

Kaliesha West Fights Angel Gladney On Sept. 18 At Staples

Written by David A. Avila
Thursday, 12 August 2010 19:00

Kaliesha West, the number one ranked bantamweight in the world, will fight Angel Gladney for the vacant WBO bantamweight world title.

Guess what?

Golden Boy Promotions will break precedent in hosting the female title fight and it will be staged at Staples Center on Sept. 18 in Los Angeles. Those are both historic moments for both West and female prizefighting.

One other thing: it's the only world title fight on the entire fight card.

"I'm kind of in shock that it's happening," said West, 22, after learning that her fight was officially approved. "I was so happy and in tears of joy cause we're making a change for women's boxing."

Unable to find opportunities in this country, Team West flew first to Denmark this past March to contend for a vacant nondescript world title against former champion Anita Christensen that ended in a draw. Then flew to Lima, Peru to knock out Brazil's knockout punching Vanessa Guimaraes.

Juan West, who is Kaliesha's father and trainer, said he needed a few minutes outside the parking lot of his job to appreciate the moment.

"I got emotional," said West, a former pro boxer who has trained his daughter for the ring for 11 years. "It feels like the ultimate compliment."

Ever since Golden Boy Promotions formed they have never staged a female world title bout. In fact, neither has Staples Center though they had opportunities to do so when Laila Ali, Jessica Rakoczy, Sumya Anani and Lucia Rijker fought on shows in that arena.

Instead, it will be the perky little girl who lives in Moreno Valley and trains in Riverside while working as a valet and going to school.

"I feel like I'm blessed," said West, a pretty 118-pound bantamweight with an electric fighting style that wowed crowds in Europe and South America. "There are a lot of girls that deserve to be on a fight card like this."

Claudia Ollis, who advises West, said the world will finally see that female prizefighting has evolved into something more than two girls fighting.

"All over the world they love female boxing," said Ollis who traveled with West to both Denmark and Peru. "It's just here in the United States that we're behind. It doesn't have to be that

Kaliesha West Fights Angel Gladney On Sept. 18 At Staples

Written by David A. Avila

Thursday, 12 August 2010 19:00

way.?

Currently many consider West the top bantamweight in the world without a world title. She can mend that on Sept. 18 on the under card of the Sergio Mora versus Shane Mosley fight.

West (12-1-2) is fighting Gladney (6-2-1, 5 KOs) a knockout puncher out of South Carolina who usually fights at featherweight. It's not uncommon for female prizefighters to jump up and down in weight divisions to find opponents.

'This girl is cocky, confident and strong,' said Juan West of Gladney. 'Denmark and Peru were just tune ups for this moment. This is big.'

Kaliesha, who took this call while emerging from a hard workout at the boxing gym, said it's good to finally fight at home.

'I've been going to other countries and coming in as the opponent,' said West who makes friends easily. 'I'm asking for all my family and all my friends to come and support me so I can finally hear the crowd cheer me.'