

Boxing and Christmas in L.A.

It happens every year in Los Angeles when the glittery elite meet with East Los Angeles area students on behalf of the Oscar De La Hoya Foundation.

You won't see anything like it anywhere else.

Each year before the Christmas holidays, De La Hoya's foundation sponsors a charity fundraising event to raise money for the disadvantaged in East Los Angeles where the champion prizefighter was born and raised. Millions have been raised from the event.

More than 1,500 showed up at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Wednesday night including George Lopez who emceed the event, Antonio Banderas, Melanie Griffin, Rick Fox, Marilu Henner, Jeffrey Katzenberg and many others. Everyone was there to spend their time and money to benefit the foundation that gives money toward numerous charity groups and schools including the Oscar De La Hoya High School students.

Several students were on hand to receive scholarships and recognition.

Perhaps Banderas said it best when he said De La Hoya has shown the way to remember where he came from by doing what he can especially for the children.

Sugar Shane Mosley was on hand with his wife Jin Mosley. Shane gave a toast honoring his former foe and current business partner. Boxing is funny like that. One day they're both tearing each other apart the next day their toasting each other.

Mosley is getting ready for a return to the welterweight division. Word has it, he has his sights on IBF titleholder Kermit Cintron in February.

"I've been working out a bit at Azusa," Mosley said.

The real work begins after the holidays.

Toy giveaway

This Saturday, on Dec. 9, Golden Boy Promotions along with the Inner City Games Los Angeles and the Hollenbeck Youth Center will have a Christmas toy give away for children in front of the Hollenbeck Youth Center located at 2015 East 1st Street in Boyle Heights.

If you want to see excitement venture down to East Los Angeles and take a gander at all the happy faces anxious to get their toys and meet De La Hoya and others. Along with De La Hoya will be several world champions and contenders including Daniel Ponce de Leon, Israel

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Vazquez, Librado Andrade, Abner Mares and Enrique Ornelas.

The event last from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the crowd is expected to swell beyond 10,000 people.

It should be a lot of fun.

WBC and Soto

Humberto Soto keeps winning title elimination fights but seems to get further and further from his goal. His promoter Top Rank is furious.

“Something has to be done about this,” said Bob Arum, the president of Top Rank.

In his last fight on August 12, Soto knocked out Ivan Valle in a match that was described as an elimination bout to fight for the WBC junior lightweight title. On August 20, 2005, he handed Rocky Juarez his first defeat in a bout for the WBC featherweight interim title. He also defended the WBC interim title successfully against Oscar Leon on Feb. 17, 2006. But he’s never fought for the actual world title.

Arum says the elimination and interim titles must be validated or stopped entirely.

“We paid sanctioning fees for Soto in his last fight,” Arum said, adding that Manny Pacquiao will not seek a match with WBC junior lightweight titleholder Marco Antonio Barrera despite winning the fight against Erik Morales for the purported WBC final elimination bout.

WBC Chairman emeritus Jose Sulaiman, who is based in Mexico City, said Soto was not fighting in a final elimination bout when he beat Valles.

“The WBC had approved a final elimination bout between Soto and Bobby Pacquiao, but he (Pacquiao) stepped out of the bout,” stated Sulaiman. “Top Rank requested a substitute in Ivan Valles, who is a very good fighter, but the WBC clearly informed the promoter that we would approve the bout as an elimination bout, but not as a final elimination bout.”

Sulaiman added that Manny Pacquiao was rated number one and Morales number two. Soto is now rated number three and must fight another elimination bout to maintain his ranking. Andre Berto alert

Florida’s Andre Berto (15-0) will appear on HBO on Saturday in a welterweight contest against Miguel Figueroa. The muscular fighter appeared last April in a Palm Springs fight card where he stopped Horatio Garcia in three rounds. He’s looking to make a big impact in the boxing world. He has one world champion impressed.

“Believe me, Andre Berto will be a world champion soon,” said Winky Wright who sparred with Berto in Las Vegas. “Ike Quartey is not as strong as Andre Berto. He’s got all of the tools.”

Figueroa (24-5-2) fights out of New Jersey and had a draw against talented Larry Mosley in

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March 2006.

Mighty Mike returns

Former WBO junior lightweight titleholder Mighty Mike Anchondo returns to the ring after a year off on Thursday Dec. 14, at the Irvine Marriott Hotel. The Baldwin Park resident meets Armando Cordoba in an eight-round bout. For tickets and information call (949) 760-3131.