

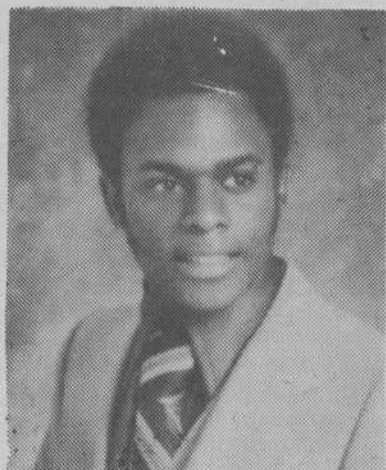
# SPORTS BOARD

SPORTS, GAMING, HORSERACING

MAY 31, 1984



## KEN'S COMMENTS



By Ken Wilson

The time has come for some higher entity to address some of the problems that seem to engulf the sport of professional boxing.

Spectacular matchups with very large paydays at stake seem to have adopted the light-switch syndrome with cancellations and postponements becoming a common occurrence.

Recent headlines that have announced changes in such bouts as Holmes-Coetzee, Hagler-Hamsho, and Hearns-Duran, to name a few, continue to suggest that the sport of prize-fighting might need to surrender to some sort of federal control.

Now, with three different boxing organizations—the WBC and WBA, along with a new group, all fighting for co-existence, all too often the reputation of the sport and the fans have become the victims in an endless game of control.

In a sport where the intent was meant to focus on the old adage "only the strong survive," money and politics have seemingly seized control with the eventual destruction of the sport the only outcome.

For the first time since their final year as collegiates, Ervin "Magic" Johnson and Larry Bird,

the premiere modern-day players, will clash with yet another title at stake.

As the Boston Celtics, the team with the best regular-season record, and the Los Angeles Lakers, the team with the second best mark, do battle for the National Basketball Association's crown, both fans and the league have appropriately titled the series, "The Dream-Encounter."

Both teams have significant goals in mind as the Celtics look to capture a record setting 15th NBA title, while the Lakers could take the crown back to LA for the third time in the last five years.

With the series opener already completed with the Lakers capturing a

## VALDEZ, ROSTON HEAD SHOWBOAT CARD THURSDAY

Featherweight Lenny Valdez, who's coming off a stunning first-round knockout win over world-ranked Steve Cruz, and outstanding junior welterweight prospect Andy Nance appear in 10-round co-main events in the monthly ESPN fight card Thursday, May 31, at the Showboat Hotel, Casino, Country Club and Bowling Center.

Valdez, who has a record of 22-2 with 14 knockouts, meets Las Vegas Dana Roston while Nance faces Roberto Juarez.

Four other bouts, two featuring Las Vegas Pepper Roach and undefeated Ted Michaelis-zyn, are scheduled for the card promoted by Bob Arum's Top Rank, Inc., in association with the Showboat.

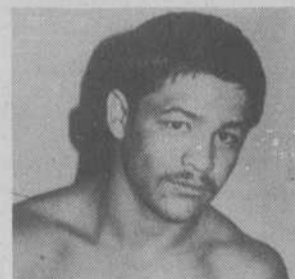
The card starts at 6 p.m. with doors to the Showboat Sports Pavilion opening at 5:00.

Tickets, priced at \$10 for general admission and \$15 for ringside

115-109 decision, all barometers indicate that both teams are prepared to go the entire series' distance with each very capable of winning it all.

served, are on sale daily at the Showboat Sports Pavilion Ticket Office.

As is the case with all ESPN boxing cards from the Showboat, the telecast will be blacked out



Lenny Valdez

in the Las Vegas area.

The 22-year-old Valdez, from Hawthorne, Calif., not only gained national prominence with his convinc-

ing win over Cruz, a former national amateur champion, but put himself in line for a world ranking as well. That victory at the Showboat on Mar. 29 is the second in as many outings for the young slugger this year.

His opponent on May 31, Roston, is more boxer than puncher.

On the Showboat Hotel giant screens the live closed-circuit TV, Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini, WBA lightweight champion, puts title on the line Friday June 1 against Livingston Bramble. The fights start at 5:30 p.m., doors open 4:30 p.m. All seats \$20.

## Abdul-Jabbar to retire after next season

Los Angeles center Kareem Abdul-Jabbar has reaffirmed what he has been saying throughout the season—that next year will be his last as a National Basketball Association player.

He's not looking forward to the retirement fanfare. It's likely he'll be showered with gifts and other shows of thanks in his farewell tour around the league.

"I might not be able to take that," he said. "I might have to duck out." Lakers coach Pat Riley has plans to cope with Abdul-Jabbar's departure.

"When Kareem leaves, my ultimate goal is to have five 6-9 guys on the court," he said.

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