

# Four fistfuls of hatred

MARK  
BONOKOSKI



They grew up in this metropolis on opposite sides of the track; one filthy rich, the other dirt poor.

There was only one common aspect to their lives. They both learned how their fists worked, out in the Street – in parking lots and teen hangouts.

North York had **Ricky PaPa**, the son of Richie PaPa, a wealthy industrial contractor who turned a hobby into another success story with such stakes winning horse as Don't Be Shy.

**Ricky PaPa** – educated in private schools, a successful businessman at 26, dressed in a sports jacket, well-creased strides and expensive shoes.

The west-end had Leo Marsh now 28, one of nine children from his late father's three marriages.

Leo Marsh – his arms tattooed with the names of old girlfriends, educated to the level of Grade 9, work boots, old jeans, a T-shirt and a peaked cap.



## RICH KID Ricky PaPa fights for kicks

Three brothers took to the boxing ring like magnets take to steel and Leo Marsh led the way. The law knew where they lived on Old Weston Road and occasionally a yellow cruiser could be spotted at the curb outside. Those days, however, appear to be gone, as gone now as their widowed stepmother who found a new love and

new home in Chicago. For a living, Leo repairs washers and dryers and, now that his stepmother has left, he raises his 15-year-old brother, Medrick(Sugar) Marsh, as best he can with his \$270-a-week take home pay.

As Leo Marsh said about **Ricky PaPa**: "He really don't even have to work anymore, I do."

Tomorrow night at St. Lawrence Market, Leo Marsh and **Ricky PaPa** will step into a boxing ring and face each other for the first time.

Marsh has a well seeded hatred of **Ricky PaPa**, a hatred that goes beyond the socio-economic.

As Marsh put it yesterday from his training head-quarters at the Lansdowne Gym: "If this wasn't business, I'd fight him for nuthin."

The seed was planted back in 1975 when both Marsh and **PaPa** were vying for a shot at the Olympics. Marsh had to fight a kid named Dave Evans and, after three rounds of pure heat, Evans got the decision and a shot at **PaPa**.

At this point in the game Leo Marsh's father – who would be dead within a year – challenged **PaPa**'s father to put up whatever money he wanted – his son versus **PaPa**'s boy.

"We don't fight losers!" replied Richie PaPa. In the next match, **Ricky PaPa**, like Leo Marsh, lost a decision to Dave Evans.

"We're both losers now," Leo Sr., apparently yelled in the direction of Richie PaPa. "Let's have our boys go at it. Let's fight!"

It was two years, however, before **Ricky PaPa** and Leo Marsh signed on the dotted line. Both were pros now – **PaPa** fighting for the love of it: Marsh for the money.

The fight never came off. Two weeks before the scheduled match, **PaPa** begged off with an injured jaw and Marsh went on to fight, and lose to Canadian junior welterweight champion Nicky Furlano – his friend and neighbor. "I don't hold any grudge," **PaPa** said yesterday. "But, if Leo feels there is, then call it a grudge match. I fight for the high I get. It's a hobby."

"Tough is tough. It doesn't matter who the opponent is. It takes a lot of guts for any man just to step inside a boxing ring."

There is \$800 in tomorrow's fight for Leo Marsh and \$500 for **PaPa**. For Marsh, it represents a couple of month's rent. For **PaPa**, it may seem like little more than pocket money.

"I retired a year ago," said Marsh "I didn't want to fight in the first place. I didn't want it, that is until I heard the name of the opponent.

"It's my last shot, a chance to finally walk away from the ring and look back and see **Ricky PaPa** lying on the canvas."



POOR KID Leo Marsh fights for the cash