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## OAKLAND ARENA LIVE BOXING: WILD 94.9 BATTLE OF THE BIG BOYS JOSE CELAYA, MARTHA SALAZAR AND SAMMY MERZA

OAKLAND, Calif. – March 14, 2005 – Clark Entertainment presents the “Wild 94.9 Battle of the Big Boys”, with five amateur fights and five professional fights, creates havoc at the Oakland Arena on Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7 p.m.

Starring NABO Welterweight Champion and Salinas resident, Jose Celaya, along with IWBFF Heavyweight and WBF Heavyweight Champion Martha Salazar from San Francisco, as well as Assyrian Sammy “Homicidal” Merza will be a main draw for boxing fans.

**Jose Celalya** first found his love of boxing in 1992, when he and his father visited a gym to practice. Born to Miguel Angel Celaya and Carmen Casas de Celaya, who came to California from Mexico to live the American dream with their family, young Jose learned the sport quickly. After training for only three months, Celaya won his first match. In his amateur career, he won four national championships and was named an alternate on the 2000 US Olympic Team. It didn't take long for him to amass a record of 74-18.

In June of 2000, Celaya entered the professional ranks where his current record is 25-2 with 14 wins by way of knockout. He is the Northern American Boxing Organization (NABO) champion. Celaya's new trainer, Emanuel Steward, has trained with a number of champions including Oscar De La Hoya, Julio Cesar Chavez, Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis.

San Franciscan, **Martha Salazar** started her career as a professional kick boxer, where she won an IFCA world championship. With three world titles of WIBF, NABAW Heavyweight and WBE Super Heavyweight champion, Salazar is the first female Hispanic Heavyweight let alone the first Hispanic to hold three world titles at once.

For the last eight years, Salazar has trained under Dee Pooler, where she is trying to obtain and hold a fourth title WBE Heavyweight title. She is scheduled to fight Vonda Ward for the IBA Heavyweight title on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

Salazar will be fighting **Kathy Rivers**, a former model, ranked number three in the world. Rivers, a “South Paw” style fighter, started boxing in 1995 and has had three title fights. Rivers has a record of 13 – 4 with 5 knockouts.

**Sammy Merza** turned pro in November 1998, after compiling an amateur record of 40 – 8 with 29 knock outs. The Assyrian won eleven straight professional bouts before his career was put on hold after damaging his cornea. Merza underwent multiple surgeries in an attempt to repair his eye. By the fifth doctor, who performed three additional surgeries, Merza was finally given approval to continue boxing professionally. Since then Merza has had 3 straight wins and is back

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The WBE Heavyweight men's fight shows off the talents of **John Clark**, more widely known for his football career where he played for the 49ers as a defensive line backer in 1996 through 1998 when he was sidelined with an injury.

You may recognize him from his cameo appearances in several movies, such as "Water Boy" with Adam Sandler, "Varsity Blues" with Allan Kraft and Mark Ellis, "Any Given Sunday" with Al Pacino and "The Replacements" with Gene Hackman and Keannu Reeves. "JC" has joined boxing more recently than the other boxers fighting on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Oakland Arena. He spent some time with the Urban Wrestling Alliance where got his second wind and returned to professional sports. Clark now boasts of an 11 – 4 record with 6 knockouts.

The main event will be the Welterweight ten-round fight between **Jose Celaya** and **Quandray Robertson**, 14 – 8 with 10 knockouts. There will be two Heavyweight fights each going eight rounds: **John Clark**, 11 – 4 with 6 knockouts, versus **Edward Neal**, 5 – 0 and 4 knockouts, for the men and for the women, **Martha Salazar**, 8 – 3 with 6 knockouts, versus **Kathy Rivers**, 13 – 4 with 5 knockouts. For the middleweight division going six rounds, Assyrian **Sammy "Homicidal" Merza**, 14 – 0 with 11 knockouts, will fight San Francisco resident **Sheldon Callum**, 5 – 9 with 2 knockouts. The Featherweight four-round fight will feature **Alejandro Perez** (1 – 0) from Salinas against **Eduardo Betances** (0 – 1) from Sacramento.

Mixed within the professional fights will be five amateur fights. All the amateur fighters are chosen by the Wild 94.9 (a Clear Channel Communications station) morning show, "The Doghouse", through a series of qualifying stunts. Aspiring amateur fighters can either email or call into the radio station to enter. From there, The Doghouse decides who will make it to the top 10, and then match fighters in the "Battle of the Big Boys." One of the bouts will feature one of The Doghouse on-air talents, Flea, who will entertain with an outrageous "fight" against 7 women with one hand tied behind his back.

### ***Fights subject to change.***

*Tickets on sale now at Tickets.com, the Oakland Arena Box Office, Tickets.com outlets, as well as charge by phone by calling (510) 762-2277. Tickets prices are \$30, \$45, \$75, \$85.*

*Photos available upon request.*

*For additional information about this show, please call Jennifer Cooke at (510) 383-4930.*

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The Oakland Arena and Network Associates Coliseum are managed by SMG, the world's leading company in the private development and management of public assembly facilities, including 170 properties in arenas, stadiums, convention centers, performing arts centers and recreational facilities.

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