

Boxing News: NBC's The Contender Is Contending

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LOS ANGELES, March 22 - The momentum is building on and off screen for NBC's hard-hitting reality series, "The Contender," with the remaining 12 boxers trying to avoid elimination, while viewers across the nation continue to tune-in to the show *Newsday* and the New York *Daily News* has called "a knockout."

The March 20th episode of "The Contender," which featured the return of Peter Manfredo Jr. and a stirring tribute to fallen contender Najai Turpin, displayed impressive ratings muscle in its second regular-slot telecast, up 30% from last week's Sunday premiere in the 18 to 49 demographic, and up 40% versus NBC's regular-program average in the time period prior to "The Contender." The 3.5 rating is NBC's highest 18 to 49 rating in the time period with regular programming since January 11, 2004.

"The Contender" has also taken the Internet by storm, with the show ranking third among Overall Top Movers on the March 22 edition of Yahoo.com's "Buzz Index" of Top Yahoo Web Searches, and first among television shows, beating out Sunday night buzz rival "Desperate Housewives."

NBC's "The Contender" returns on Sunday, March 27 (8pm ET/PT).

"The Contender" follows 16 professional boxers as they come to a training camp to follow their dream of becoming a champion. The driving force behind the series is the pursuit of the American dream and the natural trials, tribulations and heartbreak inherent in that quest. The canvas of the show gives viewers a first hand look into the real life hopes, triumphs and defeats of the contestants and how this single-minded, consuming commitment affects their families. The final two boxers will fight live at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas on May 24th for one-million dollars and the chance to change their lives and the lives of the people they love forever. "The Contender" is a joint production between Mark Burnett Productions, DreamWorks Television and Rogue Marble Productions. Sylvester Stallone, Mark Burnett and Jeffrey Katzenberg are the executive producers. Jeff Wald is co-executive producer.

For more information on "The Contender", visit www.nbc.com/nbc/The_Contender/