

Bey-Molina Tops Friday "ShoBox"

Written by The Sweet Science
Tuesday, 16 July 2013 11:39

NEW YORK (July 16, 2013) — Two of **Mayweather Promotions'** most talented boxers, lightweight **Mickey "The Spirit" Bey Jr.** and world-rated super middleweight **Badou Jack**, will try to keep their unbeaten records intact when they face **John "The Gladiator" Molina Jr.** and **Farah "Quiet Storm" Ennis**, respectively, in co-featured fights on **ShoBox: The New Generation** live on **SHOWTIME**® this **Friday, July 19** (10 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast) from **The Joint At Hard Rock Hotel & Casino** in **Las Vegas**.

Bey, a former amateur standout from Las Vegas by way of Cleveland, is 18-0-1 with 9 KO's. Molina (25-3, 20 KO's) is a former world title challenger from Covina, Calif. Sweden's Jack, a 2008 Olympian for Gambia who also resides in Las Vegas, is 14-0 with 10 KO's. Philadelphia born-and-raised Ennis (21-2, 12 KO's) is a former NABF champion who's won four in a row. Both bouts are scheduled for 10 rounds.

Tickets for the event, which is presented by Mayweather Promotions and sponsored by Corona, are priced at \$125, \$100, \$75, \$50 and \$25, plus applicable taxes, fees and service charges, and are on sale at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Box Office, all Ticketmaster locations, online at www.ticketmaster.com or by phone at (800) 745-3000. Doors open at 5:25 p.m. PT on fight night and the first fight begins at 5:30 p.m.

Typical of ShoBox, both Bey and Jack will be facing their toughest foes to date.

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"I think in the case of Mickey Bey, he's a little bit different than other prospects featured on ShoBox and the reason for that is that he was a legitimate and heavily hyped prospect when we first had him on six years ago," noted ShoBox expert analyst and boxing historian, **Steve Farhood**

"But his career has stalled because of injuries and promotional issues. One thing that hasn't changed since 2007 is that even at the age of 30, Bey still has the profile of a top prospect. He's taking a big step up in class against power-puncher John Molina.

"Badou Jack has been looking better and better and showing good boxing skills to go along with his signature body-punching style and he too is stepping up against a veteran, yet still a prospect himself, in Farah Ennis. It'll be interesting to see whether Jack can break down Ennis over 10 rounds."

The 5-foot-9 Bey was a sensational amateur, a four-time national champion and a member of the 2004 U.S. Olympic team. He was unable to complete in the Olympic Qualifiers or Olympic Games, however, after he became ill with pneumonia after winning the Olympic Box-Offs.

Expectations were extremely high when Bey turned pro in April 2005, but his career has sputtered. Now, under the Mayweather Promotions banner, the eight-year pro seems primed for his best. A terrific boxer-puncher, he was sharp and dominant in his debut as a member of The Money Team last Feb. 2, winning his first fight in 15 months by impressive third-round knockout over **Robert Rodriguez** in Las Vegas.

However, the fight was later ruled a no-contest because Bey tested positive for elevated testosterone levels. It was a bitter setback for Bey, who maintains his innocence. While it is easy to look back, Bey has moved on and his focus is now totally on Molina. A convincing victory, he knows, will get him on track to the top.

"I should have been champion many years ago," said Bey, who's been reunited with his original trainer, **Floyd Mayweather Sr.** "When I'm on point, there isn't anybody who can hang in there with me. It's just a relief to be signed with Mayweather Promotions, who's got my best interest in mind on every level. You're going to see better performances out of me just because of that.

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"I think **John Molina** is a good fighter, tough and strong. He's got a lot of punching power and he's got a lot of knockouts. I think he's a real solid opponent. He's not the best technically, skill-wise, but he's got experience and a lot of power. That's always dangerous, although I've got a great defense. People fought him thinking they would beat him and left with a KO on their record. That's one thing I'm aware of.

"I think it's a great matchup. We went through a lot of tough opponents who wouldn't take the fight, so I'm just glad he took it."

For all his natural talent, Bey knows that dedication and work ethic are major keys to getting to where he wants to be. "I'm always in the gym. I work out all year round, even if it's not actually boxing," he said. "I don't really do too much but train. Ninety percent of the time, everything I do involves some kind of working out. I'm a fitness freak and an all-around athlete. I've been preparing for this fight for (almost two months)."

The older brother of pro fighter **Cortez Bey**, Mickey Bey possesses good skills, speed, and movement. The sharp, accurate puncher will be making his third appearance on ShoBox and first since February 2008. He says he doesn't study a lot of tape on upcoming opponents, but likes to watch videos of old fighters.

"I'm always watching tapes of guys like **Ray Robinson**," he said. "I like **Sugar Ray Leonard**, **S**

,
Muhammad Ali

,
Jersey Joe Walcott

and

Willie Pep

. I get a lot of different things from different fighters just by watching a lot.

Tommy Hearns

, too.

"It has a whole lot of influence on my style because I see a lot of things that they did back then that fighters don't do today. I think that boxing is a lost art now, where a lot of fighters really don't study the game. They can't even name a lot of old fighters.

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"I feel that if this is the sport that you're in, then you should know a lot about the history of boxing. I think Ray Robinson has influenced my style more than the others because I stay glued to him. I've been watching him since even before I started boxing. I watched his tapes for months straight every day and I still do. I'll watch his tapes at least eight days a month because I've got his whole DVD collection."

Molina will be making his fourth start on ShoBox. The 5-foot-10 ½-inch, 30-year-old turned pro in March 2006 and won his first 18 fights before losing a 10-round decision to **Martin Honorio** in his last appearance on ShoBox on Nov. 28, 2009. He's gone 7-2 since and registered a couple of impressive victories (TKO 11 over

Hank Lundy

in July 2010 and KO 4 over

Dannie Williams

on Jan. 11, 2013).

The aggressive-minded, hard-punching Molina has registered 15 victories inside three rounds, but he's lost two out of his last three, including an upset, majority 10-round decision defeat to **Andrey Klimov**

in his last outing this past June 7. Molina's other defeat came in a world title fight, a 44-second, first-round KO loss to then-WBC Lightweight World Champion

Antonio DeMarco

on Sept. 8, 2012.

"Molina was really disappointed after his last fight," said matchmaker **Tom Brown** of Molina's promoter Goossen Tutor Promotions. "He said he was going right back to the gym the following Monday, which he did. Right after the loss, he decided to go back to trainer

Joe Goossen

. John kept asking us to please find him something immediately. He wanted to get right back in there and try to get a victory.

"His back's up against the wall. He knows he needs a victory. This is a tough, dangerous fight, but it's what John asked for – to put him into something meaningful. Now he's got to do his job."

Jack trains at the Mayweather Boxing Club under the watchful eye of former WBA world light

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heavyweight champion **Eddie Mustafa Muhammad**. He's steadily ascended the 168-pound world ratings in the last year-and-a-half and is currently rated No. 6 by the WBA and No. 13 by the WBC. This will be his second ShoBox start and third on the network. He is coming off of a dominant third-round knockout win over **Michael Gbenga** on the Floyd Mayweather vs. Robert Guerrero undercard last May 4 in a preliminary fight that was featured on **SHOWTIME** from the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Vegas.

On May 11, 2012, Jack won his ShoBox debut with an eight-round split decision over previously undefeated **Alexander Brand** (17-0). In his bout after Brand, Jack flattened **Jonuel Tapia** in the first round on Feb. 2, 2013 and followed that with an eight-round unanimous decision over **Don Mouton** on Feb. 22. Next, he overpowered Gbenga.

"I always expect a tough fight," he said. "I don't know much about Ennis, but I saw about one minute of a fight of his. He seems to be a good boxer. It's going to be a good fight. I'm not worried about his style. I had 150 amateur fights so I've seen a lot of different styles. I can adapt to anything."

Jack became a member of Mayweather Promotions stable in late 2012. "I went back home to Sweden a month after the Brand fight and I stayed there for six months," he said. "I had some management problems, but Floyd helped me out. That's when I signed with Mayweather Promotions. He basically saved my career. I came back in December 2012."

The 6-foot-1, 29-year-old Jack was a European amateur standout, compiling an outstanding record of 122-28. He represented his father's country, Gambia, in the Olympics and is the only boxer ever to represent Gambia in any Olympic Games. He turned pro in June 2009, fought his first five fights in Sweden and Finland, but has fought exclusively in the United States since.

Ennis is a 6-foot-tall, 30-year-old who'll be making his ShoBox debut. In his last fight, and his first in 11 months, he scored a knockdown in the final round to secure a close, 10-round unanimous decision win over former world-rated contender **Anthony Hanshaw** (96-93 twice and 95-94) on June 7 in Shelton, Wash.

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A natural counter-puncher who is proven at the 10-round distance, Ennis has a strong boxing background. His brother **Derek** fights professionally and his father/trainer **Bozie**, was also a fighter. Farah feels he will benefit from the quick turnaround between bouts. "I took a week off and got right back in the gym after my last fight," he said. "I think I got the call (right after that). I want to stay busy. I don't want any long layoffs like before. That probably had a little effect on my performance."

Ennis only had a handful of amateur fights, and he hasn't exactly been highly hyped in a pro career that began when he was 23. He'll be the underdog in this one, but don't look for the boxer-puncher with good skills and movement to be in awe of the surroundings or his opponent.

"I'm training hard," said Ennis, whose lone defeat in a seven-year pro career came on a 10-round majority decision loss to southpaw **Alexander Johnson** on April 2, 2011. "I'm patient in the ring, but if I hurt you I'm going to get you out of there. I'm ready to go."

Mauro Ranallo will call the ShoBox action from ringside with Farhood and former World Champion **Raul Marquez** serving as expert analysts. The executive producer is **Gordon Hall** with **Richard Gaughan** producing and **Rick Phillips** directing.