

Bobby Antonakos

Our 'Spartan Warrior'

SEVEN years ago Pagewood boxer Bobby Antonakos had his jaw broken in six places during a violent robbery in his old Redfern neighbourhood.

Battered, bruised and disillusioned he decided to refocus all his energy on a sport that would teach him to defend himself.

"I was really into my soccer as a kid but I loved boxing, too; it was just that my parents tried to keep me away from it", Antonakos, now 31, said.

"At the time I was robbed I'd only had one exhibition fight and it put me out of action for a year, but I eventually got into the gym and fought my way back".

Having started boxing at a relatively late age, Antonakos entered the ring with a humble goal of winning an amateur fight or two and maybe, one day turning pro.

Fourteen professional fights later, the two-time NSW titleholder has earned himself a crack at the Australian junior welterweight title.



"It's definitely not something I would've expected a few years ago", he said. "Even if I hung up the gloves now I'd be pretty happy with what I've achieved".

Antonakos is a boxing promoter's dream: a larger than life character who knows how to get himself if noticed and has built up a loyal fan base in the boxing community.

In the ring he's the "Spartan Warrior", a nod to his Greek heritage which he cites as a source of courage when fighting against favoured opponents.

"There's just no better feeling than when you walk into a venue and hear a massive roar from your supporters - it's a massive adrenaline rush, a big buzz", he said.

"It definitely helps get me through the tough times in a fight".

The man who stands between him



and the Australian title is no easy feat. Solomon Egberime is a Nigerian who settled in Sydney after competing in the 2000 Olympics.

He's a technical fighter, really slick," Antonakos said. "He's got the title, so I know I have to take it to him, I know I have to attack".

The event will be held on July 30 at the Orion Function Centre in Campsie and televised live on Network Ten's free-to-air sports channel, ONE.

Article from the Southern Courier

CAFE CULTURE

BEING conceived and born out the back of a Greek cafe in Wee Waa, and living a privileged life of fantastic food, locals, friends and family hang on my word on where to eat out.

I can pick a dud just by stepping in the front door. How, you ask? Thoughts of my father over the years making us scrub walls and floors, cleaning fridge motors with a toothbrush and drawing the short straw with my brothers on who was to get in and clean the grease trap regularly. I have smelt the good and bad a food store has to offer, that's how.

Reading "Food safety failures", (The Sun Herald, July 12) reminded me how bloody proud I am to be a part of Australia's food culture. The Greek Cafe has become an Aussie icon.

As a past winner of the cleanest cafe-milk bar in NSW, all I can say is well done for publishing the results. I feel I have a right to say to all the dodgy operators that owning a food business in not all sitting back watching it all roll in.

It's hard work, commitment and dedication, just like a relationship and family - a culture in itself.

Love what you do or don't get involved.

STEVE SOTIROPOULOS
Raymond Terrace

(Letter was published in the Sun Herald
(July 19, 2009))



Eye check-ups are crucial

AS PART of National Diabetes Week St George Vision optometrists are stressing the importance of regular eye examinations for people who have diabetes.

Optometrist Mary Krithinakis said that more than 70 per cent of Australian diabetics would develop diabetic disease within 15 years of diagnosis.

Diabetes affects the fluid balance and blood circulation in the eyes, which can cause cataracts, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. Diabetic retinopathy is a major cause of vision impairment and blindness.

"Vision loss caused by diabetic retinopathy is often irreversible therefore, early diagnosis and treatment is essential, and can prevent up to 98 per cent of severe vision loss," Ms Krithinakis said.

"All people with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes are at risk of developing diabetic retinopathy and the longer a person has diabetes, the greater the risk. Poor control of blood sugar levels can also increase the risk."

Ms Krithinakis said only half of those with diabetes had a regular eye exam and that a third had never been checked.

"An eye exam at least every two years is necessary for people with diabetes," she said.

St George Vision: 7 Montgomery St.,
Kogarah; 9587 5320

PHOTO: Tests are a must: A patient, optometrist Mary Krithinakis and optical dispenser Mary Zikidis.

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