FCP Warriors Quest

submitted by Mark Daniels Sr., FCP Boxing Club

On Aug. 19, 2013, the FCP boxing club began its Warrior’s quest by enduring a two-week training camp in preparation for a two-stage competition. Two straight weekends of competition. The first stage, slated for Sept. 1, just being a warm up, one-day club show hosted by Gust Boxing Club in Marshfield, Wis. That would lead up to the three-day weekend tournament (Sept. 6-8) being held at the Indian Summerfest in Milwaukee the following weekend.

The training camp was on site at the FCP boxing gym. The Warriors were requested to eat, sleep and train on site. All of today’s technologies, communications, etc., along with any other distractions were to be checked at the door. The Warriors were disciplined to wake up at 6:45 a.m. to begin the 7 a.m. training session each morning, which consisted of an hour to an hour and a half of practice prior to breakfast being served at 8 a.m. with lunch being served at noon. The second session of training began at 4 p.m. sharp and lasted until 6 p.m. when dinner was served. Lights were out by 10 p.m. each night. That was the regimen we lived by for those two weeks.

On Sept. 1, 2013, the FCP boxing club set out to begin the first stage of its Warrior’s quest. We left the gym at 4:30 a.m. to make weigh-ins at noon. We were scheduled and pre-matched to compete at the Marshfield State Fair Grounds at the ice arena. The bouts were scheduled to kick off at 5 p.m.

Marcus was scheduled first at bout number eight against 22-year-old Neil Stahl of the Gust club. Marcus had a very strong opponent in Neil as he felt his power immediately in the very first round. Neil would fire a basic one-two combo on Marcus to start out with. Marcus would fire combinations of his own in retaliation and continue trying to walk Neil down. However, Neil proved to be a bit elusive at times for Marcus to mount much of an offense.

The second round was pretty much the same; however, Neil fired a little flurry that Marcus was not able to respond to in time before the referee decided to step in to count a standing eight on Marcus. Marcus then tried to nullify the standing eight by going after Neil; however, the second round had come to an end. The first two rounds could have easily gone another way; the fight was that close.

The third and final round, Marcus knew he had to apply pressure the whole round. Marcus delivered many different combinations on Neil this final round, sending Neil in retreat mode most of the round. Marcus delivered a nice left hook to the body that caused Neil to buckle in pain as he turned away from Marcus, causing the referee to draw a standing eight count on Neil. That gave Neil the opportunity to recover just enough to hold on until the end of the round and bout.

I, myself, had believed Marcus had done enough to get the W. Unfortunately, the judges saw it differently and awarded Neil the win. Neil himself, confided he apologized to his corner and told them he tried, but knew he lost. Unfortunately, that’s just the name of the game, and when left up to the judges, the right call isn’t always made. Although Marcus was a little devastated by the loss, considering the sacrifices he and his team endured the past two weeks, he recovered his focus quickly and knew the real test would be at the Indian Summerfest the next weekend. Marcus is definitely a true warrior. Great attitude, great resiliency to bounce back, great focus, determination, and dedication to himself and his teammates. Great job!

William Alloway was already pre-matched for this event; however, for whatever reasons, his opponent was reported as a no-show. William’s match was scratched for this event.

Mark Jr. was scheduled to compete in the twelfth match against Mike Thunder out of the Wisconsin Rapids Boxing Club. Mike is a very well-known veteran of amateur boxing and is known to have been in some very tough battles. I informed Jr. he would need to be completely focused with no distractions and this fight would go his favor. However, losing focus for even a moment, Mike has the experience to capitalize on any mistakes.

This evening definitely proved to be a night Jr. would be clicking on all cylinders. The focus was on, the discipline was on, speed, conditioning, everything was humming up perfectly for him. A completely focused Jr. without distraction, confusion or excuses, is truly like watching an artist’s passion flow so fluidly, so gracefully, so masterfully as he authored his own version of this artistry. Although, Jr. wasn’t taking very many shots from Mike, Mike definitely proved to be a very strong and intelligent boxer as he did get inside and land a couple of good shots on Jr. that almost caused him to lose focus and want to retaliate. But Jr. was able to regain his composure and stay in the moment. He continued to out box Mike and fought a very intelligent smart fight to the end.

A relaxed-in-the-moment style had not only earned him the win, but he was also named the outstanding boxer of the evening. Congratulations Warriors!

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Courtney long weekend it was! The FCP club journeyed to Milwaukee on Thursday evening where we stayed at the Clarion hotel near the airport. We had to make weigh-ins at 9 a.m. on Friday morning, which was held at the Clarion. That evening, at the Summerfest grounds, the temperature was in the 80s, so we knew it would be a hot one under the canopy tent. Both Marcus and Mark Jr. received first round byes the first evening. William did have a Senior Open Division Championship match on the very first night against a United Community Center (UCC) super heavyweight named John Luna. John had the height, reach and weight advantage on William. We also later discovered John had the experience advantage as well. Apparently, Mr. Luna was a four-time national champion, an international champion, a junior Olympic champion and a golden gloves champion. That is what we knew of anyway.

William and John were the fourth bout of the evening and both would begin the round feeling each other out, working the jab and then combos to the body. John would dig to the body with the left hook attempting to land that devastating liver shot, but William caught on to that and defended against it nicely. William would attack up the middle with flurries and nice uppercuts that would get John’s attention. William’s relenting offense would cause John to get on his bicycle and retreat to the ropes where he would utilize the entire ring by circling William as he would use the stick and move style. William would walk him down and catch him along the ropes at times; however, William fought cautiously so as not to walk into anything unnecessarily. William admitted he had fought John too cautiously, giving John too much respect. We were very proud and quite pleased with William’s efforts as he represented himself, his club, and his community with great pride and honor. The match was very close and could have gone either way. Unfortunately, the judges awarded the contest to John Luna, giving William his first defeat of his amateur career. So many bystanders and boxing enthusiasts and coaches were also very impressed with William’s performance considering John’s background in the amateurs.

The discipline of these young warriors is so admirable as a coach to watch them rebound and accept defeat so graciously, knowing they will only strive to keep reaching to better themselves. That is what it’s all about for this team, to represent themselves, their teammates, and their community - to have that desire to achieve their goals and dreams in reaching their potential. They know even in defeat, there are lessons learned, which in turn, help them to progress in their craft. True professionals!

On Saturday, the boys had a day off as they advanced to the finals. Sunday, Marcus Daniels was declared the unopposed 178#, 17-18-year-old Novice Champion. Mark Daniels Jr. was scheduled for a championship match in the fourth bout of the day versus Owen Torres of the UCC boxing club.

Both Mark Jr. and Owen started out the first round feeling each other out - gauging distance, speed, power, and reaction. Jr. immediately felt comfortable and began imposing his game plan on Owen by utilizing his speed and quickness, almost pot shutting Owen at will. Soon, Owen was bleeding from the nose by the second round. Owen was very determined in trying to turn the fight in his favor, but he was unsuccessful as Jr. would continue to have his way with him. Between rounds, we sensed Jr. could end the match at any time he wanted to set down on his power shots. By the end of the second round, the valiant Owen was quickly fading.

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The FCP Boxing Team (l-r): Brian Shepard, Richard Allen (Lac du Flambeau teammate), Marcus Daniels, William Alloway, Mark Daniels Jr., Mark Daniels Sr. The boxing team (l-r) Mark Daniels Jr., Mark Daniels Sr., Marcus Daniels and William pose with FCP tribal member Michael Armstrong.
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In the third round, we sensed Mr. Torres was ready to go, and we instruct ed Jr. to go for it now in the middle of the final round. Jr. did go for it and Owen’s corner threw in the towel indicating they’d seen enough and wanted to protect Owen from any further unnecessary injury. Mark Jr. was declared the 165# Senior Open Division Champion. Congratulations champs!

Marcus was able to get a non-title match in which he sparred with Lac du Flambeau’s Richard Allen. This would prove to be a good match as they both knew each other very well in the ring as prior sparring partners. Both Marcus and Richard understood and respected one another as friends and sparring partners, but once in the ring, they would both be going for the win.

The match went the distance with neither giving ground and both going for the win. Both fighters definitely gave as well as they received, and they both had the battle wounds to share with one another after all was said and done. Although it was a fairly even match, the edge and win went to Richard in the end, but both had tremendous respect for one another afterwards as well. Great match - very proud of both their warrior performances. They both represented themselves, their clubs and their tribes respectfully!

The main event had William Alloway also getting a rematch with John Luna. William was excited to get the opportunity to avenge his first and only loss so quickly, that we jumped at the opportunity. We had already discussed what adjustments we would need to execute. We also discussed William not giving Mr. Luna too much respect this time around and to take the fight right to him, being more aggressive in his offense. William did exactly everything he needed to do; however, Mr. Luna and his corner had also made adjustments, which kept the match fairly evenly close yet once again. Once again, the match was close enough to go either way, and once again, it was no mystery: UCC was the local favorite. So, it wasn’t surprising that the win had been awarded to John Luna yet again. Both matches between the two were definitely crowd pleasers and definitely memorable to the fans, as you could see the progress in both fighters’ adjustments from one fight to the other.

As far as our team is concerned, all three are champions of native pride. We brought all three back as our champions. We sacrificed together, we bled, sweated and left everything in the ring together like the warriors we are disciplined to be. So our pride, our honor, our respect for our fellow boxers in amateur boxing is still intact.

The tournament had come to an end on Sunday and we had begun our journey home at 5:30 p.m. On our route home, we detoured off into Green Bay where we had arrived at 7:30 p.m. to visit the Armstrong family in the hospital - to share our champion warriors’ celebration with our family, friend, and Potawatomi tribal member, Michael Armstrong Sr. It was so encouraging to know how much he appreciated the team taking the time to share our success with him and his family. It was an honor and a pleasure.

It was also an honor and a pleasure to represent you, the Potawatomi tribe. We thank all those who have taken the time to stop in and show your support to your team. Many, many MeGwetches to you all.

On behalf of the FCP Boxing Club, I would also like to express our team appreciation to the FCP executive council for making this all possible in giving us the opportunity to represent our tribe in successfully achieving our goals. Many, many MeGwetches to the council.

We have also received additional invitations in Wisconsin Rapids, Racine and Milwaukee in the upcoming months. We’re waiting to receive details, and I will try and keep you all posted. Thank you for your support. We hope to continue representing you proudly!