

Bodog Fight Women's Champion Fighting with Heavy Heart This Weekend

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This Thanksgiving weekend will be a difficult one for Tara LaRosa . While others stuff themselves with turkey, the Bodog Fight Women's 135lb Champion will be dieting to lose ten pounds.

Not satisfied with conquering her division, LaRosa has decided to drop to 125lbs and fight Minnesota's Cody Welchlin (2-1) in a lighter weight class, as Bodog Fight presents HOOKnSHOOT Saturday, November 24 at the Evansville Coliseum in Evansville, Indiana.

Cutting weight isn't anything new for LaRosa.

"I'm used to it," said the Jersey girl. "I've missed several Thanksgivings due to fights, but I'm on target and the weight is coming off fine, so I'll be ready."

LaRosa (14-1) is keen to show off her considerable mixed martial arts skills at 125lbs, after suffering her only professional loss at the lighter weight (to Jennifer Howe in 2003) - a small blemish on an otherwise extraordinary career.

"Jennifer was just better than me that night," admits LaRosa. "I'm actually glad I got that loss out of the way early on in my career, because I learned a lot from that fight - namely, that I needed to work a lot more on my standup and not hesitate in executing my game plan. Those lessons have made me the fighter that I am today."

Hard as it may be, having to fight is not the real reason Thanksgiving will be difficult this year for LaRosa .

Just three months ago, she attended the funeral of her boyfriend, SFC Adrian M. Elizalde. The 30-year-old Special Forces engineer and Green Beret from Fort Lewis, Washington was killed while serving in Iraq when his truck was hit by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED).

"It's been horrible," said LaRosa, who has somehow managed to continue training while trying to cope with her tragic loss.

"I cry every night on the way home from the gym. Thankfully, my training partners - like Eddie Alvarez and Stephen Haigh - at the Philadelphia Fight Factory have been wonderful with me, and have helped me to really focus on this fight, which hasn't been easy with everything that has happened."

LaRosa says if there is something for her to be thankful for this Thanksgiving, it is the time she was able to spend with Elizalde, who was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and the Meritorious Service Medal.

LaRosa also plans to dedicate the fight to Elizalde, knowing that no matter what physical injury she may suffer in the ring, there are some scars that are healed only by time.