

Sillakh To Meet Grachev on April 27 FNF

Written by The Sweet Science
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AUSTIN, Texas – World-class professional boxing will return to the Frank Erwin Center Friday, April 27 when Roy Jones Jr.'s Square Ring Promotions brings two riveting 10-round feature bouts to be telecast live on ESPN Friday Night Fights.

NABF Light Heavyweight Champion Ismayl "The Black Russian" Sillakh will face unbeaten contender Denis "The Pirate" Grachev of Russia. Sillakh, 17-0 with 14 knockouts, is rated No. 2 in the world by the WBC, and is in line to meet the winner of the April 28 Bernard Hopkins-Chad Dawson WBC world title fight. He risks that title shot, his world rating and his NABF championship against danger man Grachev, 11-0-1 with 7 KO's, a world champion kickboxer who trains in San Diego.

"These are two great matchups with some of the most exciting young talent in the sport today," said Jones. "I can't remember a time when the top two fights on ESPN featured four undefeated boxers putting it all on the line. They're all stepping up because they want to be world champion."

Sillakh, a Ukrainian living in Southern California, stormed to the top of the WBC ratings last year when he dominated fellow unbeaten contender Yordanis Despaigne on an ESPN main event. Grachev earned the reputation as a spoiler after his two most recent matches, scoring impressive wins in the backyard of previously unbeaten opponents.

The co-feature is just as intriguing and competitive as Sillakh-Grachev, with Yuandale "Money Shot" Evans of Cleveland battling Javier Fortuna of the Dominican Republic in a 10-round featherweight bout. Fortuna, 18-0 with 13 knockouts, is the WBC No. 8-rated featherweight, while the globetrotting Evans, 16-0 with 12 knockouts, has scored significant victories in Indonesia and Russia and holds the WBC Youth Championship.

The five-bout undercard is loaded with Texas talent, including local fighters Daniel Henry, Cory Yett and Ronny Hale. In addition, former world champion Jesus Chavez will bring his unbeaten protégé Maurice Hooker of Dallas for a 4-round bout.