

SoCal Gym Hopping, and Other Fight Chatter

Written by David A. Avila
Thursday, 18 July 2013 10:25



No big fight cards are on the near horizon but boxing gyms and mixed martial arts academies are at full tilt.

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Maywood Boxing Gym was the first fight gym on my journey. The small boxing building with two boxing rings is home to a lot of prizefighters, including some of the elite prospects in Southern California.

Two of the three brothers Molina were sparring and working out on Wednesday afternoon. Carlos Molina, who recently fought former world champion Amir Khan at the nearby L.A. Sports Arena, was busy hitting various bags. Also, younger brother Oscar Molina was sparring in preparation for another fight next week, tentatively in Mexico. He is a former Mexican Olympian.

In the other boxing ring featherweight contender Charles Huerta was busy boxing some of the guys from Long Beach. It was pretty good stuff as each fighter worked on things with few restrictions. Later, Russian prospect Rustam Nugaev took his turn with a number of quick fisted and fleet footed lightweights.

Nugaev is one of many talented Russians who work at the Maywood gym. He is being trained by famed boxing coach Rudy Hernandez, the brother of the late, great Genaro "Chicanito" Hernandez. How great was Chicanito? His only losses came to Floyd Mayweather and Oscar De La Hoya. That's impressive. Nugaev and Hernandez are a good team. The Russian lightweight is due to fight Jose Hernandez on Aug. 9, at Morongo Casino in Cabazon, Calif.

After the sparring ended we drove to East L.A. to eat at Lupe's 12 Kinds of Burritos on Third Street. It's been a favorite eatery for anyone living in that area for decades. De La Hoya, Eric Gomez, Raul Jaimes and I grew up in that area and have stories to tell about the restaurant. The owner is a big boxing fan and sports fan in general.

Next on the list was South El Monte Boxing Gym where trainer Ben Lira coaches amateurs and pros. He's working with Joseph Diaz, the former U.S. Olympian now fighting as a pro. He will be fighting this Saturday on July 20 at Fantasy Springs Casino in Indio. Golden Boy Promotions needed someone to fill a spot after Frankie Gomez pulled out due to an injury. Diaz is a comer.

The last boxing stop for me was Montebello P.A.L., where former junior middleweight champion Sergio "The Latin Snake" Mora (*pictured above*) and Seniesa Estrada train on a daily basis with vastly under-rated trainer Dean Campos. I missed both fighters who had trained earlier in the day. Mora recently fought and beat a Polish middleweight contender and is on the hunt for

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another middleweight contender or one of the world champions. He's not being choosy. Estrada hopes to fight next week in Pomona.

Other Fight Chatter

The World Series of Fighting Fan Fest takes place at Dave and Buster's in Ontario, Calif. on Saturday July 20. Six-time mixed martial arts world champion Ray Sefo and Josh Burkman will be present at the festivities. The events take place from noon to 4 p.m.

Riverside Poly High graduate Saul "Dinamita" Rodriguez (10-0-1, 7 Kos) remained undefeated with a third round technical knockout of Dominic Coca (8-4, 3 Kos). Both landed blows in the first round before Rodriguez began to find openings. "He had a strong right hand," said Rodriguez. "My corner told me to be patient and the openings would come. And they did." The junior lightweight fight took place Saturday in Inglewood, Calif.

Argentina's Marcela Acuna (39-6-1, 17 Kos) defeated Melissa Hernandez (18-5-3, 6 Kos) by unanimous decision after 10 rounds on Saturday. The female featherweight world title fight took place in San Miguel, Argentina. Hernandez is considered one of the top female boxers in the world.

Germany's Robert Stieglitz (45-3, 25 Kos) won the WBO super middleweight title by technical decision against Japan's Yuzo Kiyota (23-4-1, 21 Kos) on Saturday. A cut over Kiyota's left eye forced the referee to stop the fight in the 10th round of their scheduled 12 round bout in Dresden, Germany. WBO and WBF female middleweight titlist Christina Hammer defeated Mikaela Lauren by unanimous decision.

La Puente's Jose Zepeda (15-0, 13 Kos) stopped Mexico's Ricardo Dominguez (37-10-2) in the third round of their welterweight fight in Tijuana, Mexico. Most of Zepeda's fights have taken place in Mexico.

Mariana "Mexican Barbie" Juarez (37-7-3, 16 Kos) avenged her loss to Japan's Riyo Togo (17-5-1, 10 Kos) with a unanimous decision win after 10 rounds in a junior bantamweight bout.

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Juarez suffered a first round knockout loss to the hard-hitting Japanese fighter a few months ago. This time she used her boxing skills to out-fight Togo in Guanajuato, Mexico.

New Jersey's Edwin "La Bomba" Rodriguez (24-0, 16 Kos) bombed out Russia's Denis Grachev (13-2-1, 8 Kos) in a fight held in Monaco on Saturday night. The super middleweight clash was held along with another super middleweight match that saw Russia's Khabib Allakhverdiev (19-0, 9 Kos) stop South Africa's Souleymane M'baye (40-5-1, 22 Kos) in the 11th round.

WBO minimum weight titlist Merlito Sabillo (23-0, 12 Kos) retained the title by technical knockout of Jorle Estrada (17-7, 6 Kos) on Saturday in Manila. Also, AJ Banal (29-2-1, 21 Kos) stopped Abraham Gomez (18-8-1) in the second round of a junior featherweight bout.

United Kingdom's Kell Brook (30-0, 20 Kos) remained undefeated with an eighth round stoppage of Oklahoma's tough Carson Jones (35-10-3). The welterweight match took place in Yorkshire, England on Saturday.

Alejandro "Alacran" Perez (18-3-1, 12 Kos) delivered a gut sapping body shot to defeat Mexico City's Edgar Riovalle (35-15-2, 25 Kos) by seventh round knockout on Saturday. The junior lightweight match took place at the Hollywood Park Casino. Also, Japan's former world champion Takahiro Ao (24-3-1, 11 Kos) used a body shot to knockout Chile's Hardy Paredes (16-12, 10 Kos) in the second round of a lightweight bout.

Russia's Maxim Vlasov (26-1, 12 Kos) defeated Riverside's Mark Suarez (25-4, 13 Kos) by unanimous decision after eight rounds in a super middleweight clash. It was Suarez's first fight in seven years. The match was held in Ventura, Calif. on Friday.

Lancaster's Chris Avalos (22-2, 16 Kos) defeated Philippine's Drian Francisco (24-2-1, 19 Kos) by unanimous decision after 10 rounds on Friday. Also, Glen Tapia (19-0, 11 Kos) remained undefeated by technical knockout of Abraham Han (19-1, 12 Kos), whose corner stopped the fight at the end of round eight of a junior middleweight battle. Both fights took place in Las Vegas.

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Argentina's Yesica Bopp (24-1, 11 Kos) is looking to rebound from her first loss and fights Anastasia Toktaulova (14-11) in a battle for the WBO and WBA female junior flyweight world titles. They will meet on Friday in Buenos Aires. Bopp was defeated by Jessica Chavez last month in Mexico.

Undefeated junior lightweight Mickey Bey (18-0-1, 9 Kos) fights John Molina (25-3, 20 Kos) on Friday July 19, at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Also, undefeated Badou Jack (14-0, 10 Kos) meets Farah Ennis (21-1, 12 Kos) in a super middleweight collision.

Coachella's Randy Caballero (18-0, 10 Kos) fights Puerto Rico's Miguel Robles (12-2-2, 5 Kos) in the main event on Saturday July 20, at the Fantasy Springs Casino. The junior featherweight bout is staged by Golden Boy Promotions and will also feature former junior lightweight world champion Jorge Linares.

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SouthPaul says:

Good local read. I attended the fights at Hollywood Park Casino. Excellent event. Props to Mr Bash and crew for putting on an affordable fun event.