



TOMMY HICKS

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

1967-1974 Lockport, New York

"The Fighting Schoolteacher"

Born on June 27, 1944, Tommy Hicks grew up in Lockport, N.Y. and became a skillful athlete in football and wrestling, achieving All-League and All-Western New York in football in his senior year. Also, he was voted Most Valuable in wrestling. These accomplishments gained him a scholarship to Ithaca College, where he hoped to study to become a teacher. In his second year in Ithaca, he suffered a shoulder separation, which ended his football career. While home on Christmas vacation, Tommy happened to go down to the

local gym and began to train using the equipment. Boxing promoter Roy Gill saw him and encouraged him to compete in the Buffalo Golden Gloves tournament in 1965. Hicks entered and won the 175 Novice Division. Two years later Tommy won the Open 175 Division and earned a trip to the Nationals in Milwaukee, where he finished third.

Turning pro in 1967, Hicks fought part-time while working as a teacher of handicapped children at the BOCES Center in Ithaca, N.Y. His ring record showed him to be a tough fighter with a hard punch, who sometimes lost fights due to cuts. He was especially popular in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and when he scored a sensational KO over Scrantonian Walter Opshinsky, he became ranked #9 in the light heavyweight division, and gained a chance to fight the World Champion, Bob Foster. Many Lockport fans of Tommy Hicks made the trip down to Scranton to see this title fight, but were disappointed to watch him lose to Foster by a TKO in the eighth round.

Hicks continued to fight, and two months later, he was back in the ring in New York's Madison Square Garden in a main event against Dennis McNamee. Tommy won this fight, scoring a TKO over McNamee in the tenth round, which earned him another fight in the Garden against highly ranked Mike Quarry. Hicks lost a 10-round decision in this bout. In 1972, after the Quarry loss, Tommy went down to Florida, where he had 5 bouts in Miami, winning all but one.

After retiring from boxing in 1974, Tommy continued teaching in the Central New York area, until he had a chance to move to the Newfane (NY) Central School District, where he subsequently became the Assistant Principal in the High School. Hicks continues to live in Newfane with his wife Jan.

Tonight Ring #44 is extremely proud to induct Tommy Hicks into its Boxing Hall of Fame.

