Perez happy to be fighting at home in Hartford

Grano headlines "The Willie Pep Boxing Classic' Saturday night at Conn. Convention Center

HARTFORD (April 6, 2011) – Popular East Hartford lightweight **Joseph** "Chip" **Perez** (5-0, 2 KOs) puts his undefeated record on the line Saturday night at home against unbeaten **Esteban Nichol** (2-0, 1 KO) 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, meets veteran "Diamond" **Dominque Alexander** (20-10-1, 10 KOs) in the eight-round main event.

Perez, who works for the Connecticut Department of Children & Family, was born and raised in Holyoke (MA). The 24-year-old former New England Golden Gloves champion recently has had, unfortunately, several scheduled fights fall through. His last action was back in November, a first-round knockout of Ronnie Peterson at Mohegan Sun. Saturday night he's matched against Nichol in a four-round bout.

"I don't know anything about my opponent other than he's 2-0 and a former Golden Gloves champ from Colorado," Perez said. "I trust my manager, Bret Hallenbeck, and I'm always ready to fight. My style depends on my opponent. I adjust to what my he does in the ring.

"Fighting at home is awesome. Mohegan Sun is in Connecticut but it's a long distance (from Hartford) compared to the Connecticut Convention Center, which is only five minutes from my

house. I was born and raised in Holyoke and I always have a lot of family and friends from there supporting me when I fight. They'll be there for this fight, too, along with family, friends and co-workers from here (Hartford)."

Perez' chief second is former world title contender "Iceman" John Scully, who trains numerous boxers at Lion's Den Connecticut in Middletown. "He's has been very exciting and dynamic so far in each of his five fights," Scully commented. "He's shown that he can box and punch, but he's been most exciting for fans when he comes in with both guns blazing, letting go five and six punch combinations. He had more than 100 amateur bouts. He spars frequently with the likes of Matt Remillard and Mike Oliver and more than holds his own. If he stays on course, I think he will have a great future in the professional game."

Remillard and Oliver are locally-based world-class boxers. "Sparring with them has been a great experience for me," Perez noted, "going against guys who are such bigger names. I've learned how to adjust and adapt by working with these two world class fighters. I study Matt and Mike, as well as John, when they spar and try to remember what I saw when I'm in the ring. I'm learning what they've been through, in and out of the ring, and I often talk to them about boxing."

Bantamweight **Danny Aquino** (5-1, 1 KO), fighting out of Meriden (CT), faces **James Owens** (4-2, 2 KOs) in the six-round co-feature.

The undercard showcases some of the best young fighters in New England, including Norwalk (CT) veteran **Shakha Moore** (10-15-3, 2 KOs) vs. welterweight **Noel Garcia** (2-8, 1 KO), 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 .

Also scheduled to fight on the is Middletown (CT) favorite, light heavyweight **Doug Cartelli** (1-0), against
Jaquan
Williams
in his pro debut, 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 faces 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
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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.