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BUSINESS

MAIN STREET MARIN: BOXING PROMOTER

A promoting 'perfectionist'

Entrepreneur
revives boxing
in Bay Area

By Rochelle Williams
IJ reporter

During the three years
Howes Entertainment has
produced matches — three in
Marin — promoter Peter
Howes has earned a reputa-
tion as one who delivers.

The Marin native and San
Francisco resident, organized
the title match between main
attraction Paul Nave and Liv-
ingstone Bramble on May 21
at the Marin Civic Center Ex-
hibit Hall.

"If my name is on it, I want
to make sure it is a profession-
al production and that people
get their money's
worth," Howes
said.

Those in
the industry
said Howes
lived up to the
goal then and
on previous
occasions.

Matches,
crowds, boxers
and sponsors
come together
when Howes takes control.
Those in the trades credit the
entrepreneur with awakening
the sport in the Bay Area.

"He is presenting some
good boxers, many who are
new and up and coming on
the horizon," said Charles
King, a trainer and owner of
two King's Gyms in Oakland.

"For someone to just get
into the business, Peter is
doing a good job, and he only
has room to grow because he
is saving boxing in the Bay
Area," said King, whose
boxer, Brian Sneed, won on
the undercard at the May
match.

Nave won and then lost the
World Boxing Federation wel-
terweight title in two 12-
round bouts with Greg Hau-
gen last year in Marin.

For the initial Nave-Hau-
gen world title, Howes pro-
duced a money-making event,
in addition to negotiating
ESPN's telecast of the fight,
which was won by Nave.

"It is phenomenal since he
is a green promoter," said Ron
Scalf, WBF president.

Howes, who declined to
state his age but said he "feels
like 35," was named Promoter
of the Year by the WBF.

A good promoter puts on
high-quality, well-matched,
competitive fights that the
public wants to see, according
to Rob Lynch, executive offi-
cer of the California State
Athletic Commission in
Sacramento. The commis-
sion has jurisdiction over all

amateur and professional
boxing and martial arts in the
state.

As a promoter, Howes
wears several hats: host,
matchmaker and business-
man.

The job requires putting
money in escrow to ensure
everyone gets paid, locating
equally matched contenders,
signing them, obtaining
sponsors and conforming to
state licensing.

One also must find a loca-
tion to have the match, find
judges and marketers, arrange
ticket sales and publicity, and
bring together the ring, pro-
gram and banners.

Then it is necessary to
make airport runs to pick up
the contenders and their par-
ties and find accommoda-

tions for
them.

The fact
that money
was made in
Howes' most
recent match
in which
Nave lost to
Bramble in
the second
round — and
the initial
Nave-Haugen
fight is unusu-

al, but not impossible, Lynch
said.

A capacity crowd attended
the Nave-Haugen fight and
"sellouts don't happen that
often" in California where
there are 95 to 110 profession-
al boxing cards annually.
That translates to more than
500 bouts because a card is a
series four or more individual
fights presented in one time
frame, Lynch said.

Howes succeeded by focus-
ing on the basics and was
helped by the drawing power
of Nave, a Marin favorite son.

"What Peter did was bring
in two quality opponents
known throughout the boxing
world," Lynch said. "He had
two very successful shows and
I wish him well in the future."

Howes estimated 80 per-
cent of those attending the
Nave-Bramble fight in May
did so without advance ticket
purchases, a factor that kept
him on edge, wondering if the
affair would be a success. He
hoped for a higher return, but
did not disclose his profit.

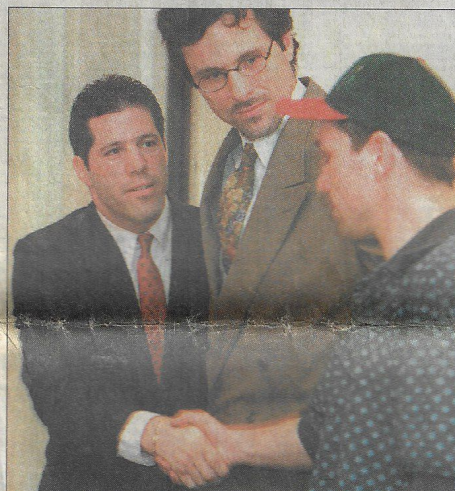
On the evening of the May
match, Howes, dressed in a
black pin-striped suit, darted
about the arena making sure
things ran smoothly. "I am a
very focused and driven per-
son. I am a perfectionist, and
I like things to go off as
planned without any hitches,"
he said.

Howes' entry into the box-
ing world came when he was a
teen and attended the Central
Marin Boys Club to train in



IJ photo/Marian Little Utley

FIGHT WHEELER-DEALER: Boxing promoter Peter Howes, who has set up Paul Nave fights, makes a call in his office in San Francisco.



IJ photo/Marian Little Utley



IJ photo/Left Vendsel

HARD PUNCHES: Paul Nave (left) and Greg Haugen exchange punches during the sixth round of the World Boxing Federation welterweight championship fight in November. At left, boxing promoter Peter Howes stands between Nave (left) and Greg Haugen before a title fight in March 1998.

you like a champion. He has
been respectful of me," Lopez
said. "He treated me like a
human being and not like a
commodity."

Howes will receive the
award as best promoter for
1998 in September during the
WBF convention in Israel.
The honor results not only
from Howes' professional
matches but also from his en-
thusiasm for boxing, Scalf,
the WBF president, said.

Howes signed Nave because
he thought he could take box-
ing to another level in Marin,
according to Scalf.

"It is not fake. I told Peter
after the (last) fight, that 'Our
golden goose just got knocked
out.' It was still a good show,"
Scalf said after Nave lost.

Nave, 38, was an eighth-
grader when he met Howes
while both trained under
MacPhee. Howes attended

youth boxing under Marin
legend Jack MacPhee.

MacPhee started training
boxers while in college in
1946. Even with the hundreds
of young men who have been
under his tutelage, the trainer
remembered Howes as "a
beefy guy" who stood out.

"Peter was kind of aggres-
sive, ambitious and deter-
mined. He was always looking
for big things, big events,"
MacPhee said, who still trains
young fighters.

Howes made it to the Gold-
en Gloves in 1976, but his ca-
reer in the ring was cut short
because of severe asthma, ac-
cording to MacPhee.

Howes graduated from
Redwood High and Universi-
ty of California at Berkeley,

majoring in social science. He
later worked for Honeywell,
General Electric, American
Express and an investment
firm before dabbling in the oil
business.

Howes quickly convinced
fighter Tony "The Tiger"
Lopez to sign with him.
Lopez, who retired from box-
ing three months ago, said
Howes is among the best pro-
moters he has encountered.

Howes allows a boxer to do
what comes instinctively in-
stead of barking orders, and
also is approachable as a
friend, Lopez said.

When Lopez is in town, the
Sacramento resident calls
Howes and the two often hang
out.

"Peter Howes would treat

Nave's matches through the
years and became a supporter.
In 1997 Howes promised
Nave to take his career to a
higher level.

"As a fighter it is always
your dream to be in a world
title fight that is telecast,"
said Nave. "Peter has done an
excellent job, is a good busi-
nessman and a hard worker."

Nave is considering ending
his professional boxing career
for a political bid at the 6th
District California Assembly
seat as an Independent.

If retirement does enter the
picture and public support fa-
vors it, Howes planned for a
Nave-Bramble rematch in
September calling it, "A
Farewell to Arms."

"I always want to support
the guys who work with me,
but I don't want to be the ve-
hicle to their destruction,"
Howes said.

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