Boxing's unlikely to ever be what it was in its heyday – too much extreme-sport competition. Dave Mirra's this era's Ray Robinson.

Nothing's forever: the dinosaurs learned that. The writing's been on the wall for decades. But boxing hangs in like a fighter on the ropes.

All the P.T. Barnums have razzle-dazzled'em to lure the gym rats back: Ring walks to rival Caesar's entrance, more fireworks than a Great White concert, pole dancers shimmying round cards, fighters costumed for Mardi Gras, cornermen in paintball camo, and the Star Spangled Banner tortured beyond recognition, but still boxing gets shunted aside by the X-Games and badminton. More and more The Sweet Science is a Victrola in an MP3 age.

Promoters don't get it. It's not about the glitz to glue the lost generation to the TV. That's only an adrenaline rush. The candle burns the brightest just before it goes out.

Like the little ol' lady demanded in the hamburger commercial: "Where's the beef?"

Boxing survives – and always will -- because its values are as old school as black-'n'-white trunks: character and pain -- as heroic as a man taking care of his family – just not too sexy.

The torchbearer has to have it in his blood.

I ran across that guy by chance one afternoon with my videographer, Jim Edwards, killing time before shooting some sparring and interviews at the La Brea Gym in Los Angeles.

He was about 40, sweating against the far wall, sandwiched between two others, drumming on a speed bag. He continued hitting the bag, answering how he felt about boxing. The impact of what he said -- how he said it -- didn't strike me until I saw the footage in the editing room.

It was mesmerizing – as many times as I viewed it. He was the embodiment of what it means to be a boxing fan. His spirit – not lasers and smoke -- will keep the sport alive. Watching him search for words adequate enough to express the depth of his feeling for the sport, the life lessons, the discipline, the sacrifices, and the men who proved themselves – all to the drumfire of the bag -- was as iconic as Ali standing over Liston.

He flubbed some boxers' names, to be sure, but there's no mistaking where his heart is, and he couldn't have said it more eloquently.

He agreed to let me show this. (didn't get his name; it was so spur of the moment, and I've not seen him since) I hope someone brings it to his attention.

So, for all of you that get chills at "LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE!" click here

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Radam G says:

Hey Editor Mike! The dinosaurs havn't gone anywhere. Didn't you see it on "60 Minutes" a week or two ago. The great minds say that nowadays birds are truthfully dinosaurs. Boxing came around with the dinosaurs. Neither will be extinct. Holla!