

# FIRST MATCH

2011, 15 minutes, USA, Color

Written & Directed by OLIVIA NEWMAN Produced by KEN MURPHY



*No amount of practice on the mat can prepare Mo for the challenge she faces at her first high school wrestling match.*



## SYNOPSIS

Fourteen year-old Monique "Mo" Morris is the only girl on what has been the all-boys wrestling team. As she prepares for her first, co-ed high school match, we learn that her desire to dominate the male opponent she will face on the mat is about more than proving to her skeptical teammates that she has earned her starting position. She is also wrestling to connect to her father, a former wrestler, and struggling single father.

## AWARDS

- ✦ WINNER 2011 Cine Golden Eagle
- ✦ SEMI-FINALIST 2011 Angelus Awards, Best Live-Action
- ✦ WINNER 2011 SimonSays Entertainment Award: Innovative Filmmaking About Underrepresented Communities
- ✦ WINNER IFC Audience Choice Award (Columbia University Film Festival, Program E)
- ✦ WINNER, BEST EDITING, Student Choice Award, Columbia University Film Festival
- ✦ WINNER 2011 Caucus Foundation Post-Production Award
- ✦ WINNER 2010 HBO Young Producers Development Award

## TECH SPECS

Shot on RED  
Aspect Ratio: 2.35:1  
TRT: 15 minutes  
Exhibition Formats:  
HDCam, Digibeta  
Sound: Stereo



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## BIOS

WRITER/DIRECTOR

**OLIVIA NEWMAN** is a Brooklyn-based writer/director currently pursuing her MFA at Columbia University. She has written, directed and produced several short films, and currently has two feature films in development. Olivia's short films have received awards from HBO, The Caucus for Producers, Writers and Directors, the ASCAP Foundation and the Accolade Competition, and have screened in film festivals internationally including the Palm Springs International Shortsfest. Her feature screenplay, 216 GARDEN, was recently selected for Faculty Honors by Columbia University and her thesis film, FIRST MATCH, received the SimonSays Entertainment Award for Innovative Filmmaking about Underrepresented Communities.



PRODUCER

Currently pursuing an MFA in Film at Columbia University,

**KEN MURPHY** combines extensive experience as a senior executive in corporate America with a growing creative resume that encompasses screenwriting, directing and producing. A published author of business fiction and non-fiction, Ken successfully integrated the use of the arts - theater, film, and fiction - into corporate leadership and organization development initiatives. At Columbia, Ken has written, directed and produced several short films and is currently writing a feature film, FIRE ON THE BEACH. Ken has a BS degree in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University, and is the 2010 recipient of the HBO Films Young Producer's Development Award for First Match.



## CAST



*MO*

**NYASA BAKKER** is a junior at Wingate High School for Public Service in Brooklyn, NY. She has been wrestling for three years and is currently a starter for the Wingate High School "Generals" as well as the Beat the Street Girls Wrestling Team. Nyasa placed 1<sup>st</sup> in her weight class in the 2011 NYC Mayor's Cup Wrestling Tournament.

*DARREL (Mo's Father)*

**ANSLEM RICHARDSON** most recently starred in the Sundance award-winning feature film, HOMEWRECKER for which he won the Maverick Award for Best Actor at the Method Film Festival. He has also starred in FIVE DEEP BREATHS, directed by Seith Mann, screening at Cannes, Sundance and Tribeca Film Festivals (Best-Narrative Awards at Chicago International and Los Angeles Film Festivals) and won Best Actor at First Run Film Festival. Other credits include AN INVISIBLE SIGN OF MY OWN, THE LIFE BEFORE HER EYES, LIFE ON MARS, LAW & ORDER: CI, and Joel on the daytime series AS THE WORLD TURNS. He stars in THE VISIT selected for the 2009 SXSW Film Festival and performed Off-Broadway in THE EXONERATED, directed by Bob Balaban. Anslem is also an award-winning screenwriter. He was awarded the Gordon Parks Award for Emerging African American Screenwriting at Film Independent for his first screenplay, THE SUBWAY STORY. His following screenplay, BARDOS, was awarded the Tribeca All Access Creative Promise Award in Screenwriting at the 2008 Tribeca Film Festival - currently in development with producer Frida Torresblanco (PAN'S LABYRINTH). He co-founded ThisThing Films with Marin Gazzaniga, to create the mini-series LIKE SO MANY THINGS... for the Independent Film Channel Gazzaniga.

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## CREW

written & directed by  
**OLIVIA NEWMAN**

produced by  
**KEN MURPHY**

co-produced by  
**CHANELLE ELAINE  
VERONICA NICKEL**

director of photography  
**ADAM MCDAID**

editor  
**BROOKE SEBOLD**

original score  
**FABIAN ALMAZAN**

production design  
**T. VICKY GERMAIN**

wrestling choreography  
**JED COWLEY**

## CAST

**NYASA BAKKER  
ANSLEM RICHARDSON  
ZACH LOMBARDO  
JUAN FREIRE  
SANTO CURATOLO**

