

Ali on undercard at Garden

NEW YORK (AP) - Another Ali will box at Madison Square Garden.

Laila Ali, the daughter of boxing great Muhammad Ali, will make her debut 35 years after her father lost to "Smokin" Joe Frazier at the Garden.

She'll be on the Nov. 11 undercard of the IBF heavyweight bout between champion Wladimir Klitschko and undefeated Calvin Brock. All three appeared at a news conference Tuesday at Madison Square Garden.

Ali, the WBC light heavyweight champion, is 22-0 with 19 knockouts since her pro debut in 1999.

"I'm excited to be at Madison Square Garden, the mecca of boxing," Ali said. "There's a lot of pressure being Ali's daughter, but I always try to do my best. I've got to do my thing — he's

already done his thing."

Ali's opponent will be determined soon.

"We just signed with this fight last week," said her adviser, Damon Bingham. "We're negotiating, we should know in a day or two."

Muhammad Ali attended his daughter's last fight in Berlin, where Laila stopped Sweden's Asa Sandell in the fifth round on Dec. 17. Muhammad Ali, who at 64 is slowed by Parkinson's disease, walked ringside to kiss his daughter.

"He's proud that I won, even though he'd rather me not fight," she said of her father, who has attended more than half her fights. "He gets in the ring and gives me a kiss, it's a sweet feeling."

It's possible the elder Ali will turn up at the Garden, where he dazzled crowds

during his career. He lost the heavyweight crown to Frazier in a 15-round epic in 1971, but won the rematch three years later.

"It just depends on how he feels," she said. "He has his good days and bad days. He has a disease, so it's something that he deals with. But, he's still traveling and getting around the world. People are always concerned about him. I don't have the energy to do as much as he does."

The 28-year-old Ali is looking to avoid her first knockout. She's training in Las Vegas with Floyd

Mayweather Sr., focusing on defensive skills. She's back in the gym after fights in Dubai and Capetown, South Africa, were canceled earlier this year.

Ali was low-key during one-on-one interviews, but sounded a bit like her father at a news conference in the Garden's lobby.

"I can scrap, OK?" she said. "What my daddy had was passed down to me. I'm not my father, I'm not trying to be. But I am a fighter, and I'm coming here and going to whup somebody good here at the Garden."



IBF and IBO heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko, left, of Ukraine, WBC Super Middleweight champion Laila Ali and Calvin 'The Boxing Banker' Brock, right, of Charlotte, N.C., pose during a press conference in New York on Tuesday. Ali is on the undercard of the NYC fight.

Clarett sad tale of life gone bad

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) - His mother crying in the courtroom behind him, Maurice Clarett stood before a judge as a common criminal in the town where not so long ago he was a king.

Gone was the glory of having led Ohio State to a national championship as a freshman tailback, along with the can't-miss prospect of an NFL career.

In their place stood a prison term of at least 3-1/2 years, the product of a plea deal Clarett took Monday as he was about to be tried on allegations that he robbed two people at gunpoint.

"He was up here," Clarett's attorney, Michael Hoague, said minutes later, raising his arm up to eye level. "He got down here," he said, lowering his arm to his waist. "And he's going to be back up here again."

Clarett was sentenced to 7-1/2 years with release from prison possible after 3-1/2 years. He also agreed to serve five years of probation for the robbery outside a bar early on New Year's Day and carrying a concealed weapon.

"It's in a range that will allow him to get his life back together after his release," Prosecutor Ron O'Brien said.

For Clarett, still just 22, the plea bargain preserved the chance he could one day resurrect a career he had tried to keep going until the night last month that he led police

on a highway chase in a sport utility vehicle with four loaded guns. Officers had to spike the tires to stop him and use pepper spray and handcuffs to subdue him when his bulletproof vest stymied their stun guns.

"There are institutions in Ohio that actually have opportunities to work out and train for football and other athletics," Hoague said. "We're hoping he can do that, and stay in shape and be focused on that."

A bearded Clarett, wearing handcuffs and jail-issued clothing, remained expressionless throughout the hearing.

"I'd like to apologize for my behavior, and I accept the time that was given to me," Clarett said in Franklin County Common Pleas Court.

After the judge accepted the deal, Clarett looked over at his mother in the first row of the gallery. She sobbed and held his 8-week-old daughter while sitting next to his girlfriend.

As a freshman, Clarett led Ohio State to the 2002 national championship, scoring the winning touchdown in the second overtime in the title game against Miami.

That was the last time he played for the Buckeyes, and his life has spiraled out of control ever since.

He was suspended for ly-
(See Clarett, Page 15)

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