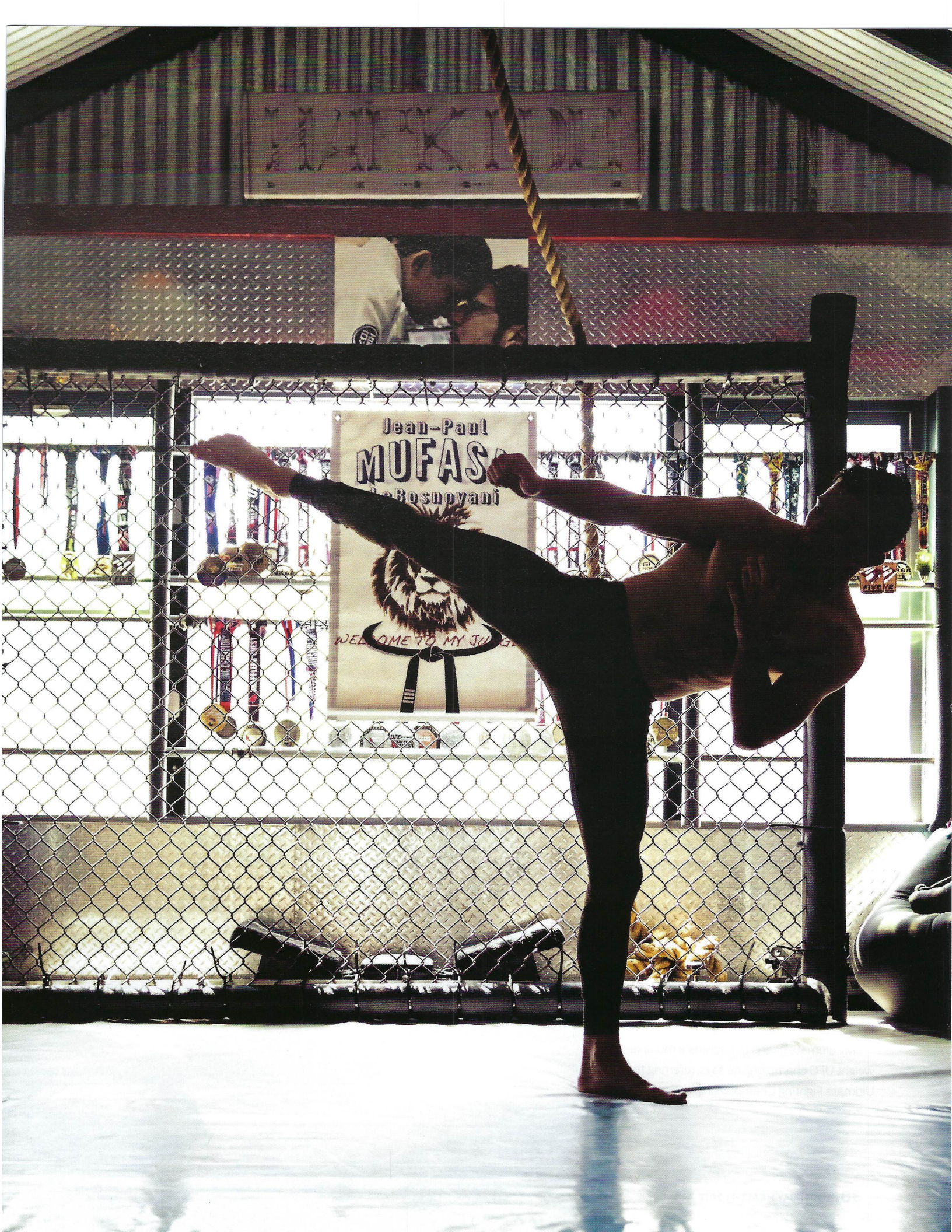


# CLINCHING DREAMS

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PASSION AND FOCUS DRIVE AN  
18-YEAR-OLD JIU-JITSU CHAMPION  
IN SEARCH OF HIS NEXT WIN.

WRITTEN BY NANCY SOKOLER STEINER  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JEFF BERTING



Jean-Paul  
**MUFASA**  
Le Bosnoyani  
WELCOME TO MY JUNGLE

**J**ean-Paul Lebosnoyani is sparring with his friend Kelly McNamee prior to competing in the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation's Pan American Games the following day. As the pair parry, Kelly lands a blow to Jean-Paul's face.

"Nice shiner," says their coach. "Keep going."

Jean-Paul expects a tough approach from his coach, with whom he's been training since around age 3. And the Mira Costa High School senior demands just as much from himself.

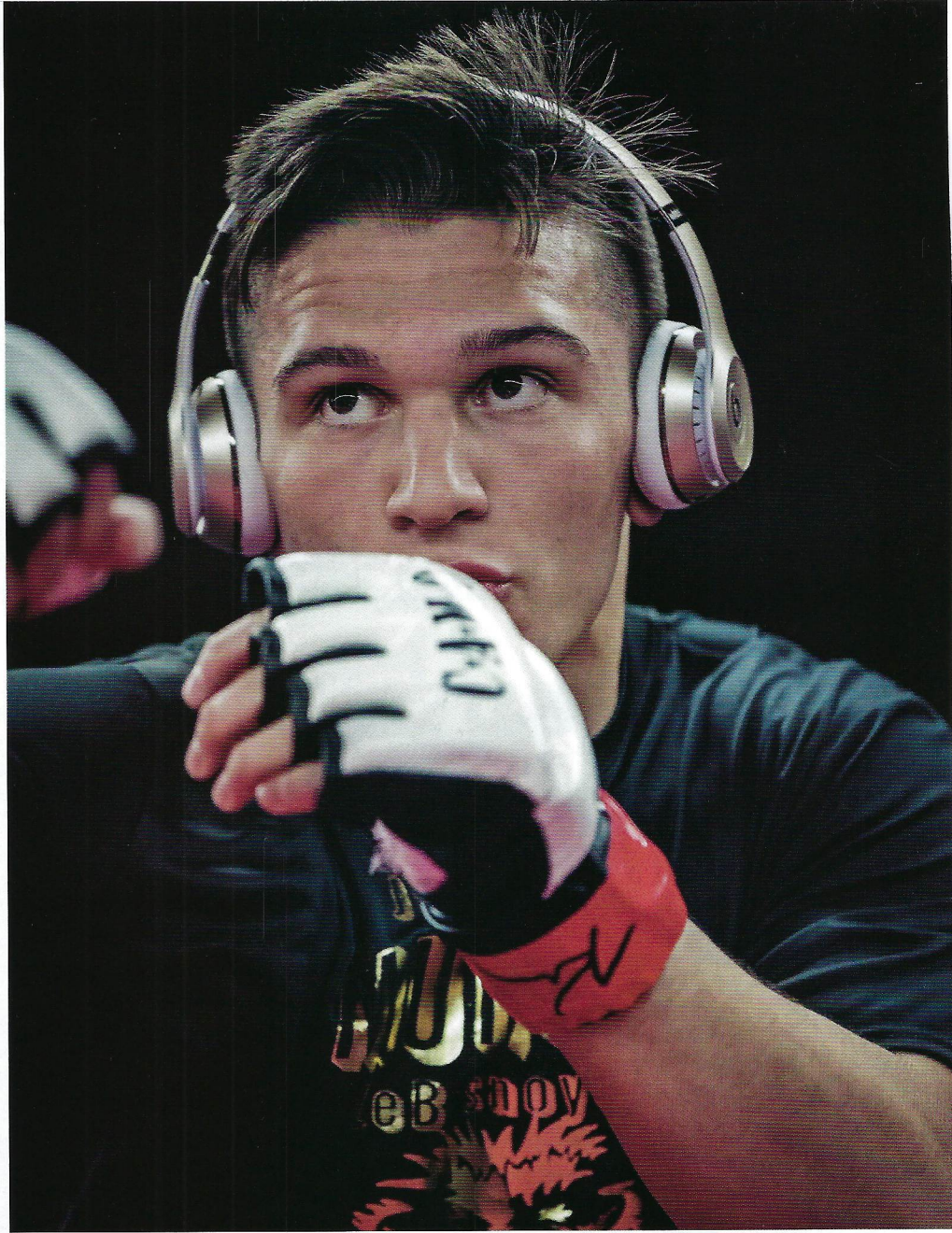
In fact, you could say Jean-Paul has jiu-jitsu in his blood. His coach is his father, Nono Lebosnoyani—a black belt in hapkido and jiu-jitsu and owner of Nono's MMA on Pier Avenue in Hermosa Beach.

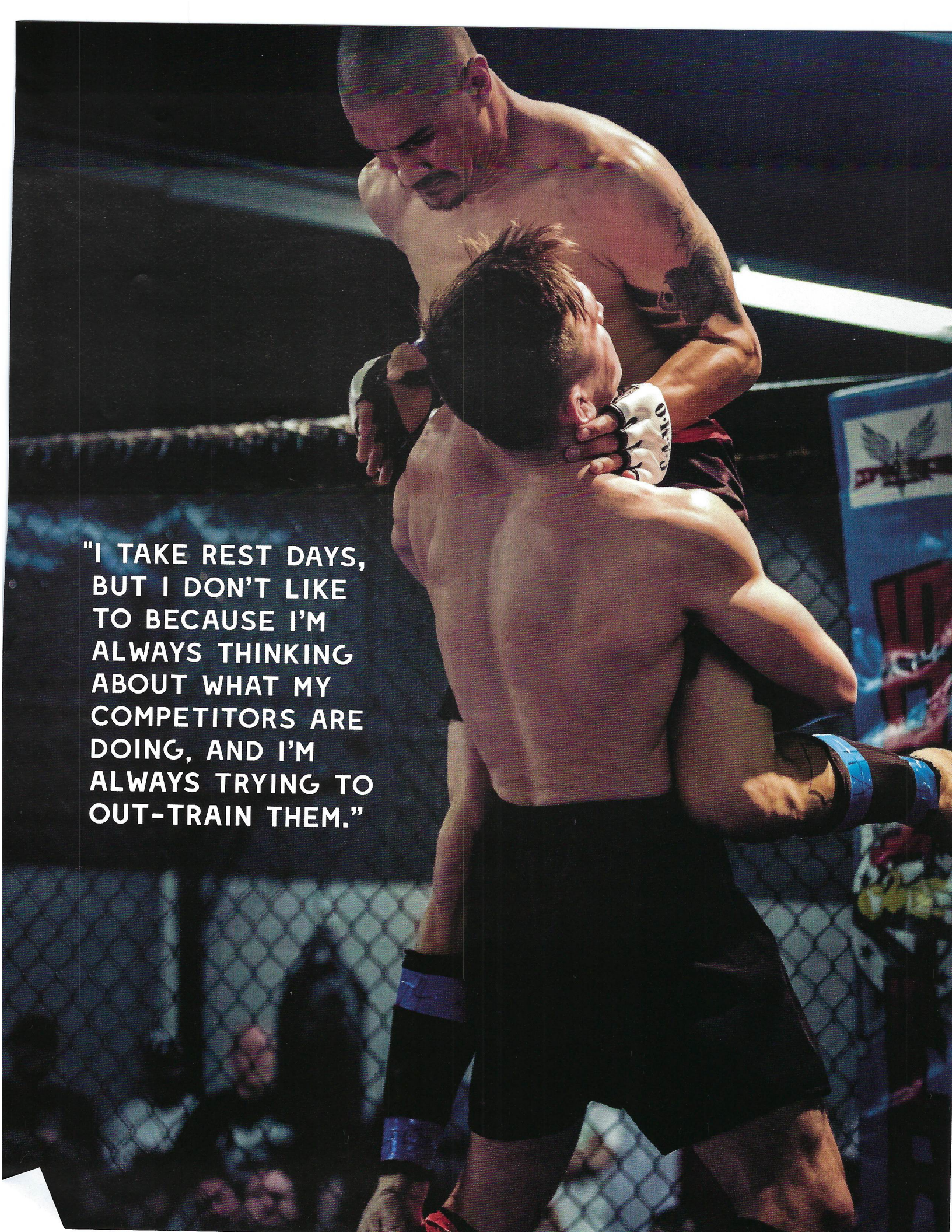
"As a teacher, once in a while you see one person out of hundreds [with the potential to become a champion]," says Nono. "Jean-Paul was one of those. Lucky for me, he had the drive."

Brazilian jiu-jitsu harnesses strength, leverage and energy to control and overcome larger, stronger or more aggressive opponents. The art made its way from Japan to Brazil in the early 20th century and was popularized in the United States by the Gracie family. Helio Gracie taught Brazilian jiu-jitsu to Nono, who in turn coached Helio's son, UFC Hall of Famer Royce Gracie.

Jean-Paul started competing at age 6 and has earned a slew of awards, many of which adorn his father's academy. In addition to excelling in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, he is a multiple champion in the North American Grappling Association and ranked #5 among California high school students in his weight class for wrestling. (His sister, Bianca, who also trains with their father, is also among the top Brazilian jiu-jitsu fighters in her age and weight class.)

"My ultimate goal is to become a multiple-weight UFC champion," he says, referring to the Ultimate Fighting Championship—the largest





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## JEAN PAUL'S YEAR IN HEALTH

### WEEKDAY ITINERARY

Have breakfast. Attend school. Have lunch. Train in MMA (mixed martial arts) with his father. Lift weights at the gym. Do swimming sprints. Take a 30-minute nap. Have dinner. Train in jiu-jitsu at Carlson Gracie South Bay. Do more MMA training at Carlson Gracie with friends and sparring partner. Bedtime.

### NUTRITION

**Breakfast:** protein shake with protein powder, blackberries, banana, granola, honey and almond milk

**Snacks:** cashews, mixed yogurt cup with granola and fruit

**Lunch and dinner:** chicken, rice and vegetables

**Drinks:** five or six 16-ounce bottles of water

### GUILTY PLEASURE

Indulging at In & Out Burger after competitions

### FITNESS ACTIVITY HE'D LIKE TO TRY:

Yoga

mixed martial arts promoter in the world. Jean-Paul trains in kickboxing and wrestling along with jiu-jitsu—all of which he would wield in UFC fighting.

"I've made a name for myself in the wrestling world. I've made a name for myself in jiu-jitsu," he says. "Now it's time to make the leap into combining all these sports in the mixed martial arts world."

Each weekday, Jean-Paul trains for about six hours, including MMA training with his father, weight-lifting, swimming and jiu-jitsu training at Carlson Gracie South Bay in Torrance—on top of attending high school. On weekends he competes, generally entailing seven or eight jiu-jitsu matches or one MMA fight.

"Most people look at my training regimen and think I'm a psychopath," he says. "But I put myself into this environment, and I've adapted to it. It's become very normal to me."

Jean-Paul accepts the time commitment and physical demands because he likes the results. "I feel the happiest when I win, because the hard work paid off for that moment. I take rest days, but I don't like to because I'm always thinking about what my competitors are doing, and I'm always trying to out-train them," he says. "Also I love it. There's nothing I'd rather be doing."

He emphasizes that martial artists are exactly that: artists. "It takes a lot of time and work and etching away at your flaws in movement and technique. It takes a lot of studying and thinking and visualizing. I'd say what I do is probably 10% physical and 90% mental."

"It pays off in ways other than success," he adds. "You're constantly learning. You're constantly making new friends. You're bettering yourself as a human being every time you step on the mat." ■