



RISING STARS LATEEF KAYODE AND LUIS FRANCO ON DISPLAY ON SHOBOX: THE NEW GENERATION Dec. 3, 2010, FROM CHUMASH CASINO RESORT

Unbeaten Roach Disciple Takes on Ed Perry in Cruiserweight Main Event;

Former Cuban Olympian Faces Eric Hunter in Super Featherweight Co-Feature.

Live on SHOWTIME® at 11:05 p.m. ET from Santa Ynez, Calif.

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NEW YORK (Nov. 30, 2010) – Lateef “Power” Kayode figures it’s just a matter of time before he is stopped by a stranger beyond the corner of Hollywood Blvd. and Vine near where he lives and is recognized for knocking people out in the ring.

The Top-10 world-ranked undefeated cruiserweight and Freddie Roach-trained Kayode (14-0, 13 KOs) is on the verge of breakout stardom and SHOWTIME® boxing fans will have another chance to catch this rising star on ShoBox: The New Generation, Friday, Dec. 3, LIVE on SHOWTIME® (11:05 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast) from the Chumash Casino Resort in Santa Ynez, Calif.

“I get recognized around my neighborhood but I want the world to know me now,” said the 6-foot-2, 27-year-old Kayode from Lagos, Nigeria, who will fight savvy veteran Ed “The Georgia Thumper” Perry (17-4-2, 10 KOs) of Frankfort, Ind., in a 10-round cruiserweight main event. “The more people who know me the better. Hopefully they will stop me now and say, ‘Hey, I saw you knock that guy out on SHOWTIME.’ ”

In the co-feature former Cuban Olympian Luis “La Estrella” Franco (7-0, 5 KOs) also continues to make a name for himself when he faces Eric “Outlaw” Hunter (15-1, 8 KOs) in a 10-round super featherweight bout.

Having a world-class trainer like Roach in your corner doesn’t hurt a young fighter’s budding profile. Some boxing experts have tabbed Kayode, who is managed by Hollywood writer and director Steven Feder and promoted by Gary Shaw, one of the most intriguing cruiserweight prospects the division has seen in years who only lacks a little bit of seasoning. Roach, who trains the world’s best fighter Manny Pacquiao and Kayode at the famed Wild Card Gym in Hollywood, has been working with Kayode for almost two years.

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Roach will once again be in Kayode's corner on Friday night. "Lateef has been blessed with a natural gift of power," said Roach, who was named Trainer of the Year by the Boxing Writers Association of America in 2003, 2006, 2008 and 2009. "He will fight for a world title someday. I'm not sure when but he will get that shot. That's what we're working for everyday."

As far as adjusting to the new-found fame, Roach said some fighters handle the limelight better than others. "He seems to really embrace the notoriety and wants to be well-known. Like so many things, it just comes naturally to him."

The WBC ranked No. 6 and WBO No. 8-ranked Kayode is coming off a sixth-round technical knockdown against Epifanio Mendoza on a ShoBox undercard fight Oct. 15 at Buffalo Run Casino in Miami, Okla. It was the 12th consecutive knockout for the fighter dubbed "Power" who has continued to step up his opposition and went the deepest (sixth round) he has ever gone in his pro career in his last fight.

"Freddie's been with Lateef since his third fight," said Feder. "We're not calling Lateef a world champion yet or watching tape of the Steve Cunninghams or the other top fighters in the division. We're just paying attention to the fight that's in front of us."

"Activity is one thing Gary (Shaw) has brought us. We needed rounds. We needed experience. We were never telling him to get the early knockdown. We were looking for experience. We don't walk in there telling him to knock the guy out. If he has to go the distance he has to know he's OK there. I don't put it in his head that he's the knockout champion. Freddie jokes with him all the time and tells him there's no belt for knockouts. There's only one belt and that's for the world title."

Added Kayode, who fought his first 10 fights as a heavyweight, "Some people think I go into the ring to knock the guy out. I don't. I go into box. Of course everyone wants to see the knockout but I have to be patient and know it will come when it comes."

In Perry, Kayode will face a veteran who is days away from turning 35 and a six-year professional who is undefeated in his last nine fights (7-0-1, 1 NSF). His last loss was by a six-round split decision against former accomplished amateur Nicolai Firtha in February, 2007.

"When it comes to experience, I think I've got him beat hands down," Perry said of Kayode. "Me seeing what Lateef can do and knowing what I can do, this should be a good SHOWTIME fight for everybody. That's what we are – entertainers. It should be a good test for him. I've had a few tests, so I know what it takes. I know how a real test feels, too."

Kayode learned to fight on the mean streets of the Surulere district of Lagos after being bullied. He would go on to become the top Nigerian amateur heavyweight, winning gold medals in Pan-African competitions in Ghana, Morocco and Algeria. He tried to qualify for the 2008 Olympic Games but missed the competition and decided to turn pro instead.

Feder says Kayode has what it takes to make it all the way and he couldn't be happier leading the young man's career. He predicts it won't be long now before he is known the world over and

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not just in Hollywood. "Even the cops in town know who he is," Feder said. "He could talk his way out of a ticket around there now. He's a real likable kid. Inside the ring I wouldn't want to be in there with him but outside he's just a really great kid."

Franco, currently ranked No. 13 in the IBF, is hoping his career can go the same way as it has for his former Cuban Olympic teammate and countryman Guillermo Rigondeaux, a two-time Olympic gold medalist who recently won the WBA junior featherweight title on the Manny Pacquiao-Antonio Margarito undercard in just his seventh professional fight.

Franco had more than 400 amateur fights and was 2-2 in the amateur ranks against former teammate Yuriorkis Gamboa. He also has a winning record against another former teammate Erislandy Lara, a fast-rising junior middleweight.

Franco defected in 2009 and currently lives in Miami. He is coming off his best win as a pro in his last fight on Sept. 17 on ShoBox -- an eight-round decision win against Wilton Hilario.

He is managed by Henry Foster, who also manages SHOWTIME Super Six World Boxing Classic semifinalist Glen Johnson. "This will be his first 10-round fight, but we've always trained as if we're fighting 10 rounds," Foster said. "His conditioning won't be a problem."

Foster said he planned to retire from the sport when Johnson quit fighting, but Franco has given him a new lease on his career calling him "the best boxing talent I have ever encountered at this early of a stage."

"The chance to manage Franco kept me in the game," Foster added. "Luis has great ring generalship acquired through over 400 fights. He has hand speed equal to or better than anyone else in his weight class. He is extremely elusive and hits without getting hit in return. He has no fear and will fight any opponent. All together, he's just the whole package. I feel Luis Franco will challenge for a world title in 2011, possibly by his 10th or 11th fight."

Hunter, 24, is a Philadelphia fighter who has won 10 fights in a row since his only loss in January, 2007. In that fight he lost a six-round split decision against Carlos Vinan but said after the fight that he broke his hand in the first round.

The event is promoted by Gary Shaw Productions.

Curt Menefee will call the ShoBox action from ringside with Steve Farhood and Antonio Tarver serving as expert analysts. Gordon Hall is the executive producer of ShoBox with Richard Gaughan producing and Rick Phillips directing.