Only a handful of women have more than 50 professional fights and Christy Martin – the prizefighter known as the “Coalminer’s Daughter” – is one of the few.

Martin, a native of West Virginia, faces Angelica Martinez (5-2-1) on Oct. 6 in a 10-round contest in the Couer d’Alene Casino in Worley, Idaho. It won’t be televised.

Now 38, Martin has endured almost every type of challenge imaginable in the sport of boxing including world title matches, fighting with little notice and sometimes without pay. But one thing is still missing: a fight with Lucia Rijker.

“I haven’t spoken to her since the fight was canceled,” said Martin (46-4-2, 31 KOs), who was scheduled to meet her nemesis Rijker a year ago in a much-publicized event that was scrapped within two weeks of the fight. Rijker was allegedly cut down by an injury but no records of her injury were ever released.

It was a sizzling matchup that many boxing fans had anticipated since 1999 when both were recognized as the top women boxers in the world, especially since they seemed to hate each other with a passion.

The hate began in 1999 when Martin appeared at a press conference at the old Olympic Auditorium to publicize a pending fight. Suddenly Rijker, who had been hungrily seeking a fight with Martin, appeared during the press conference to challenge the West Virginia boxer to a showdown. It quickly turned into an ugly scene where both women exchanged punches and noses were bloodied.

At the time, many debated over which woman was the best female fighter in the world: Martin with her one-punch power or Rijker with her overall speed and technique. Despite several attempts to get the two in the ring, it did not materialize.

“What can I do to get this lady in the ring,” said Rijker during a World Boxing Hall of Fame ceremony in 2001.

When Martin accepted a challenge from Mia St. John in 2002 in Pontiac, Michigan, there was Rijker in the audience shouting taunts.

“She was basically stalking me,” said Martin who beat St. John that night by a surprise decision, not a knockout.

After St. John, Martin challenged the much bigger Laila Ali in an enormously popular match that saw more than 8,000 people crowd a Mississippi casino to watch the two female boxing icons. Ali won by knockout but Martin had proved her mettle. Rijker seethed with anger.

“I wanted to be the one to knock out Christy Martin,” said Rijker, who then challenged Ali to no avail.

“Lucia Rijker is a gifted fighter but she’s no match for me. I proved that against Christy Martin. She’s too small,” said Ali after the fight. “It’s not going to prove a thing.”

A year later, when the Academy Award-winning motion picture “Million Dollar Baby” captured the hearts of millions, boxing promoter Bob Arum was convinced that it was time for Martin to meet Rijker in a million dollar match.

At the swanky Beverly Hills Hotel the two adversaries met with Top Rank’s Arum and gleefully posed for photos. Both were ecstatic that their dream of a lucrative payday was about to be fulfilled. But a few weeks before the fight was to take place in Las Vegas on July 30, 2005, it was burst like a bubble. The fight was canceled and never rescheduled.

“I still don’t know what happened,” said Martin who never received a penny for that fight despite spending money for training and sparring partners. “I was in the best shape of my career.”

Rijker disappeared from public view like a boxing version of Greta Garbo. Rumors swirled that she was not really hurt and others claim she was overcome with fear.

“I still have not talked to her,” Martin said.

Fighting back depression after spending weeks in intense training, Martin decided to accept a match with a fighter named Holly “Hottie” Holm a hometown favorite in New Mexico. Martin was shut out on all three scorecards against the always moving southpaw.

“I never got hit. In every fight I get marks and swelling but I didn’t hit all night,” said Martin. “I thought at least the Nevada judge would give me the fight or most of the rounds because I was the aggressor, but he didn’t…I’d like to fight her again but somewhere else. Not in New Mexico.”

Now Martin faces Martinez, a fighter who fought Holm three times resulting in two losses and a draw.

“She likes to come forward,” said Martin of Martinez. “So do I.”

Though she’s preparing diligently as ever, the empty feeling of a job left undone remains with Martin.

“If Lucia Rijker can read this I still want to fight her,” Martin says. “We have unfinished business.”