Written by Ralph Gonzalez
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Sometimes a song sums it all up for a person. For 17 year old Javier Molina, it's Mexico's Frank Sinatra, Vicente Fernandez, who spells it out for him in one of his classic mariachi songs. "No Me Se Rajar!" (I Don't Know How to Back Down) is a tune that reflects the macho culture that prevails in Mexico.

"I like that song. It talks about never quitting, never giving in," said Molina before receiving a special commendation from the city of Commerce, CA. "That's my attitude inside the ring. I have no quit in me."

It's exactly that frame of mind that got the seventeen year old where he is. The Commerce kid just earned the privilege of representing the United States in the 2008 Olympics set to take place in Shanghai, China in the 141 (light welterweight) class. Molina won the Olympic trials held in Houston, Texas this past August 25th. He sports an impressive amateur record of 111 wins against 12 losses.

"I knew he had that special something when he first walked into the ring. Sometimes you can tell right away," said trainer Roberto Luna. Molina walked into the Commerce Boxing Club at the age of nine with his twin brother Oscar. "He always had the mentality of a winner. He and his brothers always showed great ability."

It seems that boxing is encrypted into the DNA of the Molina family. The father, Miguel, was a pro in Mexico with two fights in his short career. Javier's older brother, Carlos, is a highly regarded prospect with a 2-0 record. Luna co-manages Carlos along with Israel Vazquez's manager Frank Espinoza. Javier's twin brother, Oscar, is also a highly touted amateur who reached the nationals as a 152 pounder. "We're going to try Oscar out for the Mexican national team," said Luna.

Molina discovered the importance of mental toughness at an early age. "I always trained real hard physically and mentally. I fight with a lot of confidence," said Molina. "When I'm in the ring, I don't think of anybody as better than me. When I get in there I don't think about getting tired or anything negative. I block everything out. I'm really focused."

Luna is confident that Molina will bring back the gold from China. "I may be a little biased but in my opinion I think I have the next gold medalist," beams Luna. "He's still young, so when the Olympics come around, he'll be eighteen and he'll be much stronger. He still hasn't reached his physical peak."

Luna has a pretty decent amateur pedigree himself having fought for the U.S. Army. "I had about forty fights as a light welterweight. I think I would've been a great pro," said Luna. "I didn't turn pro because ultimately it wasn't my calling. I just feel fortunate to be in the position I am with the fighters I have."

Luna has been a part of Molina's life for so long that they consider each other family. "We're real close. Whatever we needed inside or outside the ring, he's been there for us," said Molina. "We have a real bond."

"After being with these kids for so long, it's a family type of situation," confirms Luna. "I attend family functions and I try to be available as much as possible."

Going for the gold in Shanghai is what Luna and Molina have been working for. "It's a dream come true for me as a trainer and him as a boxer. To represent the US in the Olympics is a tremendous accomplishment," said Luna. "It's a trainer's dream to have a fighter with such a strong work ethic and determination."

Molina is also an accomplished student. He currently attends John Glenn High School in Norwalk, California where he's maintaining a 3.8 grade point average in mostly honors classes. "I plan to attend U.C.L.A. when I graduate high school," said Molina. "I'm not sure what my major will be yet."

Luna believes Molina is destined for success regardless of what field he chooses. "He's very intellectual and humble," said Luna. "He's going to be a great role model. Whatever he decides to do in life, he's going to make it."

For now, Molina concentrates on his lofty goals. "To win the gold medal, go pro and be a world champion," said Molina.

Luna believes that the Molina brothers all show an uncanny ability to improvise in the ring which will ultimately lead to their success. "They're very versatile. They're boxer-punchers and they can bang when they want to," said Luna. "They can outbang or outbox their opponents."

But it's Javier Molina's mental toughness that always stood out for Luna. "He was about ten years old and we were at a tournament where you have to win several fights. Once you lose, you're eliminated," remembers Luna. "His father bought him a new outfit to wear inside the ring and he was wearing his old outfit. I asked why. He looked at me and said I'm going to wear the new one in the finals. It just goes to show you he's always had a winner's mentality. He felt no one could beat him and ultimately he showed it."

"The Molina kids have proven that if you really dedicate yourself, great things will happen to you," said Luna. "I believe we'll be bringing home the gold, I believe it and most importantly, Javier believes it."