But they didn't handle them right."

There was one who was almost as good as Marvelous Marvin Hagler. His fists were lightning lethal, his moves like quick silver.

But the mercurial kid was lured away from Moore a few years ago with promises of sure money and easy fame. He wasn't ready for the 15 brutal fights that would tear into his

body.

A detached retina ended his boxing career.

"He has one eye and can't fight. He comes to the gym, but he's all used up at 27," Moore said. "He bums around. He could have made \$30 million."

There are now four boxers in Moore's stable. His hopes ride on their talent. He says he will donate his winnings to promote more youth programs.

When Moore walks through Fuller Park, little kids run up, their hands outstretched. They know he's an easy touch for a quarter. Retired from a factory job, Moore earns money for his boxers by selling candy in the projects.

Boxing has been called the sweet science, an ancient art, a violent ballet. For Arthur Moore, the science, the violence and the artistry come down to one thing: "I love all my fighters."

There's a ring of truth to what he says.