

Eye of the cougar

Hearns, the Quiet Man, draws a bead on Hagler

By Steve Marantz
Globe Staff

LAS VEGAS — The law of the jungle prevails at the Thomas Hearns residence, and the fittest survive, as in a boxing ring.

Bret Summers, a genial young lightweight who fights out of the same stable as Hearns, learned this upon being invited to Hearns' suburban Detroit home last year. Summers noted the live-in cook and marveled at the landscaped acre of land, the swimming pool shaped as a boxing glove, and the fleet of cars — including a red DeLorean, a Rolls Royce and two Mercedes. Most of all, Summers marveled at the pet baby cougar kept in a glass-walled room in Hearns' basement.

"He sends me into this room to pet the cougar," recalled Summers. "It stands up on its hind legs and it's as tall as me and I'm scared to death. I just pulled my hands inside the arms of my jacket and tried not to move. The cougar bites into my new jacket and leaves these teeth marks."


Hearns looked in through the glass wall and grinned.

"Later on, the cat got out of the room and killed two of Tommy's cockatoos that were worth about \$600 each. He found them in their cages where the cougar had clawed them."

Summers didn't think Hearns was upset. "He didn't say anything, but I couldn't really tell," said Summers.

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Marvelous Marvin Hagler will confront one cool customer April 15. Those who know Hearns say he simply does not tip his hand.



Thomas Hearns is the Hit Man — and the Quiet Man. AP PHOTO

no matter the circumstance.

Last year, Hearns was the defendant in a paternity suit in which a Detroit woman claimed he was the father of her 5-year-old son. Once Hearns saw the boy he knew she was right. He agreed to pay the woman \$300 a week for his support.

"The painful thing was that nobody knew for all those years," said Lois Hearns, Thomas' mother. "He would have been excited to have a son.

After the settlement, she said, "He never talked about it to anybody."
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