



### GIBBONS BROTHERS BOX IN MONTANA TODAY COMMEMORATING 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF TOMMY GIBBONS VS JACK DEMPSEY

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Photo: Tommy Gibbons, black trunks, lands a punch against Jack Dempsey.

UPDATE: Saint Paul's Ryan Gibbons won a three round decision over Montana's Tristan Gregori in the bout mentioned in this story. Gibbons, 16, wore headgear while Gregori did not. Minnesota amateur boxers Ryan and Michael Gibbons will both be competing today in Shelby, Montana on an amateur show looking back at the famous World Heavyweight fight between Minnesota boxing great Tommy Gibbons and legend Jack Dempsey. That historic event took place on July 4th, 1923 in the remote Montana town of Shelby which was housed only 500 people. 16 year old Ryan Gibbons Jr. of Sir Boxing in Saint Paul, MN is accompanied by coach Johnny Johnson and will box in this afternoon's main event against a local boxer named Tristan Gregori. The boxing action begins at 3:30 PM at the Shelby, Montana Fairgrounds. Ryan Gibbons Sr. told MinnesotaBoxing.com that his great grandfather was boxing legend Mike Gibbons which makes Tommy his great uncle. That in turn makes Tommy Gibbons, Ryan Jr. and Michael's great, great, grand-uncle.



Ryan Gibbons Jr., right with hat, Michael far left, ryan Sr. White shirt.

Crowds of Gibbons family members from all over the country and as far as Ireland have made their way to Shelby for this weekends event. Minnesota Boxing historian Jake Wegner recounted the Dempsey-Gibbons bout and the events that surrounded the famous fight.

"The 100th anniversary of the Dempsey-Gibbons Heavyweight Championship of the World is an epic anniversary, not just in professional boxing, but in professional sports" said MN Boxing Historian Jake Wegner. "The mayor of Shelby and a small group of businessmen thought they could put Shelby on the map and drive up land prices that were said to be oil-rich, and for way more than they bargained for, and the small town certainly paid the price. Maybe not more so than Hall of Fame Minnesota boxer, Tommy Gibbons, who basically fought for the championship for free aside from training expenses."

"Gibbons was not only 4 years older than the Champion, but had almost 100 pro fights under his belt and was on his final leg towards retirement. Dempsey, the Mike Tyson of the roaring 20's, was in his prime and the terror of the world inside a prize ring. Nevertheless, try as he may (and he tried plenty), Dempsey could not knock Tommy out. Tommy later said he used the wrong strategy of taking the fight to Jack and making it an inside affair to smother Dempsey and he admitted after the fight that was a crucial mistake, as Dempsey loved to tussle in close so he could land that hellish left hook of his. Tommy regretted not boxing from a distance and using his superior defense and counterpunching ability, but he definitely made history even in his defeat. Gene Tunney later credited Tommy Gibbons as giving him the game plan to beat Dempsey."

"Still...100 years after that fateful day in a sweltering cow-town called Shelby, people are still talking about the fight, the town, and the the many interesting facts that led up to it and occurred after it. Thank you Tommy Gibbons. Shelby thanks you as well. For if you had not shown the values of a man who signed a contract and was determined to live up to his own signature—even when not getting paid, Shelby, Montana's beating would have been even worse. Rare is the skill and the man, that was St. Paul's Tommy Gibbons."

Gerard Gibbons, the grandson of Tommy, is also launching his highly anticipated book titled "Shelby 1923" today. The beautifully illustrated book looks back on the event in great detail. Pre orders and more info can be found [HERE](#).

