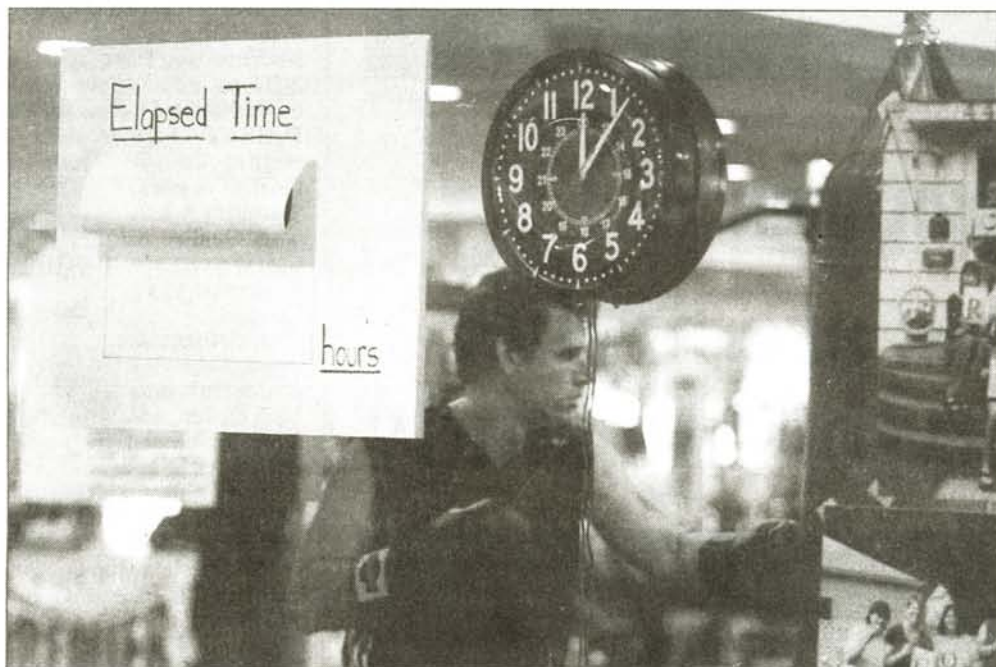


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ENCINO



Phil McCarten/Staff Photographer

Ron Sarchian began Tuesday in his attempt to break the world record for hitting a punching bag, at Premier Fitness in Encino. The current record is 24 hours, 16 minutes.

Man hopes to punch his way into history

By Jason Kandel
Staff Writer

With short bursts from his chiseled arms, actor Ron Sarchian punched a 100-pound bag every two seconds — something he'll have to do 86,400 times if he reaches his goal of breaking the world record for longevity at the event.

Sarchian set out at midday Tuesday to top the 24 hours and 16 minutes listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the record time for punching the heavy bag.

"I'm doing this until Thursday — that's 48 hours. I want to shatter the record," Sarchian said between punches of the bag at Premier Fitness. "I'm going to punch till I drop."

Working to the count set by a metronome, Sarchian's goal would mean 86,000 punches over 48 hours. Even beating the current record would take more than 43,680 punches.

Sarchian, a 6-foot-1, 200-pound actor who once played a hit man on the daytime drama "General Hospital," was an amateur karate full-contact fighter in Seattle, until a roundhouse kick from his

competitor broke his nose and ended his career in 1995.

"I had my nose fixed four years ago," he said. "No more fighting for me."

So now Sarchian, who is also a kickboxing instructor, has decided to take on an inanimate foe: a heavy bag that can't punch back.

He's also using the punch-athon to raise money for the Lance Armstrong Foundation, named for the bicyclist who survived testicular cancer to win the Tour de France. Sarchian, whose father died of testicular cancer at age 33, had raised about \$2,000 by Tuesday night.

Always interested in the Guinness Book of World Records, and wanting to belong to an exclusive club, he learned of the punching bag record set in the mid 1990s by Eunan Devenney.

"A lot of people ask if (Sarchian) is crazy," said friend Scott McKay, who volunteered to supervise Sarchian. "But he set a goal. And he's going for it."

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