

BRC's Coach Halbert honored in Brazil's *Open Games*

Coach Christy Halbert served as an ambassador for women's boxing when she and two U.S. boxers participated in the *Open Games*, from September 17-25, 2006. The *Open Games* are South America's largest athletic competition, with 33 Olympic and non-Olympic sports, and participants from all around Brazil and other South American countries. Emily and Katy Klinefelter, sisters from Iowa City, Iowa, were also part of the U.S. delegation.

Halbert said "Women have been boxing in Brazil for years, but only organized as a national team since 2001. The Brazilians have made incredible strides in spite of being such a young team. They are among the top four teams in the Americas."

The three-person U.S. delegation was incorporated into two city teams: Rio Clara and Mogi Das Cruzes. "It was an honor to represent these two cities. The people of Brazil are wonderful hosts, and they are great fans of boxing. The men and women boxers in the tournament were smart, strong, and skilled – Brazil will be a team to look out for in the men's and women's events."

Halbert made two public addresses in Brazil, at the Faculdade do Clube Nautico Mogiano in Mogi das Cruzes and Vera Cruz venue in Sao Bernardo. Halbert spoke about the history of the women's boxing movement in the United States, the movement of getting women's boxing into the Olympics, and answered questions about training female boxers.

Halbert also helped coach women and men on the Mogi Team, and was reportedly the first female boxing coach to work an event in Brazil. Halbert explains "we made great inroads in our relationship with Brazil, and the U.S. boxers gained experience on the international level."

"The Brazilian Federation is supportive of female boxers, and wants to see women's boxing in the Olympic Games."

Coach Jucelino of Mogi das Cruzes claims that Halbert's presence and talks opened more sponsorship for women boxers in Brazil.

Emily Klinefelter defeated Ivani da Conceicao Ferreira, 10-2; Ana Paula Faria Sampaio, 14-2; and Naiane Lameu Santana, 8-2. In the finals, Emily lost to Loren Marques Bargi Capecci, 9-14, to earn a Silver medal. Halbert said "The Brazilians seemed to love watching Emily's in-fighting, especially her head movement and inside combinations."

Katy Klinefelter stopped Elizangela Martinelli by RSCOS-2 (16-1)., Katy lost her final match to Taynna Taygma S. Cardoso by one point (8-9). Halbert said "Katy has a boxing style that is effective on the international level. This loss was controversial, but Katy is accustomed to being an underdog. I expect to see her represent the U.S. in future international events."



Coach Halbert accepts a medal of appreciation from the Brazilian Federation.

The U.S. delegation appeared on television approximately six times, made various newspapers at least five times, and talk of us was also on the radio. The South American ESPN covered our participation, and even reported that Emily and Katy were robbed of their finals' victories!



Eduardo shows off his gold medal with Coach Halbert.

The most memorable part of the trip came during the men's finals. After the head coach was ejected from the corner, Halbert found herself alone to coach boxer who only spoke Portuguese. "I find Portuguese to be a beautiful, but difficult, language. However I'd been coaching alongside Jucelino all week. I spoke the words that I knew. Thankfully they were precisely the things that Edwardo needed to do in order to win. He made us all proud. He boxed his heart out."

"I'd like to wish the best to the Brazilian boxers who welcomed us onto their team, and especially the team staff Sydney, Michelle, and head coach

Jucelino. Thank you also to the sponsors of our host city team, who defrayed the cost of our participation. This was an amazing experience."



The host of the U.S. delegation, Mogi das Cruzes boxing team. Front: Emily Klinefelter, Robson, Flabio, Edwardo, Danila Ramos, Fabiana Rodrigues. Back row: Katy Klinefelter, Elisangela Durases, Jackson Durases, Coach Jucelino Alves, Mauro, and Coach Christy Halbert.