



# DANNY DI LIBERTO

LIGHTWEIGHT

1957-1959

Danny DiLiberto grew up on the streets of Buffalo's west side. That experience led him to boxing, then to bowling, and finally to the world of champion pool players. Danny "D" wanted to become a boxer in his early days just like his older brother Joe. His family did not approve of his brother's boxing career and surely didn't want Danny to follow him into the ring. When he finally decided to become a professional boxer DiLiberto left Buffalo for Florida. He trained in Miami Beach under the tutelage of famed trainer Angelo Dundee. Danny decided to fight under an assumed name to hide his new career and took the moniker Danny Toriani. As luck would have it, a few of his father's friends were in Florida and happened to go to a fight card in which Danny appeared. The cat was out of the bag but DiLiberto continued to fight as Danny Toriani with his father's blessing. Toriani made his pro debut on December 11, 1957 against an experienced and much heavier opponent named Tino Fuertes. Carmen Basilio who was in Miami getting ready for an upcoming fight advised Danny not to take the fight, but Danny would not hear of it. In the first round Fuertes hitting Danny at will until just before the end of the round. Then Danny hit Fuertes with an uppercut that had only the bell saving him from being knocked out. Danny started the second round with a flurry of punches and dropped his opponent three times, the third for the count. Toriani was undefeated as a lightweight professional fighter with a record of 12-0-2 with 11 KO's. Danny's hands though were his toughest opponents. He broke his knuckles four times and that caused him to have long layoffs between bouts and finally into retirement from the ring. "Danny was a heck of a fighter" said Angelo Dundee. "Whoever I put in front of him he knocked out. If it weren't for his brittle hands he would have been a champion. He was a great bowler and pool player too; he once bowled a three hundred game".

Danny DiLiberto returned to Buffalo and went back to his other love, pool. Danny spent many days bowling on the first floor at Connecticut Lanes or shooting pool on the third floor pool hall. In 1961 he became the City straight pool champion at the age of 26. In 1962 he would win the NY State straight pool championship and in 1963 the United States Master's title. In 1969 Danny "D" playing in Arlington, Virginia would again win the US Master's Tournament. At the famed Johnston City, Illinois tournament in 1972, DiLiberto would win the world all around Championship. Through the 1970's and early 1980's Danny would win or be runner up in many State and National tournaments. In 1983 he again became a world champion, this time in the world one-pocket championships in Tampa Florida. In all Danny DiLiberto would win a total of four world championships. In 1997 he was ranked as the number one senior pool player in the world. Today you can hear Danny "D" on the Pool Network lending his experience and vast knowledge of the sport as an analyst. He has also written a book that has recently been released titled *You Bet Your Life*, where you can learn about his life on the road as a pool player.

Tonight we are very proud to honor Danny DiLiberto for his achievement and dedication to the sport of boxing by inducting him into Ring 44's Boxing Hall of Fame.