HARTFORD (April 5, 2011) – Mexican-American bantamweight prospect **Danny Aquino**, trained by his father Julian, is looking forward to making a statement Saturday night in the six-round co-feature fighter on "The Willie Pep Boxing Classic" card, presented by Hard Hittin' Promotions ("HHP"), at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

In a crossroads fight of significant interest, local heavyweight favorite **Tony** "TNT" **Grano** (17-2-1, 13 KOs), the 2005 U.S. Nationals amateur champion, takes on veteran "Diamond" **Dominque Alexander** (20-10-1, 10 KOs) in the eighth-round main event.

The 21-year-old Aquino (5-1, 1 KO), fighting out of Meriden (CT), will attempt to bounce back from his only pro loss, last December in Florida against undefeated Yoandris Salinsas by way of a four-round split decision, in the six-round co-feature versus **James Owens** (4-2, 2 KOs).

"I'm looking forward to fight at home this weekend," Danny said. "I know I'll have a lot of family and friends there supporting me. My last fight I thought that I won a unanimous decision, but we fought in my opponent's hometown and they gave him a win by split decision. That's ok, though, because it's made me a different fighter. I've trained much harder and I'm better shape for this fight.

"My opponent has two losses but they were to undefeated guys who have real good records (Leo Santa Cruz 15-0-1, 9 KOs and Rances Barthelemy 11-0-0, 9 KOs). Ownes is going to be a good test for me. I'm a warrior who comes forward but, for this fight, people are going to be seeing a little different Danny Aquino. I'm still going to bring it, but. I'll also be boxing more than in the past."

The undercard showcases some of the best young fighters in New England, including Norwalk (CT) veteran **Shakha Moore** (10-15-3, 2 KOs) vs. TBA, and promising New Haven featherweight and former amateur standout, **Luis Rosa** (5-0, 2 KOs) vs. **Tommy Attencio** (4-6, 2 KOs), both in six-round bouts; undefeated East Hartford

Joseph
"Chip"
Perez
(5-0, 2 KOs) faces unbeaten
Esteban Nicol
(2-0) in a 4-rounder.

Also scheduled to fight on the undercard are a pair of Middletown (CT) favorites, light heavyweight **Doug Cartelli** (1-0) and pro-debuting super featherweight **Willie Picard**, respectively, against the Williams brothers,
Jaquan
Williams in his pro debut and Charles
(0-1
)
, plus undefeated Philadelphia super featherweight
Frank Trader
(7-0, 2 KOs) versus
John Willoughby
(2-6, 1 KO). All fights and fighters are subject to change.

There will be a special wheelchair boxing exhibition match wheelchair boxer **Ian Cannon**, an 18-year-old college student who meets former New England Golden Gloves champion
Luis Reynoso
, of Springfield (MA), in a three-round wheelchair boxing exhibition under amateur boxing rules (headgear, large gloves, etc.). The inspirational Cannon, of Glastonbury (CT), suffers from cerebral palsy but regularly trains at Lion's Den Connecticut in Middletown, where he has developed a wheelchair boxing program, "Roll With The Punches."

Tickets are priced at $100.00 (ringside), $80.00 (preferred seating), $60.00 (reserved) and $40.00 (general admission) and are available to purchase by calling 860.402.4838 or The Lion's Den at
860.613.2394
.

Willie Pep: Born Gugliermo Papaleo in 1922 in Middletown, CT. He was a 2-time world champion who retired in 1966 after a 26 year professional career with an amazing 229-11-1 (65 KOs) record. In 1990, Pep was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, New York. He died November 23, 2006 at the age of 84.