

Kaliesha West & Friends Back In Action On Thursday

Written by David A. Avila
Monday, 18 January 2010 18:00

Kaliesha "Wild Wild" West spearheads a Southern California fight card that includes three of her Riverside team mates on Thursday at San Manuel Casino.

After a very meager 2009, West (11-1) hopes her fight with former three-division world champion Ada Velez (16-3-2) indicates that 2010 will be more lucrative or at least busier than a previous recession starved 12 months.

"Before that I fought about five times. I was so active throughout the year (in 2008) then last year, I was not getting any action. You would think I would because I had just lost to Ava Knight. I was real surprised I only got one fight," said West.

Despite knowing more than a month in advance that she would be included on the San Manuel fight card, it was still difficult to find an opponent. Age restrictions forced Brittany Cruz off the card and others were unable to be considered. Only Velez was acceptable because of her pure talent.

"I love when two women who are real good come together to meet. The crowd gets to see something spectacular and I really love it," said West, 21. "When you have two women who are really good and mean we're putting it on the map for women's boxing."

Velez, a southpaw who lives and trains in Florida, has fought numerous greats in the past. The Puerto Rican boxer has been inactive for the past two years due to legal problems. But she's very capable of derailing West.

West says there is only one regret in taking this fight with Velez.

"I wish it were more rounds," said West, who will be fighting at a contracted weight of more than 122 pounds though she considers herself a 118-pound bantamweight. "I'm excited about fighting Ada Velez. Anytime you get two good fighters it's going to be exciting for the fans."

Other fighters from West's gym on the card are Jose Reynoso (11-3) who meets Azusa's undefeated junior welterweight Aris Ambriz (13-0). A fight of this magnitude is usually televised but you'll have to witness this in person.

Riverside's Reynoso, 25, has been fighting professionally since 2003. The former Golden Gloves winner has fluctuated up and down in weight until stabilizing as a 140-pound junior welterweight.

"The guys were too big for him at 147 pounds," said Charlie Perez one of Reynoso's two managers. "He's much better at this weight."

The lanky southpaw has won seven of his last eight pro fights. That one loss came in a brutal

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eight round fight that saw Reynoso survive three knockdowns and rally to give former Irish Olympian Dean Byrne his toughest scrap. Both fighters were injured as Byrne suffered a bad cut and the Riverside boxer injured his hand.

“My hand is much better now,” said Reynoso who proved it with a six round win over veteran Fernando Montilla of the Philippines.

“He was in great condition for that fight,” said Ruben Castanon who co-manages Reynoso. “He’s in better condition for this fight coming up.”

Ariz is a tall junior welterweight who packs a punch.

“I’m even more ready for this fight than my last,” Reynoso said.

Also on the San Manuel Card will be South El Monte’s southpaw prospect Ricky Duenas who seems to improve more and more with his timing and natural fighting instincts. San Bernardino’s Artemio Reyes Jr. has that look of a much better fighter than he shows. Despite suffering knock downs in two previous fights, he’s managed to rally and win. That’s a good attribute, but he can do much better. And finally Moreno Valley’s Sean Solomon gets to show local folks what he can do. The southpaw bantamweight has quickness and pop.

For tickets and information (800) 359-2464.

Friday

On Friday, about 25 miles west of San Bernardino, it will be Thompson Boxing Promotions bringing its first show of 2010 and in the main event Venezuela’s Patrick “El Elegante” Lopez (17-2, 11 KOs) collides with bad news John Brown (24-16-2) a former contender. Brown has fought a who’s who of lightweights and junior welterweights like the late Diego “Chico” Corrales to current welterweight kingpin Sugar Shane Mosley. The small but powerful Brown is the gate keeper for junior welterweight contenders. It should be an interesting match.

Also on the Ontario fight card will be Riverside’s undefeated Hector Serrano getting a huge test against Mexico’s iron-chinned Cristian Favela (17-23-6). Forget Favela’s record. All of his fights are brutal or super competitive. Carson’s lightweight Daniel Hernandez and Riverside’s junior middleweight Albert Herrera will also try to remain undefeated in separate bouts.

For tickets and information (714) 935-0900.