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Main Events



TWO-TIME OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST CLARESSA SHIELDS ANNOUNCES PROFESSIONAL DEBUT ON KOVALEV-WARD "POUND FOR POUND" FREEVIEW TELECAST

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19
AT T-MOBILE ARENA IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA**

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA (October 25, 2016) - Two-Time Olympic Gold Medalist and the Women's Sports Foundation's Sportswoman of the Year **Claressa Shields** will be making her much anticipated professional debut during the lead-off freeview telecast of Kovalev-Ward "Pound For Pound" on Saturday, Nov. 19 at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. Shields is set to face an opponent to be announced in a four-round middleweight bout, with each round timed at two-minutes. The pay-per-view telecast will be produced and distributed live on HBO Pay-Per-View® beginning at 9:00 p.m. ET/6:00 p.m. PT. The freeview telecast which includes the live Claressa Shields bout will begin at 7:00 p.m. ET/4:00 p.m. PT and will be available on cable, satellite, and telco channels.

As an amateur, Shields achieved unprecedented Olympic success as an American athlete. She is the only boxer in U.S. history, male or female, to successfully defend a title, winning back-to-back Gold medals at the 2012 London and 2016 Rio games. The 21-year-old Flint, Michigan native and four-time USA National Champion has merited accolades at every level of international competition, earning Gold medals in the Pan American Games, two World Championships and two-time AIBA Female Boxer of the Year honors. The pride of a nation, Shields looks to break boxing's glass ceiling and engage a new generation of fight fans with her move into the professional ranks.

"After working hard for so many years and having the honor to represent my country at two Olympic games, I am thrilled to take the next big step in my career, fighting professionally and leading the rise of women's boxing worldwide," said Shields. "There is no better place to begin the journey than to join the biggest fight of the year, Kovalev vs Ward, and to fight alongside my idol and fellow U.S. Olympic Gold Medalist Andre Ward. I can't wait to entertain the fans on Nov.19!"

"Claressa Shields is a uniquely talented and special young woman. At just 21 years old, she is a once-in-a-lifetime type athlete whose talent inside the ring and charisma outside of it gives her the potential to be a trailblazer for women's boxing and for all of boxing for years to come," said Mark Taffet and Jamie Fritz, co-managers of Claressa Shields. "We are proud to be part of Claressa Shields's team and are thrilled she will be part of the year's marquee event, Kovalev vs Ward, on Nov. 19 at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas."

"Claressa Shields is about to take the boxing world by storm and we are honored to host her professional debut as part of an already loaded fight card on Nov. 19," said Roc Nation President & Chief of Branding and Strategy Michael R. Yormark. "Claressa's unique blend of talent, style and charisma make the two-time Olympian a rising force to be reckoned with in the boxing world and beyond."

Claressa Shields is a talented 21-year-old boxer from Flint, Michigan. Inspired by former boxing star Laila Ali, Shields developed a passion for the sport and began boxing at the age of 11. It was soon after beginning her journey she realized her family was apprehensive towards the contact sports. After weeks of family discussions, Shields was granted her family's permission to pursue her passion - a decision they will likely never regret.

Shields burst onto the boxing scene, developing a name for herself as one of the most talented female boxers in the country. Her reputation continued to build through her middle and high school years leading her to become the first ever U.S. women's boxer to qualify for the 2012 London Games. To Shields, simply earning an invitation to the Olympics was not enough, she wanted to make a lasting impact for her country. After three exciting fights, Shields was rewarded her first Gold medal in the 165-pound weight class, and became the first American woman to win a Gold medal in boxing.

Shields was named the 2014 AIBA Female Boxer of the Year, 2014 USA Boxing National Champion, 2015 Pan American Games Gold Medalist in the light heavyweight division, and two-time World Champion in the women's middleweight division. Chasing greatness, she became the first U.S. boxer to successfully defend an Olympic title as she earned a second Gold medal at the 2016 games in Rio de Janeiro. Concluding an unparalleled amateur legacy, Shields announced that she would be making her professional debut on the freeview broadcast of the year's biggest boxing matchup, Kovalev-Ward at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas on Nov. 19, 2016.

As a proud Flint, Michigan native, Shields is constantly looking for ways to shine a positive light on her hometown. She understands the importance of being a role model to youth in her community and has been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support she has received since returning from Rio with another Gold medal. Following her first Gold medal summer, Shields became the first in her family to graduate from high school and is enrolled in online college classes to pursue her academic goals and competitive aspirations simultaneously.

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