

Interview from Female Single Combat Club, February 2001

Yvonne Tara Caples, 28. American amateur and professional boxer of Indian origin - Jr. flyweight (5'4", 103 lbs). Lives in USA. Her pro record is 3-3.

Tell us briefly about yourself. Where do you live? Are you married? Did you start participating in boxing before your relocation to USA?

I have lived in the U.S. all of my life. I live in Las Vegas now. I am a quiet natured, ambitious, hardworking person. No, I am not married.

What are the reasons why you have chosen boxing? What encouraged you to participate in it?

I have always been athletic. I had a friend who was a boxer who introduced me to the sport. There was a boxing program at the University I attended.

What are your best achievements and titles?

National Golden Gloves Champion, 1999.

Do you feel yourself as a special woman? Do you stand out among ordinary non-combative women? Is it visible for other people that you are a fighter?

Boxing has given me a strong sense of self-confidence. People who don't know I box are always surprised to hear that I do.

Do you recommend other women to participate in boxing, in particular, your daughter (if you would have her)? Do you consider contact sports not to be typical for an average woman all the same?

I would recommend for anyone to try it, but I wouldn't say that it is for everyone. It's a very demanding sport.

Why women never participated in combative activities during centuries (except some episodes, which can be considered as queer events)? What was changed recently in our life, which pushed women in the world if physical combats?

I think perceptions of femininity and societal expectations have prevented women from competing in the past. Now women are demanding that they get equal access.

Many women come to boxing from other sports, like kickboxing, karate, etc. What sport seems to be the best to prepare to boxing?

I did triathlons prior to boxing, but I think that being involved in any sport is good preparation; there are basic underlying principles in all sports.

How female combative sports (particularly, boxing) are reacted in India?

I believe that there is an amateur boxing program in India for women, but there is not much pro boxing, male or female.

You are a teacher. Do you instill love to boxing to your students?

My students are generally very interested in my boxing career so I use it to teach them that they can do anything they set their minds to if they work hard.

What the difference between male and female boxing? From emotional, technical, physical, psychological perspective? Are the differences going to be diminished the future?

In men's boxing there are so many more opportunities but it is also more competitive. Women still have a long way to go before there is equality in the sport in terms of skill and opportunities.

What do you think about mixed boxing? Is it appropriate for men to box with women even for training? Is it possible at all that women can be on an equal footing with men in boxing?

I am against mixed boxing. Men are simply stronger than women are. I think that training together is fun but not competing against one another.

Would you like to test yourself in a real competition with a man?

No.

Do you believe that women should do whatever men do? What do you think about feminism?

I think that all people should have the opportunity to do what they would like to as long as it's ethical and doesn't hurt anybody.

A beautiful girl and boxing... Does this combination sound unnaturally for you? Is it important for you to look good during the contest or you forget about that when boxing? Are you afraid to damage your face? Do you care about this kind of problems at all?

I don't think it's an unnatural combination. There are many beautiful women in other sports so why not boxing? I think looking good in the ring involves being a good athlete and in execution of skills. I do worry about damage to my face and brain, but I have been careful.

Don't you consider boxing to be dangerous for women? Don't you think that it might be harmful for a female body (particularly for breasts) and for the ability to have healthy children in future? What about brain damage?

There are definite safety concerns for women, but as long as care is taken, those concerns can be minimized.

Do you consider boxing to be brutal and cruel?

I think mismatches are and people fighting because they are desperate for money, but otherwise no.

Who is the hardest opponent for you (in general and in particular)?

Someone with a lot of determination who throws a lot of punches.

Which your bout was the most interesting and exciting?

My bout with Lori Lord for the IBA intercontinental title. It was an action packed fight and my first time going ten rounds.

What do you feel when winning over an opponent, knocking her out, inflicting a trauma? Do you feel joy, triumph, regret, other emotions?

My initial reaction is triumph then concern.

What do you feel when you are knocked down? Does some fury arise against the opponent or intentions to beat her up?

I have never been knocked down.

Sometimes, actors dream about roles they would play. What about athletes? Is there a special opponent who you want to measure strength against or it doesn't matter for you whom to fight with?

I want to fight the best in my weight class.

If you don't get paid, would you still participate in boxing?

Yes.

It looks like female boxing is becoming an Olympic sport. What do you think about that? Would you like to participate in Olympic games?

I really hope it does become an Olympic sport. That would improve the state of women's boxing tremendously.

Would you like to participate in different combative sports such as freestyle wrestling, extreme fighting?

I am only interested in boxing.

Do your parents approve your enthusiasm in boxing?

Yes.

What your husband (boy friend) and other male friends think about your enthusiasm in boxing and about possible face injuries? Could they feel uncomfortable about your physical superior over them? Don't people consider you as a "queer bird"?

Most people are supportive.

Do you consider physical superiority of men over women acceptable and natural? Would you imagine that your husband or boy friend is weaker than you are?

There are strong men and strong women. There are weak men and weak women.

Do you think that a man must be gallant and attentive toward a woman even the woman is a fighter?

Yes in an ideal world.

Do you like watching physical contests? What is more exciting for you, men's or women's competitions?

I like watching boxing. I like matches where actions are packed with skilled fighters; it doesn't matter, what gender the combatants are.

What is your opinion about erotic and show contests, such as professional wrestling, catfighting or foxy-boxing?

I think they reduce my chosen profession to a circus show.

Do you consider women's contests for men's amusement to be humiliating for women?

Yes.

Are you boxing or wrestling with women or men just for fun?

No, I am very serious about the sport.

Have you ever participated in real fights with women? Do you consider them as acceptable under some circumstances? Would you be able to fight a woman over a man?

I think for self defense its all right to fight.

Have you used your fighting skills for self-defense against male attackers?

No.

What are your hobbies?

Reading, writing, dancing, watching movies.

Who is your fans and audience?

My friends, family and generally anyone who has seen me box.

What would you like to wish your admires and fans?

Thanks for your support.

What do you want to say to our visitors?

Thanks for your interest.