

The legends of KC

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The road to being legendary began quietly, humbly in several boxing gyms in the Kansas City area. There was no glory and accolades in those gyms; just a group of “ordinary” young men with grand dreams, and the grit and determination to make them come true.

The hard work and determination began immediately following the 2016 Kansas City Regional Golden Gloves Tournament. Some of these young men were successful in the tournament, and some fell short of the goals they had set for themselves. But not one of them was deterred by either success or failure – they were each bolstered by their circumstance, using experience as fuel for the fire that burned in them.

These “regular” guys returned to their gyms reinvigorated – ready to take on the challenge of fulfilling those goals. They each knew that the path to pursuing their dream would be grueling. The work ahead of them promised to be brutal, exhausting and relentless. They wouldn't have it any other way; they welcomed the climb.



And so, the grind began. Day in and day out this group made individual choices to will their bodies and minds to do things that most would shrink and hide from. They pushed themselves beyond any expectations that their coaches placed on them. They dedicated themselves to the concept of no limitations.

As days turned into weeks, months and – finally – a year, 10 young men, secure in the knowledge that they had done everything in their power to prepare, gathered in Kansas City to face opponents and test their mettle. Bout by bout, these 10 men were declared victors – regional champions.

For many, this would be enough. This would warrant celebration, self-adulation. But for 10 “ordinary” young men, this was just the first step. This just meant it was time to double-down on all of the previous year’s training. The next level would take a tenacious spirit seldom exhibited by most people.

Back to the gym, and back to the grind. The difference this time was that there was roughly a month to prepare – and prepare they did.

There was a concentrated intensity in their work; a do-or-die attitude. As quickly as the month started, it was over. It was time to pack and head to the National Golden Gloves Championship Tournament.

Ten of the best boxers that Kansas City had to offer came together as a team. The task ahead of them was daunting, unlikely. You see, in 82 years, with all of its storied and rich history, with all of the stellar boxers that Kansas City has produced, there has never been a National Golden Gloves Championship Team from Kansas City.

The National Tournament commenced, and the KC boys stepped into the ring. As the week progressed, the Kansas City team began to rack up the points that are necessary to claim a Team Championship berth. A tentative excitement grew in



the KC boxing community as the regional team gained momentum. The boxing continued and the Kansas City team found themselves tied for first place. The impossible suddenly seemed possible, plausible and, dare-say, probable.

And then, on the last day of competition, after the last bout had been fought, history was declared. The Kansas City team had come together and achieved what seemed impossible; they were crowned the 2017 National Golden Gloves Team Champions.

Among this group of “ordinary” young men are:

- **Cam F. Awesome**, a multi-time national champion, motivational speaker, comedian, and bigger than life personality
- **The Brother’s Davidson, Marcus and Marcell**, who continue to achieve notable goals in their boxing journey and are dedicated to coaching and mentoring other boxers
- **Jorge Carlos**, a talented, rising super-nova, who at 17 years old was the youngest boxer competing in the tournament
- **Eric Priest**, a recipient of the Kansas City Golden Gloves Scholarship, and relatively new boxer who bears the promise of great things both in and out of the ring
- **Devon Campbell**, a quiet, unassuming young man who exhibits enormous heart in his sport and his life
- **Matthew Anani**, a peaceful, centered soul, who inherited his warrior spirit from his world champion boxer mom
- **Misael Reyes**, a tough, hard-knock kid who is dedicating his life to making a good life for his family
- **Eddy Gullien**, a father, who understands what boxing can do for a person and is making a difference as a boxing coach in his community
- **Mario Armenta, Jr.**, a well-mannered college student, who’s passion shines in the ring

Each of these “ordinary” boxers came to the National Golden Gloves Championship Tournament focused on reaching their own individual goals, and something extraordinary took place. Through their combined grit, determination and dedication, they became legendary.