



Roots

Three Philadelphia fighters face off in very tough fights on Saturday, Jan. 21, at the Asylum Arena in South Philadelphia. In the 10-round main event heavyweight **Fast Eddie Chambers** faces **Sergei White Wolf Liakhovich** of Vitebsk, Belarus. Local favorite, junior middleweight **King Gabriel Rosado** goes to war with Mexico's **Jesus Soto-Karass** in the 10-round co-feature. On the undercard, welterweight **The New Ray Robinson** tests himself in an eight-rounder with **Doel Carrasquillo**, of Lancaster, PA.



The local fight community knows these fighters either on a personal or professional level or has heard about at least one of them. What do we know about where these fighters are rooted, coming from three different gyms, in three different areas, with three different trainers.

Chambers lives in New Jersey and travels to West Philadelphia to train. He works out of the **James Shuler Memorial Boxing Gym** at 750 N. Brooklyn Street. The gym is nationally known for its outstanding fighters coming as well as having nationally known trainer **Nazim Richardson** as part of the Shuler's Team.

The gym is one of the many across the city that is always active and has well-known, old-time fighters such as **Robert Bam Bam Hines** and **Percy Buster Custis** working with fighters in the gym.



Shuler's has both pros and amateurs who work with one another on a daily basis. Along with Chambers, pros such as cruiserweight **Steve Cunningham**, super middleweight **Dafir Smith**, junior welterweight **Steve Upsher-Chambers** fill the gym. Shuler's gym, though having a strong professional influence, is just as wrapped up in the amateurs, housing the Mid-Atlantic tournament every Saturday this month.

Chambers (left) is trained by internationally known trainer **James Ali Bashir**. This will be his first bout with Bashir and it will be interesting to see what Bashir brings to the table with the already skilled heavyweight.

One of the only local trainers who uses old-school techniques like Richardson and Bashir, along with a few unique training spins such as

having his fighter train while wearing a gas mask, is **Billy Briscoe** at the **Rivera Recreation Center**.

The Rivera Rec, at at 5th and Allegheny, and is caught up in the mix of North Philadelphia gyms, **Philly Rumlbers**, **Front Street** and **Harrowgate**. The difference between Rivera Rec and majority of local gyms is that Rivera is hot no matter what time of the year and that makes it easier to cut weight.

Front Street gym's lightweight **Angel Ocasio** has been working out at the Rivera Rec for various reasons, but the fact that it is hot in the gym this time of the year allows him to cut weight more easily for his upcoming bout on **Greg Robinson's** card Jan. 13 at the National Guard Armory in Northeast Philadelphia.

Rosado (right), who was at the press workout on Monday at the Joe Hand Gym, told me that the canvas at Rivera Rec is carpet, which gives it that old-school gym feel. The old-school training that Briscoe puts Rosado through ties into Rosado perfectly. He has the heart of a true Philly fighter yet markets himself the way the new-age mainstream fighter should. You can't miss him on Facebook or twitter (@KingGabRosado). Rosado will be in a war on Jan. 21 and fans are guaranteed an exciting bout.



The **Joe Hand Gym**, located in Northern Liberties section at 3rd and Spring Garden, is one of the cleanest gyms anywhere. This gym houses welterweight Robinson along with welterweight **Mike Jones**, super bantamweight **Teon Kennedy** (who headlines ESPN2's Friday Night Fights this week) and middleweight **Latif Mundy**. The Joe Hand Gym is their second home.



This gym is where **Bernard Hopkins** makes home when training. It has a few old-time fighters training young fighters just as Shuler's does. **Smokin' Wade Hinnant**, and **Bobby Boogaloo Watts** are just two familiar faces.

Robinson (left) is trained **Howard Moses Mosley**, who is more like a father figure to Robinson than anything. Moses and Robinson have a bond that boxing is built around without the title that comes along with it, the father-son relationship does not always work

in boxing but it is always strongly rooted in the sport. These two have that bond and make it work.

Here are three different fighters, three different fighter-trainer relationships and three different gyms, all having one goal— to win.

The author is a senior at Temple University who is now a part of Peltz Boxing. Follow us on twitter @Peltzboxing and our intern @bamonboxing Photo credit to phillyboxinghistory.com