

PAUL BRIGGS

The Australian light-heavyweight takes *Alpha* behind the scenes of his epic, bloody challenge for the WBC world title in Chicago

WORDS IVAN SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY SAM RUTTYN

➔ IN AMERICA, SAYS PAUL BRIGGS, THEY LOVE A WARRIOR – AND BRIGGS IS SURELY THAT.

His first encounter with Polish champion Tomasz Adamek, a majority-decision loss in May, was a 12-round war. Their second bout, in early October, was even more bruising. “It was a great opportunity for Americans to see me fight,” says Briggs. “If you can fight, [if] you’re a puncher and put your opponent down, the Americans love you.

“This [fight] wasn’t as tough as the last one because I was in better shape. At the post-fight press conference he had sunglasses on, and I had a little scratch on my left eye. I punch a hell of a lot harder than him, and he punches a hell of a lot more often than I do. It came down to the judges: some love power, some love you being busy.”

Alpha travelled to Chicago for the title fight, and got a stunning insight into the glamour and pain of big time boxing.



➤ **GLOVE WORK:** Training at the Crunch Gym in Chicago, four days before the fight. Trainer Johnny Lewis gets Briggs to do “focus” pad work. “We are tapering – but saying that, it is a good, solid hour-and-a-half working hard.”



➤ **THE STRETCH:** After a strength work-out, masseur Clint Hill helps Briggs stretch at the public gym. “Everyone just gives us privacy and lets us train, and (they) come up and chat with us afterwards.”



➤ **JUST THE TONIC:** On the walk back to the hotel, Briggs drinks a smoothie containing ingredients good for recovery. “They are completely fruit – no water or milk or anything else – plus protein powders.”