

Boxing Resumes in Gallup

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The last time boxing was alive and well in Gallup was several years ago when Jimmy Montano, now the head softball coach at Miyamura High, was working with the Police Athletic League program. Since then, nothing, except for a much more modified event called MMA which involves cage fighting.

Joe Olivas, who has been in Gallup for about five years, hopes to change that with his small group of young “Lights Out” fighters, aided by his assistant Raymond Yazzie. Olivas, a boxer from the age of seven in Oxford, CA had 176 bouts as an amateur and fought in the Olympic Trials in 1988 at the age of 18 at 135 pounds. He turned pro four years later at 140 pounds and trained with Robert Garcia and his dad Eduardo from 1990 until moving to Gallup.

Olivas took several of his young fighters to Los Lunas on April 10-11, and came home with two state champions: 13-year old Richie Archuleta at 75 pounds and 14-year old Blaine Wilson at 125. Wilson disqualified himself with a leg injury during a rodeo, but Richie is pumped and ready to face the competition in Ogden, UT at the Nationals this weekend.

“I had five fights (at state),” Archuleta said. “They were OK, but I’m better! My last fight was against a boy that had 33 fights (against other opponents), but I like challenges.”