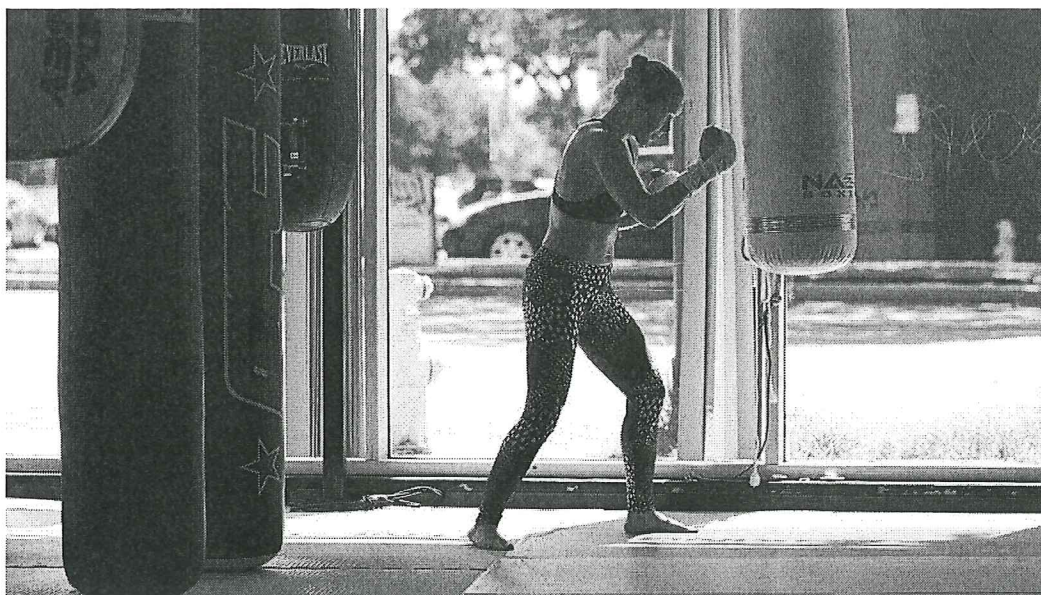


NEWSELA

Challenger's plan crushes champ Rousey in women's ultimate title bout

By Lance Pugmire, Los Angeles Times on 11.19.15

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Mixed martial arts fighter Ronda Rousey trains at the Glendale Fighting Club in Glendale, California, July 15, 2015. Photo: AP/Jae C. Hong

Mixed martial artist Holly Holm's smart training program led her to victory on Sunday in Melbourne, Australia. She beat champion Ronda Rousey, who had never lost before and was thought to be unbeatable.

Holm stunned the sporting world with a second-round knockout victory over Rousey. She took home the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) women's bantamweight title, for fighters weighing under 135 pounds.

Rousey was sent to a hospital for stitches in her cut lip. Although a brain scan came back fine, she remained in the hospital overnight, according to a UFC spokesman.

She sent an Instagram message that said, "I appreciate the concerns about my health, but I'm fine. As I had mentioned before, I'm going to take a little bit of time, but I'll be back."

Boxer Wins Mixed Martial Arts Crown

Holm became the first former boxing world champion to collect a UFC belt. Her win re-ignited the competition between mixed martial arts and boxing. The Ultimate Fighting Championship features mixed martial artists, while boxing is a separate sport.

"Everything we worked on ended up being used," Holm (10-0) said after the fight, which drew a crowd of 56,214 people.

Rousey, 28, is six years younger than Holm, but she appeared exhausted by the end of the first round. She badly missed with a punch that Holm ducked and was repeatedly hit by Holm's left hand, including one punch that set up the left kick to the head that ended the fight.

Rousey had seemed to be in great shape before the fight. In Rousey's three fights before facing Holm, she needed only 64 combined seconds to finish off Alexis Davis, Cat Zingano and Bethe Correia, three other mixed martial artists who compete in the UFC. These speedy wins made her one of the best-known sports personalities in the world.

Strategy Found Champ's Weaknesses

"I have a lot of respect for Ronda," Holm said. "This wouldn't have meant as much if it hadn't been for what she has done. She's been imposing her will on everybody. She tried the hip-toss, the arm bar. I just wanted to stay focused. We did this in practice. I (knew I) could do it again."

Holm's track record of finding the weaknesses of talented fighters continues.

In 2011, after getting knocked out by boxer Anne Sophie Mathis, she devised a plan and won a rematch.

"What Holly did hurt Ronda in a number of ways. Hurt her physically. Hurt her pride," Englebrecht said.

Holm's Coach Not Surprised

The man who scripted Holm's performance, her striking coach Mike Winkeljohn, said of Rousey, "I figured we'd pick her apart little by little. It played out real well.

"Holly walked into my gym 17 years ago. Now, you're going to come here and give the biggest upset in history in people's minds ... not in our minds. We knew she could do it."

Holm fought tears in post-fight interviews, saying, "I'll probably have a few sleepless nights replaying everything that happened."

In her first two UFC fights, Holm appeared a bit cautious, winning both by judge's decision. A knockout ends a fight immediately.

UFC President Dana White said he'll set up a rematch.

"Obviously ... biggest upset ever," White said. "When you look at how Ronda is revered — baddest woman on the planet — definitely."

Differences Created Interesting Match

White first leaned toward making Miesha Tate the No. 1 contender to fight Rousey.

However, he decided to go with Holm because Rousey had beaten Tate twice. Holm also had boxing know-how, and boasted a slight height and reach advantage on Rousey, making for an interesting fight.

"This is the fight I went after," White said. "Holly, we said it at the time, had the range, uses her distance very well, has great head kicks. Everything we talked about is essentially what went down.

"Obviously, I thought Ronda would have more answers."

The stunning event came after Rousey, who is from Los Angeles, California, acted out of character by confronting Holm at the weigh-in a day earlier. She charged at the challenger and labeled "the Preacher's Daughter" a phony.

Rousey is making a movie now, but the defeat was a tough reminder that maybe she needed to spend more time training.

White said he originally planned for Rousey to fight at UFC 200 in July. Rousey's past success qualifies her for an immediate rematch against Holm if she wants it, White said, but he would not set up a date.

"I don't think there's any rush," White said. "She still has a movie to film, doing all the things she has to do before she fights again. I wouldn't (expect) her back any time soon."

Quiz

- 1 Which detail would be MOST important to include in a summary of the article?
- (A) how long Rousey was in the hospital after the fight
 - (B) the moves that Holm used to win the fight
 - (C) Rousey's history as a mixed martial-arts fighter
 - (D) which organization was responsible for the match

- 2 Which of the following answer choices has two main ideas from the article?
- (A) Rousey is currently working on a movie; Holm was mostly considered to be a boxer prior to the match.
 - (B) Rousey is currently working on a movie; Holm was considered to be an underdog before the match.
 - (C) Holm beat Rousey in a mixed martial-arts match; Holm was considered to be an underdog before the match.
 - (D) Holm was mostly considered to be a boxer prior to the match; Holm beat Rousey in a mixed martial arts match.

- 3 Read this quote from the section "Strategy Found Champ's Weaknesses."

"I have a lot of respect for Ronda," Holm said. "This wouldn't have meant as much if it hadn't been for what she has done."

Which of the following words, if it replaced the word "respect" in the sentence, would MOST change the meaning of the sentence?

- (A) praise
- (B) appreciation
- (C) esteem
- (D) admiration

4 Read this quote from the section "Holm's Coach Not Surprised."

"Holly walked into my gym 17 years ago. Now, you're going to come here and give the biggest upset in history in people's minds ... not in our minds. We knew she could do it."

What does the word "upset" mean in the quote?

- (A) a sense of surprise that another competitor performed badly
- (B) a feeling of sadness after losing an important match
- (C) an event where an unexpected person wins
- (D) a person who has won many competitions before losing one