



AL BERNSTEIN BIO

Al Bernstein is best known to a national audience as the voice of boxing, first for ESPN, and now for Showtime, but he has carved out a career of varied endeavors and achieved success in television, movies, and as a live performer stage performer.

Al is considered by many as the most recognizable and respected boxing commentator. He now serves as the analyst for Showtime Championship Boxing. Since May of 2003, Al has worked with ringside partner Steve Albert in calling the matches on the Showtime Network. "Doing the boxing at Showtime has been a wonderful experience," Al said, "the matches are terrific and fun to call, and the production values that the Showtime production team puts into these telecasts, makes you feel proud of the overall effort. That and the pleasure of working at ringside with Steve, makes this a great endeavor for me."

In addition to the monthly matches on Showtime, Al has also appeared on the Best of 2003 and Best of 2004 anthology shows. These shows looked back on the great boxing moments on Showtime. From 1980 to 2003, Al was known as the voice of boxing for ESPN; from 1980-1998 he was the analyst (and often host) of the Top Rank Boxing series on ESPN. This weekly series was a staple of ESPN programming, and helped propel the network to its current status. "We were inventing cable television back in the early 1980s, and it was a harrowing, but fun experience to do a weekly boxing series on a shoestring budget. Top Rank provided exciting matches of young fighters on their way up--and the show became a cult hit," Al said. It was on this series that Al worked for 8 years with Barry Tompkins and formed a team that many believe is one of the best ever to call the sport. "I have worked with some terrific partners over the years, and the 8 years with Barry were very special--we could finish each other's sentences. There was a great synergy in that partnership, and Barry is a very special talent."

Throughout his 23 years at ESPN Al covered all the major fights for Sportscenter. In addition Al's duties for Sportscenter included covering Major League Baseball, NBA Basketball, and the NFL draft. "While I was doing the Top Rank series in my first 18 years at ESPN, I only occasionally had the time to cover other sports for Sportscenter--but for the last five years I was at ESPN, one of the nice things was I got to cover other sports more often," Al said.

And, one of Al's signature shows at ESPN was "Big Fights Boxing Hour" which still runs on ESPN Classic Network. Al wrote and hosted 26 episodes of this show, which chronicles all parts of boxing history by looking at major matches. "I'm proud of the work we did on those shows, it was just fascinating researching and doing them," Al said. In 1992 and 1996 NBC reached out to Al to be its boxing analyst at the Olympic Games. His work at those two Olympic Games earned him high praise from Sports/TV critics around the country.

Al has been on the telecasts of over 50 major pay per view boxing matches, and he is the ONLY boxing announcer in the history of the sport to have at various times fulfilled the roles of host, blow by blow announcer, analyst, and or roving and in-ring interviewer. "I set out to be as versatile as possible when I started in television, and I feel comfortable with virtually any role on a boxing broadcast--I love that kind of variety in what I do."



There is also variety in the forms of media that have utilized Al's talents. On radio he has done several syndicated shows, and currently does "Al Bernstein's Sports Party" which airs 5 days a week on ESPN RADIO 920 in Las Vegas. Al does a lighthearted, but informative sports and entertainment show that features big name guests in both sports and entertainment. "Radio is a wonderful medium in which to be eclectic, and that is what I love to be more than anything. I have a fairly wide range of interests, and I indulge most of them on this show--and so far, the listeners seem to share my curiosity," Al said.

Starting in 1988 Al began to use his vocal ability as a singer to carve out a dual career as a live performer. He did a live musical show at Caesar's Palace on the weekend of the Marvin Hagler-Sugar Ray Leonard fight that was very well received by both critics and overflow audiences. Since then he has performed at many major Las Vegas casinos including the Mandalay Bay and Riviera. He has also performed at dozens of riverboat and Indian casinos around the country. "Music is something I love, and when there is the time and opportunity to perform it, I consider it a real gift to me," he said.

Al has ventured into the world of feature films and television movies and series for a number of appearances. His movie credits include, "Rocky V," "Streets of Gold," and "Play It To The Bone." He has made two guest appearances on the HBO series "Arli\$\$," and appeared in a Showtime movie "Paradise" and HBO movie "Glory Days."

Al began his professional life as a journalist, and was a managing editor at Lerner Newspapers in Chicago from 1974 to 1979. During that time he won the Chicago Newspaper Guild's award for best news story--an investigation into illegal land deals by suburban officials. In 1980 Al wrote a book called "Boxing For Beginners," an instructional/historical book on boxing. It was published by Contemporary Publishing. Al also covered boxing for both Ring magazine and Boxing Illustrated in the late 1970's. Away from his professional life, Al is an avid horseman who has participated in several Ben Johnson Celebrity Rodeos. Al has competed in team penning competitions with his two horses, Sunset Matt and Paladin. Al has also served as grand marshal for a number of PRCA Rodeos. "I love riding, and one of the most enjoyable things I do is make appearances from time to time at western and rodeo events--I am ALWAYS available for that," Al said. Al also does a lot of trail riding throughout the southwest, where he says the "solitude and beauty of nature" offer an interesting counterpoint to an otherwise busy life...