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# Hearns, the Quiet Man, draws a bead on Hagler

■ HEARNS  
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Thomas has always tried to hide his feelings. He did it as a kid to keep me from worrying. He would come home and ask me how I was feeling, and if I wasn't well, he'd say, 'Don't worry Momma, you'll get better.' In a

way, he felt like he was taking care of me and that he couldn't worry about himself.  
"After the Leonard loss he felt very badly - he really was hurt. He felt like he let his friends and the whole city down. He knew everybody was counting on him. He tried to be himself, but I know he was hurt. But he had very little to

say about it."  
Enamored Steward, Hearns' trainer and manager for 11 years, and a close confidant, said, "Thomas was a quiet kid, but he always had something about him - a sort of mystique. He's a Clint Eastwood type. You only have to be close enough to him to know he never says too much."

The difference between Hearns and Hagler, Steward said, is that "Marvin is not as street hard as Tommy is. Even in the fight with Leonard, I said, 'We're going to stop this,' and Tommy said, 'Screw it, man, we're fighting another round and I'm going to hit this SOB before this fight is over.' It's a different hard street mentality Tommy has that Marvin doesn't."

Hearns did not grow up a street ruffian, though with his might, his mother said. Lois Hearns raised her nine children alone after Hearns' father, Thomas Sr., a truck driver, left her. She moved her family from Memphis to Detroit in 1960, found a small house on the east side, and took a job as a housekeeper. Thomas, her oldest son, took it up, his skinny shoulders to help her out, taking his first job at age 8.

"There was this little store in the neighborhood that all the kids went into on the way home from school," said Lois. "Thomas went in there and said to the man, 'I can't eat candy. And I can keep the kids from stealing candy.' He got the job, and every week after he got paid he'd bring home three or four bags of groceries."

Under Steward, Hearns built a 154½ amateur record, captured four national titles, and was the country's outstanding amateur in 1977. But he stopped just eight opponents and gave no indication of becoming a great puncher. That came suddenly as a pro, when he knocked out his first 17 opponents. In 1980, Hearns captured one of the welterweight titles in dramatic fashion, when he KO'd Filipino Carlos in two rounds.

He was considered an immortal in the making, invulnerable because of his freakish height and reach, until Ray Leonard cut him down to size in their 1981 classic. Yet Hearns' performance in that 14-round KO has earned him a lifetime's worth of respect.

"Thomas lost the battle, but he won the war," said Prentiss Dwyer, Hearns' business manager. "After the Leonard fight, Tommy was a name."

Nevertheless, Hearns was depressed by the loss and performed weakly against his next opponent, journeyman Ernie Singletary. In the spring of 1982, Hearns signed to meet Hagler, but the fight fell apart for a number of reasons, including Lois Hearns' refusal to allow her son to fight in Las Vegas, promoter Bob Arum's failure to come up with adequate money, Leonard's unexpected eye surgery, and Hearns' own lack of enthusiasm. Several friends advised him that he was not ready for Hagler; Hearns' refusal is the basis for the genuine animosity between the two today.

In December 1982, having outgrown the welterweight division, Hearns filed Wilfred Benitez junior middleweight title in a 15-round tactical standoff, injuring his right hand midway through the bout. The injury limited him to one 1983 appearance, and it wasn't until he won a decision over Luigi Minichillo in February 1984 that the hand was sound.

That, when Hearns KO'd Roberto Duran in two rounds last June, it had been three years since he had displayed the form that had inspired the nickname "The Man."

Wealthy at 28, and by all accounts scrupulous with his money, Hearns is taking care of his mother as he promised he would. In 1983, his Christmas present to

her was a new house. He decorated the house from top to bottom, she said.  
"I'm not sure when he found the time to do it, because you never really know where Tommy is," said Lois Hearns. "He sort of drifts in and out."  
He has also given cars to each of his brothers and sisters. One younger brother, Billy, is in his camp as an assistant trainer.

Hearns is romantically involved with a Detroit woman, Kim Craig, who is the mother of their 2½-year-old daughter, Natasha. At a recent charity benefit, Hearns introduced Craig as his fiancée, although he has said neither his mother nor Steward of wedding plans. "I think what that was, she was mad and he was making up to her," said Steward.

His relationship with Detroit is as close as any boxer with any city. Hearns serves on the 1000-person auxiliary police force, and participates in boxing benefits for city programs. He and Mayor Coleman Young are friendly, and Young took the unusual step of putting up city money to help promote the Minichillo fight.

Yet Hearns is spending more and more time in Los Angeles. Steward said, "Tommy is getting in with the actors like Eddie Murphy and Richard Pryor. You'll see a bunch of them at the fight."

Yes, Hearns can talk.  
"Marvin Hagler is just a man in my way," said Hearns recently. "He's preventing me from where I want to go, and I have to move him out of my way."

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THOMAS HEARNS  
The eyes have it

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