

PHILLY SPECIAL UNDERCARD SHAPING UP TO BE A CLASSIC MARCH 27 AT 2300 ARENA

PHILADELPHIA, PA – The undercard of Raging Babe's March 27 Philly Special is shaping up to be a classic.

With the comeback of a local favorite, a pair of Philly vs. Philly matches, and the debut of an elite multi-sport athlete to complement the main event, the card promises to delight fight fans at the 2300 Arena in South Philadelphia.

Popular bantamweight Christian Carto, of South Philadelphia, returns in his first bout since his first loss in 18 bouts nearly 14 months ago. Carto will fight Mexico City's Roberto Pucheta in a six-round contest.

In an all-local, six-round junior lightweight fight, Coatesville's Gerardo Martinez faces a more experienced foe in West Philadelphia's Frankie Trader. Martinez, who has only one loss in six fights, works as a landscaper and personal trainer during the day, but recently has scaled back his outside work outside to focus on his boxing career. He defeated Osnel Charles in a pair of back-to-back bouts in 2019, first by majority decision, then unanimously last October.

Trader is the veteran, with a record of 13-2-1, 3 KOs. This will be Trader's first fight after aggravating a previously dislocated shoulder last June during a fight with Jerome Conquest. He would go on to finish the fight, winning an eight-round unanimous decision and showing incredible heart.

Hall-of-Fame Promoter J Russell Peltz, who is making the matches for Philly Special, sees the bout as a great style match-up.

"I told Martinez that I'm not going to sugar coat it," said Peltz. "He has to get inside, because he's not going to outbox Trader. This fight is a step-up in class for him and he's got a shot to win. Too often fighters ask what will happen to them if they lose. They need to focus more on what will happen if they win.

"On the other hand, if Trader fights the right kind of fight against a guy who walks in like Martinez, he could look like Sugar Ray Robinson. Martinez is the perfect foil if Trader gets his punches off and doesn't let Martinez get inside. Neither guy is a big puncher – it should go the distance and be a good fight, style-wise."

Another local attraction sees Daiyaan Butt, undefeated in five bouts, against lefty Seifullah Jihad Wise in a six-round, junior welterweight contest. Butt, 22, is young and energetic, with charisma and talent that has seen him sail through his earlier bouts. Wise, 27, who represents a step-up in competition for Butt, who is coming off a unanimous decision win over Vinnie Denierio, which followed a string of losses against undefeated boxers in their backyards.

The March 27 card also will feature the professional debut of Tommy Santiago, a standout football player at William Tennent High School, and brother of pro boxer Milton Santiago, Jr. With an amateur record of 119-2, Santiago launches his career with a goal of being a multi-sport professional athlete – a boxer who hopes to play in the NFL one day. Santiago is pursuing a college football career with a resume full of high school accolades. He will face Angel Vasquez, of Springfield, MA, in a four-round, light heavyweight bout.

Rounding out the card: super middleweights Christopher Brooker (14-7, 5 KOs), of West Philly, against Isaac Rodriguez (25-3, 20 KOs), of Brazil, now living in South Jersey, in a six-round bout; welterweight Tahmir Smalls will appear in a four-round contest.

The card is topped by the highly anticipated Philly vs. Philly match-up – Stevie Ortiz vs. Damon Allen, in a 10-round bout for Ortiz' Pennsylvania State Lightweight Title.

The card kicks off at 7:30 in the evening on Friday, March 27. Tickets priced at \$50, \$75 and \$125 are on sale now, and can be purchased by visiting 2300arena.com or by calling 267-273-0945.