

Ava Knight Fights Gloria Salas At Fantasy Springs Casino

Written by David A. Avila

Tuesday, 11 January 2011 21:04



Despite only eight professional fights tucked away, Oakland's Ava Knight already has fought three world champions in her short career.

Next up for Knight is Gloria Salas, who may not be a world champion but has never been easy for anyone.

Women's boxing returns on Friday as Knight (5-1-2) faces Salas (3-5-1) at Fantasy Springs Casino on a Golden Boy Promotions card. The winner could get possibly fight for a world championship in early spring.

Golden Boy has kept its promise about supporting women's boxing.

It's been more than 17 months since Knight last laced up for a professional prize fight. Despite a reputation as one of the best young female boxers in the United States, the talented Knight has

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been wingless as promoters, managers and other fighters have refrained from looking in her direction.

And with good reason.

Two years ago Knight met Southern California's budding super star Kaliesha "Wild Wild" West in a match pitting two youngsters with lightning reflexes, power and a lot of self-confidence. It was north versus south and the pair met in central California.

On that night in November 2008, Knight pulled out the victory after both fought in a fast-paced fight that had the crowd roaring its approval as the two fought at the bantamweight level. Knight won by unanimous decision after eight explosive rounds but it was close.

"Kaliesha West was my toughest fight," said Knight, 22, who is originally from Chico, California. "I just knew it was going to be big. She was big in the south (California). I walked into that fight as the underdog."

Knight says that the Moreno Valley prizefighter who now holds the WBO bantamweight world title hit the hardest of all her previous opponents including Mexico's WBC junior bantamweight titleholder Ana Maria Torres, who she lost to by decision.

"Those last three rounds I had to come hard," Knight said of her win against West. "My fight with Kaliesha West was definitely the toughest," said Knight, who also fought former world champion Elena "Baby Doll" Reid to a draw.

Interestingly enough, West has not lost a bout since fighting Knight two years ago and has fought two former world champions and knocked out the past two opponents. Knight hopes she can fight West again, but is not looking past Salas.

Salas, 25, lives in Desert Springs and is moving up in weight to obtain this fight that could lead to a world title bid.

"In order to get better you got to fight the best," said Salas, who trained in Indio for the fight. "This will be my first time fighting a little heavier."

In her last fight, the Desert Hot Springs boxer lost a very close decision to San Diego's Amaris Quintana.

Salas knows all about Knight's abilities.

"She's very skilled," said Salas about Knight.

Both Salas and Knight have agreed to fight at no more than 110 pounds.

The two women are set for a six round battle and eager to grab that win and a potential world championship prize fight.

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Knight recently made ties with Laguna Beach business woman Claudia Ollis, who was instrumental in helping WBO titleholder West obtain the title fight last September 18, at Staples Center.

"I found out Claudia Ollis was behind Kaliesha West this past year. I feel I'm capable of doing what she (West) did as well," said Knight, who is now trained by Ben Bautista after her former coach Joe Rodriguez retired.

Ollis, who is also helping guide superstar Melinda Cooper, recognizes world championship potential and more in the Oakland boxer.

"I like her because she is very hungry," said Ollis of Knight. "She is also very talented but very humble."

Knight and Salas aim to steal the show on Friday.

"This is going to be my year," says Knight.

Local prospects

Coachella's Randy Caballero and East L.A.'s Frankie Gomez are also fighting on separate bouts at Fantasy Springs Casino.

Caballero (6-0, 4 KOs) is a former amateur bantamweight star who has impressed many with his skill and power. He trains at Coachella Boxing Club.

Gomez (7-0, 6 KOs) was a world ranked amateur star and has blitzed through most of his professional opponents as a junior welterweight. Golden Boy sources say Gomez could conceivably drop down to the 135-pound lightweight division.

Fights on television

Fri. ESPN2, 7 p.m., Peter Manfredo (36-6) vs. Daniel Edouard (23-3-2).

Fri. Telefutura, 11:30 p.m., Erislandy Lara (14-0) vs. Delray Raines (18-8-1).

[Comment on this article](#)

Radam G says:

Though I've been up in Big Money O's grill lately, I have nothing but love for him when it comes to him supporting lady pugilism. [He has kept his word.] I'm willing to bet that his late mom is beaming with pride from behind those Pearly Gates of God's Heavenly Eternal Kingdom up in her mansion of forever peace, joy and happiness. For when it comes to ladies, BMO is the head

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gentleman. Much blessings and successes to him, even though sometimes he is more deceptive than all the crooked promoters who have ever run game and try to rule every opportunity of the game for every hard-working pugilist, who's just trying to make a living and a good future for when his or her time is up in this darn topsy-turvy world of the hurt bitness. Holla!

brownsugar says:

haven't read the article yet but if more women boxers looked like King,.. I'd be a bigger fan than Peter E. and the Roast. Hey....I'm willing to become an emergency correspondent if she takes a fight in the Midwest. Holla'

Editor Mike says:

Sug, you been deputized. Want me to send you a badge??

brownsugar says:

Yee-haaa!!

Radam G says:

Hahahahahaha! Cut it out! No wilding! Bobby C is the master comic here. But WELCOME to the fight to finally give women the luv, moola and hook up to get it OWN! They got the skills and they need to pay their bills. The first popular woman fighter, known as the Lady Ali -- I forget her actually name -- is beaming UP there behind those Pearly Gates. She died a couple of years ago. I was a little fart sittin' on her lap with Muhammad Ali Jr back in the mid 1970s. [True story.] Besides GOAT Ali has always supported fair treatment for all. Especially for women. A woman other than his mother whipped his arse one time. It was at the 1975 Thrilla in Manila events and camp. Yall musta' fo' got! GOAT Ali was with his new interest Veronica, and wife Belinda wasn't having it. Belinda was watching television from Chicago and saw the GOAT presenting Veronica as his wife to Prez Marcos and First Lady Imeda. Sister Belinda immediately caught the next plane smoking to Manila. She went up to GOAT's suite with two big muscle-bounded, ugly, muggly bodyguards. She then chased everybody out of the suite and gave the GOAT one loud, smacking arse thrashing that Joe Frazier was unable to do. For all who don't know, Sister Belinda is a seven degree black belt in karate and a sensi red belt -- the highest belt -- in some other secretive form of martial arts. Da sister can RUMBLE! Enough said! Holla!

Agopfaiff says:

This was refreshing. I wished I could read every post, but i have to go back to work... But I'll be back.The titan roms were pretty easy to figure out!

Radam G says:

The correct spelling of that level of martial arts is sensei -- sensi. Holla!

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