

## BOXING AINT DEAD YET: The Legendary 5th St. Gym To Re-Open

Written by Michael Woods

Tuesday, 22 June 2010 15:00

---

To hear certain spinmeisters, youd think the sweet science has been on its deathbed, wasting away like Terri Schiavo, forever. Youd think mixed martial artists were muscling their way into the the two or three remaining boxing gyms in the US, throwing the boxers out onto the street, and setting up shop.

But boxing will never die. The allure of watching two men square off, and go toe to toe, and determine who is the better man, without aid of linemates, or tricky jiu-jitsu moves, will never die.

Those disposed to believe the MMA-is-taking-over the world hype need the occasional reminder of boxings rich history, to be reminded or perhaps even informed for the first time, that boxing is really the sport to which all others aspire. Tom Tsatas, along with his partners Jimmy Dundee, Dino Spencer and Matt Baimonte, are offering a refresher course in what the sport once was. They are re-opening the 5th St. Gym, the Miami fight factory which was started by Chris Dundee and his little bro Angelo back in 1950, and churned out nonpareil sweet scientists til it closed in 1992.

Heres a quickie lowdown from 5thstgym.com, the website set up to call attention to the new venture.

The 5th St. Gym got its start in 1950 when Chris Dundee began promoting big time boxing in Miami Beach. It quickly became the celebrated University of Boxing, overseen by Chris, the "Wizard of Oz, and his brother Angelo, the "Prince of Oz. The gym was also a magnet for a wide range of international celebrities including Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano, Jackie Gleason, Malcolm X, The Beatles, Sean Connery, Frank Sinatra, Sylvester Stallone, and a myriad of others who were absorbed into the gym's legendary mystique. Boxing people the world over sent their fighters to be trained at the 5th St. gym. Every possible thing that could be taught about this grim profession of boxing was taught by the Wizard. It originally lasted around four decades and created countless world champions, such as Carmen Basilio, Willie Pastrano and the greatest of them all, Cassius Clay-who then became the ubiquitous Muhammad Ali. He still remains the shining accomplishment of Oz (5th St. Gym).

You will note that the tagline Train For The Future pops prominently on the website.

TSS chatted with Tsatas, a Chicagoan who has managed the heavyweight Fres Oquendo, ran restaurants and did boxing and kickboxing as a kid. The 47-year-old has tried for almost a decade to resurrect the gym, which is associated with the best known boxing trainer, and the best known athlete in the world, Angelo Dundee and Muhammad Ali. The gym, which will open up in August--probably August 14 if the city gives a sign-off--will be housed on the corner of 5th and Washington in Miami Beach, in a structure erected in 2002. The requisite grime and odor one might have seen in the 1960s-1980s, when Ali, Foreman and Sugar Ray Leonard trained there will be stripped away, Tsatas said.

## BOXING AINT DEAD YET: The Legendary 5th St. Gym To Re-Open

Written by Michael Woods  
Tuesday, 22 June 2010 15:00

---

Pros can train here for free, and well have reasonable rates for other people looking to train, as well as box-aerobics classes, and some MMA classes as well, he told TSS. The 88-year-old Dundee, a Tampa resident, will be present, hopefully for at least a week out of every month, when his schedule, and the health of his beloved wife Helen, permits. Jimmy Dundee, Angelos son, has collected Dundee-Ali memorabilia, which is being donated to the famous gym and landmark. The aura of men like Willie Pastrano, Carmen Basilio, and Ali will loom large at the updated 5th St, and will serve to remind pros and non pros that there is something eternal and majestic about boxing.

“We wanted to get Angelo on board first and get his and his son Jimmy’s blessing before we did anything, said Tsatas, who splits his time between Miami and Chicago. “Matt Baiamonte, who has trained Attila Levin, Timor and Sultan Ibragimov and David Estrada along with actor Academy Award winner Matt Damon, was Angelo’s chief trainer, student and protégé (along with Luis Lagerman). We wanted to keep the lineage of Angelo with the gym and Matt is a purist and loyalist. He was the piece that brought the puzzle together. He phoned Angelo and Mark Gismer (Angelo’s manager) and they were extremely receptive. We waited eight years for this moment and it all finally came together, the timing was perfect. We met with the group and it was absolutely one of the best days of my life hearing stories from Jimmy and seeing all the original photos of the history in the gym. Angelo’s team is a class act and number one in my book.

Dino, Matt and Tsatas hope to maintain the legacy of the gym and even more importantly Angelo Dundee’s good name, they say. “We have the highest standard to maintain and we will, Tsatas said. “Our motto will be simple. Like Angelo Dundee says, It don’t cost nuthin to be nice. And that will be our motto at the 5th St Gym.

For more info on 5th St, check out their website: [5thstgym.com](http://5thstgym.com)