

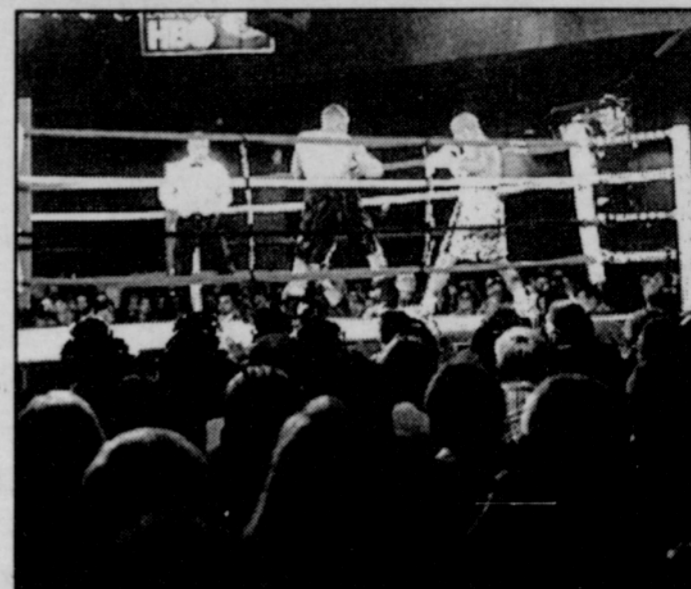
We Caused a "Commotion at the Ocean"

Chinook Winds has had a number of "firsts" and somehow they always turn out well. The "Commotion at the Ocean" was the first live championship boxing event to take place in Oregon and be broadcast on HBO to the entire nation as well as 30 countries.

For Chinook Winds, it was both a blessing and a challenge. The blessing is that it gave the casino exposure in a way that no advertising could. The challenge was making it work.

Boxing was an entirely new event for Chinook Winds. That, combined with the need to make it a success, made it necessary for the staff to learn fast and work extra hard. Everyone knew that this was a do-or-die event. If it worked, there could be more boxing in the future. If it failed, the entire United States and 30 countries would see the failure firsthand and live via HBO.

The number of unforeseen things that needed to be accomplished or



Left photo: "Ferocious" Fernando Vargas; top photo: the title bout, Vargas vs. Ronald "Winkie" Wright; photo below: a white tiger, part of Vargas' entourage, rests in the wings.

changed was mind-boggling for every department. One of the challenges was bringing orangutans and a white tiger into the facility to promote the fight. The white tiger, part of Fernando Vargas' publicity, was to be a well-kept secret until the last match of the eight-bout event.

Now, just how in the world do you move a tiger that's a little larger than a Shetland pony from the outside parking area, through the back of the building, up the elevator, and into the convention center without anyone noticing? Even in a covered cage, tigers have an odor that's very distinctive. Somehow, the tiger's appearance did come as a great surprise to everyone, even though the strange odor permeating the air caused some suspicion among the guests, along with some sideways glances at their neighbors.

Most of the undercard matches were very brief, causing a number of us to wonder what happens if the two headliner bouts end in one-round knockouts. How are we going to look then? Will the crowd be angry? How do we fill the time? What if, what if, what if?

To make a long story short, we were blessed. Both bouts went 12 rounds with the winner determined by the judges' decision. The undefeated IBF junior lightweight champion, Diego Corrales, retained his title in a match with John Brown. The undefeated junior middleweight champion, "Ferocious"



Fernando Vargas, retained his title in a match with the IBF's No. 1 mandatory challenger, Ronald "Winkie" Wright.

The event was aired at 11 p.m. across the Northwest, almost immediately after the last bout. It was amazing to see the difference between being at the event and watching it on television. Both were impressive, but watching on TV gave the "We've arrived!" feeling. We looked like Ceasar's Palace or Madison Square Garden.

A great many comments have been received on the positive affect the "Commotion at the Ocean" had on the surrounding community in promoting Oregon and conveying the message that Chinook Winds is a facility that can successfully host world-class events.

Another rabbit was pulled out of the hat with a great staff providing the magic.

Vinton, con't from page 25

During the turbulent years between 1962 and 1972, Vinton's music offered the youth of America something gentle and loving. The inspiration for one of his biggest hits, "Mr. Lonely," came from his experience in the Army. Its heart-wrenching sentiments touched many a lonely soldier along with reminding America what members of the Armed Forces were experiencing.

"My Melody Of Love" not only became No. 1 in the nation, it was embraced by Polish Americans around the country as their new national anthem. Not long after, Vinton's best-selling autobiography, "The Polish Prince," was published.

A multi-talented musician, singer and actor, Vinton incorporates his mastery of the piano, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, drums, and oboe into his act.

Performances are 8 p.m. Friday and 7 and 10 p.m. Saturday. Ticket prices range from \$25 to \$40, depending on seat location.