

USA BOXING NEWS

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Spokane, Washington to Host Historic U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Women's Boxing, February 13-19

Twenty-four Olympic Hopefuls to Compete in the inaugural event in advance of Women's Boxing Olympic Debut in London

(*COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.*) – The journey that the sport's pioneers started decades ago will culminate next summer with the Olympic debut of women's boxing at the 2012 Olympic Games in London, England. The 24 American women vying to compete in the sport's inaugural Olympic Games will start their own run toward the history books at the first-ever U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Women's Boxing, February 13-19, at the Northern Quest Resort in Airway Heights, Wash., just outside of Spokane.

"We are thrilled to bring this historic event to Spokane. This tournament will feature the premier female athletes in our sport and they deserve to compete in a first-class facility," USA Boxing Executive Director Anthony Bartkowski said. "The inaugural Olympic Trials competition is a result of years of hard work by our female athletes, coaches, and administrators as we head into the Olympic debut of the sport in London. We look forward to working with the outstanding team in Spokane to make this a top-notch event that the athletes will never forget."

The city of Spokane has previously hosted several major boxing events, including the Women's National Championships. "It's an honor to be able to welcome and champion our nation's best female boxers for this historic event," said Eric Sawyer, President, Spokane Regional Sports Commission. "Our local organizing committee is working hand-in-hand with USA Boxing to create an experience that both fans and athletes will not forget."

The full week of competition will take place at the Northern Quest, which has a great history of showcasing top notch sporting events. "It is our privilege to be the host for the first-ever U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Women's Boxing," said Phil Haugen, General Manager, Northern Quest Resort & Casino. "We look forward to extending our hospitality to the United States' top female boxers, and are pleased to be a major part of this momentous occasion."

Three women's weight classes will be contested at both the U.S. Olympic Team Trials and subsequent Olympic Games. Eight women in each of the three Olympic weight classes, which are flyweight (112 lbs.), lightweight (132 lbs.), and middleweight (165 lbs.), will compete in the Olympic Trials. The 24 women vying for gold in Spokane are the three Pan American Games representatives, the top four finishers from the 2011 USA Boxing National Championships, the 2011 National Golden Gloves Champions and top three boxers from the 2011 National PAL Championships. The tournament will be a double-elimination competition with the three victors moving on to the lone international qualifier, the 2012 Women's World Championships.

Reigning World Championships bronze medalist **Queen Underwood** (Seattle, Wash.) will enjoy the opportunity to compete in her home state in the Olympic Trials for Women's Boxing. Underwood is excited to have a major event close to her Seattle roots as she looks to add the title of United States Olympian to an already outstanding resume. "It's wonderful to have an event so close to home. My local supporters rarely get to see me compete since the majority of my bouts are on the national and international level," Underwood said. "This will mean a showdown near the hometown for me, and I can't wait."

A five-time national champion, Underwood began her career at the light welterweight division, but made the move down to the lightweight class following the announcement of the three Olympic weights. Since moving to the lightweight division, she has won two national titles as well as claiming bronze at the 2010 World Championships.

Yet Underwood isn't the only accomplished athlete vying for an Olympic berth in Spokane. The 24 women competing in the first-time competition all traveled unique and challenging roads to what they each hope will be their own spots in the history books. The full list of U.S. Olympic Team Trials participants can be found below.

The Road to London is not a short endeavor for the United States top female boxers; the three victors of the U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Women's Boxing must qualify their spots internationally in order to secure their berths in the 2012 Olympic Games. The 2012 Women's World Championships, May 21-June 3 in Qinhuangdao, China, will serve as the lone international qualifier with the top eight finishers in the three Olympic weight divisions, claiming spots in London. A Tripartite Commission will select the final four boxers in each weight class.

Full event schedule and ticket information will be announced over the coming weeks and months. For more information on the first-ever U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Women's Boxing, go to www.usaboxing.org.

U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Women's Boxing Qualified Athletes

Flyweight/112 lbs

1. Christina Cruz, New York, N.Y. (Pan American Games representative)
2. Marlen Esparza, Houston, Texas (USA Boxing National Championships)
3. Tyrieshia Douglas, Baltimore, Md. (USA Boxing National Championships)
4. Poula Estrada, Palmdale, Calif. (USA Boxing Championships)
5. Cynthia Moreno, Phoenix, Ariz. (Golden Gloves Championships)
6. Virginia Fuchs, Kemah, Texas (National PAL Championships)
7. Alex Love, Monroe, Wash. (National PAL Championships)
8. Taversha Norwood, Marietta, Ga. (National PAL Championships)

Lightweight/132 lbs

1. Queen Underwood, Seattle, Wash. (Pan American Games representative)
2. Tiara Brown, Lehigh, Fla. (USA Boxing National Championships)
3. Lisa Porter, Northridge, Calif. (USA Boxing National Championships)
4. N'yteeyah Sherman, Barberton, Ohio (USA Boxing National Championships)
5. Mikaela Mayer, Los Angeles, Calif. (Golden Gloves Championships)
6. Patricia Manuel Long Beach, Calif. (National PAL Championships)
7. Bertha Aracil, Yonkers, N.Y. (National PAL Championships)
8. Asia Stevenson, Washington DC (National PAL Championships)

Middleweight/165 lbs

1. Franchon Crews, Baltimore, Md. (Pan American Games representative)
2. Alyssa DeFazio, Peoria, Ariz. (USA Boxing National Championships)
3. Tika Hemingway, Pittsburgh, Pa. (USA Boxing National Championships)
4. Tiffanie Ward, Hacienda Heights, Calif. (USA Boxing National Championships)
5. Tiffanie Hearn, Louisville, Ky. (Golden Gloves Championships)
6. Claressa Shields, Flint, Mich. (National PAL Championships)
7. Andrecia Wasson, Centerline, Mich. (National PAL Championships)
8. Raquel Miller, San Francisco, Calif. (National PAL Championships)

USA Boxing, as the national governing body for Olympic-style boxing, is the United States' member organization of the International Amateur Boxing Association (AIBA) and a member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC).

Northern Quest Resort & Casino is located 10 minutes west of downtown Spokane and 5 minutes from Spokane International Airport. As the only tribally-owned AAA Four Diamond resort in the Inland Northwest and one of 27 lodgings in the entire state to receive this recognition, Northern Quest Resort & Casino welcomes visitors with a contemporary urban setting and 250 luxurious guest rooms and suites, an upscale spa, 14 restaurants and lounges, and true Las Vegas-style gaming and world-class

entertainment. Discover more about Northern Quest Resort & Casino at www.northernquest.com

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