

Battle For Women's No. 1 P4P – Holm Or Hernandez?

Written by David A. Avila
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A smoldering debate has arisen regarding who is the best female prizefighter pound for pound: Holly "Hottie" Holm or Melissa "I Am Womyn's Boxing" Hernandez.

In the west many argue Holm has strafed through the junior welterweight, welterweight, and junior middleweight divisions against many of the biggest names of those aforementioned divisions.

In the east Hernandez has eaten up opponents in the featherweight, junior lightweight, and lightweight divisions. Her list of victims is equally as impressive as Holm's.

Holm (25-1-3, 7 KOs) and Hernandez (11-1-2, 4 KOs) will settle the debate on Friday at the Isleta Casino in Albuquerque, New Mexico in a 10 round welterweight battle called Bad Blood. It can be seen for \$8.95 on web cast at www.fresquezproductions.com

Bad blood may exist between them but this is more a statement to determine the best female prizefighter on the planet. In the last three years a number of fighters have engaged in some riveting fights. Hernandez and Holm are thick in the middle.

"I asked for this fight because women's boxing needs a new face, a new breed of fighter," says Hernandez, 29, a quick witted and dippy-do kind of fighter who can steal a show with her antics and skills. "I've always wanted to see how good I really am. And why not?"

With a five or six inch height disadvantage and coupled with the weight difference, can Hernandez step up to another weight division and do what she does?

"I'm just trying to get ready for the size of Holly, not the fight," Hernandez said.

The Bronx fighter of Puerto Rican descent has that entertainer quality to accompany her slick boxing skills that make fans laugh and squeal with delight. On her resume she has victories over Melissa Fiorentino, Layla McCarter, Lisa Brown and a draw with Chevelle Hallback.

Both McCarter and Hallback are two Pound for Pound fighter candidates too.

Holm, an extremely athletic fighter who can box and move as easily as she can stand and fight, has become a major box office attraction in the New Mexico area where few other sports stars reside.

"I really want to challenge anybody that wants to fight. I know she can be really tough and definitely fights with heart. And she will present some difficulties," said Holm, 28, who is identifiable with her strawberry blonde hair and tall stature. "I'm ready for any opponent at any time. I definitely want it to be against good fighters."

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Early in her career there was some speculation that she was the recipient of hometown decisions. Even this writer contemplated that her wins might be tainted, but when her fights became televised and she opted to fight outside of her home state, myself and others saw why Holm was winning all of her fights.

She has exceptional athleticism and determination.

Victories over Ann Saccarato, Jane Couch, Mary Jo Sanders and Hallback have proven she can handle the heat from intense pressure fighters and remain focused against the often varying styles in the ring. She's very serene inside the ropes.

"Every fight is something different. Chevelle Hallback stayed low. I threw that uppercut. My whole plan is to take them out of their plan to make them frustrated," says Holm whose boyfriend Joey Villasenor is a ranked mixed martial arts fighter. "When you see them frustrated you know you're doing your job."

Both Hernandez and Holm have analyzed each other looking for weaknesses and probing for idiosyncrasies like two opposing generals. It's not in either fighter's nature to concede and both have enormous pride in themselves.

How can Hernandez beat Holm?

"You beat her by being me," laughs Hernandez who plans to open up her own boxing gym in South Beach, Florida. "Holly isn't a good fighter, she's just a big fighter with all the balls in her court. But I asked for this fight. I wanted to see how good I was."

How do you beat a fighter like Hernandez?

"I'm sure she is working on something different. Her style and all around style I'm sure is going to be different," said Holm who plans to open up a health and beauty salon with wooden floors in the near future in Albuquerque. "She switches to lefty, she tries to be a hard to read fighter who is hard to hit. I expect to have to adjust to all of these things."

On Friday it will be just Holm against Hernandez to determine the best female fighter pound for pound in the world.