Tim Bradley knows the best way to stay hungry. To do that, you have to live like you still are. For a prizefighter, that really isn't all that difficult these days.

Once there was a time when winning a world championship would insure that you would be anything but hungry. You would be busy boxing and well paid for your efforts, two things that these days are guaranteed for only a handful of fighters.

For the rest, boxing remains the toughest of hustles. It is a sport that demands much and gives back little except for stolen moments of glory that money cannot buy and not even the IRS can take back from you after the title belts are gone and the battles are over.

Bradley had such a moment on May 10, 2008 when he upset then WBC champion Junior Witter in Nottingham, England, Witter's hometown. That night Bradley had to flatten Witter in the sixth round at Nottingham Arena and dominate him the rest of the night merely to escape the U.K. with a split decision. But he got it and the world title he'd thought about since he first walked into a gym back home in Palm Springs 15 years ago.

Yet at 25, Bradley is still waiting for the fight that changes his life. He didn't get rich becoming a world champion that night. He just got the chance to remain what he says he'll always be in the ring – hungry.

But Bradley did leave with 25 per cent of the 140-pound world title and a chance to live his dream. He retained both in his first title defense, a win over Edner Cherry in September, but still the money did not come, so he is back at it again this weekend against a far more dangerous opponent.

When Bradley steps into the ring at the Bell Center in Montreal Saturday night he will be facing one of the hardest puncher's in the division, WBO champion Kendall Holt. For one of them, a victory will bring with it the hope he might soon land a big money showdown with the winner of the Manny Pacquiao-Ricky Hatton fight May 2 in Las Vegas, the theory being that Pacquiao or Hatton might fancy the idea of winning the bulk of the four major titles in one night.

Yet even if that happens, Bradley insists he will never be anything but the hungry 10-year-old kid from the California desert who first decided boxing would be his escape route long before he understood it was the most uphill road to glory in sports.

"I live like a poor man,'' Bradley (23-0, 11 KO) said. "I don't have rims on my car. I don't have a lot of jewelry except for the world championship ring Gary (Shaw, his promoter) bought me.

"Staying hungry is really easy. I don't have a big entourage to hype me up or blow me up. I stay hungry, level and grounded. I set goals for myself.''

The latest one is to beat Holt the only way anyone has – which is to send him to the floor and leave him there. Dangerous task but, as past history has shown Bradley, doable.

“At the first press conference (in Montreal) I told him that the only way I know how to beat him is to knock him out because in every fight that he’s lost he’s been knocked out,’’ Bradley said. “That got him a little heated and he started firing at me but I was just giving the facts.’’

The actual facts are that Bradley is not the kind of fighter who stops many opponents. Instead, he bamboozles them. He outfoxes and outboxes them, leaving them frustrated and fuming but not often unconscious.

In fact, it has been two years since Bradley last won by knockout but that is not the point. The point is to win, as he himself understands. Do that often enough and eventual the hunger pangs subside.

“I’m not going to be looking for the knockout,’’ Bradley said. “I’m a smarter fighter than that. I’m not going to go in there hunting for a knockout and get out of character. If the knockout comes, it comes but if not I just want to win. Winning is all that matters.’’

Bradley believes that victory will come because Holt (25-2, 13 KO) will have more problems figuring him out than ordering lunch in heavily French-speaking Montreal. While the Paterson, N.J. native speaks no French, Bradley believes Holt also won’t understand the leather-laced sign language he’s going to be beating out on his head when they are left alone with each other in the ring Saturday night either.

“I’ve been watching Kendall Holt tapes since the beginning of my career,’’ Bradley claimed. “I’ve been watching him for a long time. I knew I could beat him even before this fight was made.

“He’s a desperate puncher. When he gets backed up against the ropes and feels he has nowhere to go he’s definitely going to swing. That’s when defense comes into effect. Staying low, keeping your hands up and high, counter punching in between.

‘If he attacks he’s at his weakness. That’s what I saw in the (Demetrius) Hopkins fight (won by Holt in his last outing). He can be outboxed.

“I’ll be able to box a little bit. I’ll be able to pressure a little bit and push the tempo. Guys let him get comfortable in there and let him do what he wants. That’s the worst thing you can do against Holt. You always have to stay on top of a counter puncher and make him work hard.

“He’s never seen anybody like me in his career. He’s never been in the ring with a fighter that has the same speed as he has, the same power as he has, if not more, and with more ability.

“He’s never been in there with a real, true athlete. He’s been in there with guys that don’t have a lot of athleticism like I do. I take nothing away from him. He’s a force to be reckoned with but I just think I’m better.’’

He may be, but Bradley will be at a distinct physical disadvantage trying to prove that to Holt, who is three inches taller and has nearly a half foot reach advantage over the WBC champion. To some fighters, such things would be a worry but Bradley sees such problems as merely new ways to remain the guy he's always been. The hungry guy from the desert out to prove he is who he says he is.

"I'm a dog,'' Bradley said. "I come to fight against these taller guys. They have those longer arms but I can get inside him.

"It's going to be a little tricky because he's a little tall and a little lanky and he knows how to use his reach but if he wants to bang we can bang. If he wants to box, we can box too.

"The Canadian fans are going to love me. By the end of the night they're going to be my fans.''

That is what Tim Bradley will be hungry for Saturday night. He'll be hungry to make some new fans for himself at the expense of Kendall Holt. Hungry to make a point and a few dollars. Not enough to make a hungry man full, but enough to make him hungry for more.