Written by Michael Woods
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For a kid looking to make the grade as a pro boxer, Oklahoma isn't really the place to be.

Grady Brewer, who the second season of The Contender reality show, has been able to instill a bit of respect for the Sooner State in the realm of pugilism. In a region without an excess of humming gyms to learn the trade, or mentors to convey the finer points of the sweet science, Brewer has done quite well for himself.

But there's a super middleweight fighter from Lawton, OK who has begun to creep onto the radar screens of fight fans who are on the lookout for that next top prospect, especially one who hails from the US, which has seen a steady deterioration in the quality and numbers of promising hitters in the last 25 years. George "Comanche Boy" George Tahdooahnippah has built himself a solid winning streak since turning pro in March 2004 after building a fighting base as a high school and college wrestler, kickboxer and Toughman contestant. He's 18-0, with 17 stops. And while he concedes that that his victims haven't been a who's who in the 168 pound class, Comanche Boy—I admit I'm typing that both because I love how it rolls off the tongue, and because it's easy to misspell Tahdooahnippah—is just about ready to step it up in class, and see how he fares with a top 40 to top 50-type of 168 pounder.

"I'm not targeting anyone in particular," says the 30-year-old hitter who lives on Comanche land in Lawton. "Whoever's in the way. There's no rush right now. I'm 30 but I'm fresh, no wear and tear."

For now, he's pumped to be known as the Native American Boxing Council 168 pound champion, a title he earned with a 9-12-08 TKO7 of Jonathan Corn: "I'll be bold and say that I'm the best Native American at middleweight in the US."

Asked to point to a few Native American boxers who he looks to as role models, Comanche Boy is sort of stumped. I mention Danny "Little Red" Lopez as one native boxer who comes to mind, but we are both stumped after that. Joe Hipp, I come up with. The fighter mentions the multi-sport legend Jim Thorpe, an Oklahoma native, as a role model.

Comanche Boy isn't looking to use his heritage as a gimmick, something to set himself apart in the climb to recognition. Sure, the pageantry and aura that accompany his war dance after he stops a foe, and his fans bang drums, and whoop and holler with Comanche fervor, makes a Comanche Boy KO a compelling site. But he wants to build himself up into a well rounded sweet scientist, because he knows there will come a day when his game changing hook won't be enough.

For his 9 to 5, he works as an environmentalist for his tribe ("basically an EPA agent for the tribe"), spending much of his time pursuing illegal dumping and securing water rights for the Comanche.

Say what you will about the OK fight scene, but it's not like Comanche Boy hones his skills working out on the Wii; he spars at his gym with Brewer, a stablemate, and has traveled extensively to get more varied sparring, with the likes of Allan Green (27-1, a Tulsa native). "I've stayed with him for three or four rounds," Comanche Boy says of Green. He owns a rip-roaring left hook and if he can shore up his defense, and remember to stick with a regular jab, it's possible we could see him on a ShoBox sometimes down the line. I'd get a kick out of seeing his patented "war dance," his celebratory boogie after his foe has been finished off.

Comanche Boy is father to three boys, and will be marrying his galpal Mia next spring. The family is open to relocating to a fight mecca, maybe Florida, Vegas or California, if his development continues. "I feel I'm a couple years away from calling the big names out," Comanche Boy says. "I'm learning the business in general, but whoever's in my may, I'm gonna put him down."