

Fight Night Is A Knockout at Portland's Rose Garden

■ Spirit Mountain Casino teams with Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Productions to bring professional boxing to Oregon.

By Peta Tinda

Roy Englebrecht, Chief Operating Officer for Golden Boy Productions, which is Spirit Mountain Casino's partner in its most recent venture, "Spirit Mountain Casino presents Fight Night at the Rose Garden," thinks that the Thursday night fights have an extremely bright future.

"I think that the July 18 fight laid a very solid foundation for future events at the Rose Garden. When you can bring in 2,700 people on a Thursday night, in the boxing business, this was a huge success," he said.

Englebrecht knows a thing or two about success in the boxing business.

As manager of the largest boxing promotion company on the west coast, and partners with world champion boxer Oscar De La Hoya, Englebrecht's company is one of the premier fight promoters around. Englebrecht himself has been in the business of fight promoting for 18 years. He admits it's a tough business, but sees potential in the Portland boxing scene.

"I think we'll see an increase in attendance at the next fight. I am confident that everybody who went to the show went to work the next day and told everyone how much fun they had at the fight," said Englebrecht.

"We're providing boxing fans great entertainment in a state of the art facility at the right price. If we do that the fans will come back. And we did just that."

Englebrecht also said that he was pleased with



And Still Undefeated... Portland's own William "Butch" Chapman (left) stayed undefeated at 5-0 in his professional career by dominating Seattle's Reggie Lowe in an entertaining four round lightweight bout.



the partnership that his company and Spirit Mountain Casino have entered into.

"In order to be successful, you need great partners. From our first meeting with Spirit Mountain and the Tribal Council, I knew we had a good thing. Fight Night at the Rose



The Main Event — WBO Intercontinental Bantamweight Champion Carlos "El Terror" Madrigal knocked out San Juan, Puerto Rico native Luis Malave in the third round of a scheduled 10 round championship fight. Malave rocked the champion Madrigal, who lives and trains in Los Angeles, with a near knockout punch in the first round. Madrigal recovered to dominate Malave and forced him to quit in the third round with a barrage of head and body blows.



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"From the very beginning, Spirit Mountain Casino has been an excellent partner. They stepped up as the major, title sponsor and their support has been unflagging. We continue to be very enthusiastic about our partnership with Spirit Mountain and the Grand Ronde Tribe."

He also said that events of this type fill a certain market that had not been addressed.

"This is something that the fans were hungry for. It used to be that they had to travel to see professional boxing. What we bring is live, high quality and up close and personal. And it was very well accepted. It was a successful event," said Sittser.

Mike Moore, President and Chief Executive Of-

Garden has a great, great partner in Spirit Mountain Casino."

He also said that he is confident that good word-of-mouth will help spread the news of the fight night.

"We had 32 rounds of boxing, and a great main event, with Carlos Madrigal fighting an action packed bout. He was almost knocked out in the first round, so it was a very exiting. The female fight was also very strong, and it ended in draw, which means that both girls fought their hearts out. Our heavyweight, Joe Guzman, a Portland local, beat Emmanuel Laurent, of Los Angeles, which was music to the Blazer fans. It was as tough as a heavyweight bout as you will see anywhere," said Englebrecht.

But the most positive thing, Englebrecht said, was that there was a good turnout and all of the local Portland boxers won their matches.

"It was a great evenings entertainment," he said.

Stan Sittser, Marketing Manager for the Rose Quarter, which handles all of the events at the Rose Garden, shared Englebrecht's enthusiasm for fight night.

"We all think it went great. We had good turnout, knowledgeable fans and an enthusiastic crowd. It was complete success," said Sittser. "I think a good time was had by every last one of those fans."

He also said he was impressed with how well the local boxers performed.

"They all went the distance. It gave Portland area fans something to cheer about. And the main event was excellent as well."

Sittser says that Portland has had its share of boxing history.

"Portland has always been a strong boxing town, and lot of the fighters are already there. We're not trying to re-invent something new. We're just revitalizing big-time fights in Portland."

Sittser feels that they have all the right ingredients for success.

"We've got the partnership with Spirit Mountain Casino and Golden Boy Productions, the beautiful venue of the Rose Garden and top-notch talent. I see nothing but success for Fight Night at the Rose Garden."

Like Englebrecht, Sittser is also pleased with the partnership with the casino.



Style and Power — Ada Velez of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida (left) pounded on Las Vegas' Layla McCarter for six rounds, but when the judges declared the fight a majority draw no winner was determined. Promoters announced after the fight that Velez and McCarter would return to Oregon to fight on a future card for the Oregon Women's Bantamweight State Championship.

ficer of Spirit Mountain Casino, was at the fight night and said the boxing was very well received.

"I think it was great evening. I talked to a lot of guests; they loved it and thought it was very exciting. I think it was a very good beginning and the fans will spread the word," said Moore.

Moore said he thinks this is a good way to expand into the market of people who follow boxing. Although it would have been too expensive and disruptive to have the fights at Spirit Mountain Casino, he says that they can achieve the same goals by sponsoring an event like the fight night.

"That way, we can have the benefits of both worlds and can also reach new people."

Moore also said that the casino has a good partner in Golden Boy Productions.

"I've been involved with fight promotions before and it's difficult. But Golden Boy is a quality outfit, with a lot of experience. They're very skilled, so I knew it would be a good promotion," he said.

Moore said that the promoters did an excellent job with the fight.

"It takes pros to do professional work. These guys knew what they were doing and it showed. The guests loved it," said Moore.

"Everyone I talked to wanted to know when the next fight was." ■

