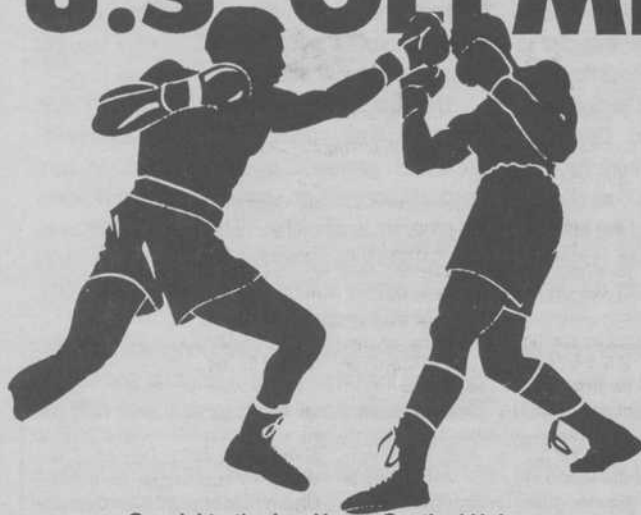




'92 SUMMER OLYMPICS TO COMMENCE THIS WEEKEND

U.S. OLYMPIC BOXING PREVIEW



Special to the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice
By JON SARACENO
USA Today

Eric Griffin, 24, Broussard, La., 106 pounds. - The world light-flyweight champion, who has boxed since 1979, is team's most experienced amateur. Voted Trials' most outstanding boxer. Voted USA Boxing's 1990 Boxer of the Year. One of 10 finalists for '90 and '91 James E. Sullivan Award as nation's top amateur athlete. Attempted to make '88 Olympic team, but was suspended after failing drug test (marijuana) prior to Box-off.

Tim Austin, 21, Cincinnati, Oh., 112 pounds. - Flyweight made Olympic team on second attempt. Foiled by Brian Lonon in Trials quarterfinals at 106 pounds in '88. Emerged victorious in '90

Goodwill Games when he beat Russian. Lost '91 world championships to Istvan Kovacs of Hungary. Considered gold medal prospect.

Sergio Reyes, 22, Fort Worth, Tx., 119 pounds. - U.S. Marine bantamweight stationed at Camp LeJeune, N.C., was named Armed Forces Athlete of the Year in 1990. Lost in '88 Trials quarterfinals to future Seoul gold medalist Kennedy McKinney. Won Goodwill Games in '90. Lost to Sean Fletcher of the Navy in semifinals of the Armed Forces championships in '91. Got revenge at '92 Trials and Box-off by defeating Fletcher twice.

Julian Wheeler, 21, Lawtell, La., 125 pounds. - Navy featherweight from Little Creek, Va., won two highly disputed decisions against favored Ivan Robinson. Defending national and Armed Forces champion. Finished third at goodwill Games in '91.

Oscar De La Noya, 19, Los Angeles, Ca., 132 pounds. - Lightweight sensation disappointed many while winning Trials, looked better at Box-off. Stopped Puerto Rico challenger at '92 World Championships' Challenge. Lost '91 world championships to Marco Rudolph of Germany. USA Boxer's '91 Boxer of the Year. National and Goodwill champion in '91.

Vernon Forrest, 21, Augusta, Ga., 130 pounds. - Light-welterweight captured world title when he beat Candelario Duvergel by decision at World Championships' Challenge. Lost on points in finals of '91 world championships to Konstantin Tzzyu. Won U.S. championship in '91.

Pepe Reily, 20, Glendale, Ca., 147 pounds. - Welterweight made Olympic team after failing in '88. Won close finals match against Jesse Briseno at Trials, then beat him at Box-off. Lost in '88

Trials quarterfinals to Michael Carbajal at 106. '91 U.S. champion. Former light-flyweight was suspended for steroid use in 1991.

Raul Marquez, 20, Houston, Tx., 156 pounds. - The world light-middleweight champion stopped hard-hitting Robert Allen in furious Trials semifinal bout. Decided Juan Lemus of Cuba in '92 World Championships' Challenge, avenging loss from previous year. U.S. champion in '91. Lost World Championships to Ole Klemetsen of Norway. A top pro prospect.

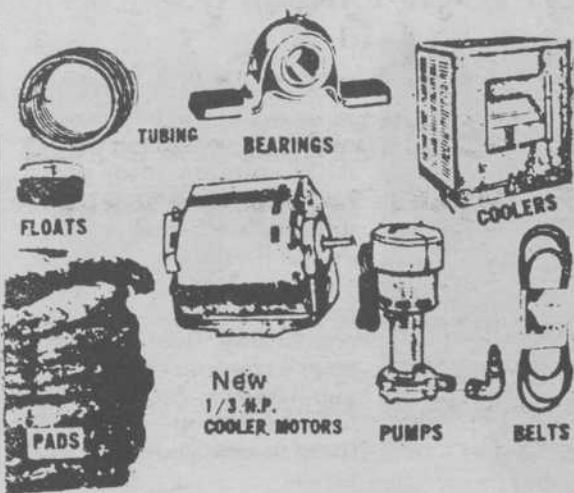
Chris Byrd, 21, Flint Mi., 165 pounds. - Slick southpaw middleweight is one of five Byrd brothers who boxed under direction of father, Joe, head coach of '92 Olympic team. Defending two-time U.S. national champion. Lost '91 world championships to Ramon Garvey of Cuba.

Montell Griffin, 21, Studio City, Ca., 178 pounds. - Chicago-born light-heavyweight was only Box-off challenger to unseat Trials champion, beating favored Jeremy Williams. Greenest boxer on team with only 29 amateur fights. Came on strong in '92, winning U.S. Championships and Canada Cup.

Danell Nicholson, 24, Chicago, 201 pounds. - Prep basketball star did not begin boxing until 1988. International experience limited to one match, which he won. Won Eastern Olympic Trials to advance to Trials. Owns Massachusetts boxers - beating James Johnson of Lawrence, Mass., in Trials finals and Bobby Harris of Worcester at Box-off.

Larry Donald, 24, Cincinnati, Oh., 201+. - Super-heavyweight lost three world championships' finals from 1989-91 before finally emerging victorious this year. Decided Roberto Balado of Cuba at World Championships' Challenge.

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OLYMPIC QUICK QUIZ

Does your knowledge of the Olympics rate a gold medal? Take this quick quiz and find out.

1. Earvin Johnson, Jr. is a candidate for a medal in (a) track and field (b) basketball (c) rowing.
2. Mary Lou Retton won her gold medal for (a) swimming (b) gymnastics (c) skiing?
3. Dan O'Brien is a candidate for a medal in (a) diving (b) tennis (c) track and field?
4. Dick Button won his gold medals for (a) skiing (b) diving (c) figure skating?
5. Bruce Jenner won his gold medal for (a) track and field (b) boxing (c) speedskating?
6. Jackie Joyner-Kersey is hoping for a medal in (a) cycling (b) track and field (c) diving?

ANSWERS

1. (b) Earvin Johnson, Jr. is the real name of basketball great Magic Johnson. 2. (b) Mary Lou Retton won her gold medal and the hearts of most Americans for her performance in gymnastics. 3. (c) Dan O'Brien is a candidate for a medal in the decathlon at the Olympic Summer Games in Barcelona. 4. (c) Dick Button won his gold medals for figure skating. 5. (a) Bruce Jenner was the 1976 Olympic decathlon winner. 6. (b) Jackie Joyner-Kersey was a double gold medalist at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

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