On his most-recent opponents:

Hasim Rahman: They haven't been the worst opponents in the world, and, secondly, I would like to say that they just got me back on a rhythm in terms of keeping my body in shape and taking my body to the next level. And that's exactly what I did to get to the title in the first place. I had to take those types of fights to work my way up the ladder and do what no other prospect would do. I feel like I am the best prospect in the game, and now I want to be champion [again]. After this fight, I will go on to win the world title.

I was prepared to go the distance in every one of those fights. What I do is prepare to go ten to twelve rounds and then I go in and let my hands go. If I do that it [his fight with Kali Meehan on Nov. 13] more than likely won't go 10 or 12 rounds.

Regarding his match with John Ruiz

I know I can beat John Ruiz. I know I didn't fight him at a typical way that I know how to fight. I am ready now, I have no excuses, I am in 100% shape. I am ready to fight this Saturday. I am ready to fight any heavyweight, whether it be Meehan, or Golota, Ruiz or Vitali. I am ready for whoever.

I am giving everybody respect. I normally think that I can beat guys based on my natural ability because I am just too heavy-handed for [most] guys, but I don't necessarily train 100% or something might go wrong and I may ignore it and go fight anyway.

Everything has gone perfect this camp. I had excellent sparring. I am in excellent shape. I just feel terrific and can't wait to lay my hands on Mr. Meehan.

I have been dormant since I won the title. I was going through the motions and not taking anything as seriously as I should have. I liken my career to a baseball game. I've got two strikes. One more strike and it is over, then I'm out. That means I can't afford to get a third strike so I have to go out and win. Not only do I have to win, I have to win impressively. I feel that I am the youngest, strongest heavyweight on this card and I feel that I can do more for this division than any of the other guys on this card. Therefore, it is my duty to America and the world and the media, I am going to have to step up and give the world a real strong live heavyweight champion that can step up and fight. And that's what I am going to give you all.

Has this fight been named a WBC Eliminator?

STEVE NELSON (Rahman's manager): I don't think that is the case. But I do think that the winner of this fight, Rock is currently the mandatory challenger for the WBA, will get the winner of Golota-Ruiz. It is because of that and, remember, things always change, the WBC would not name him mandatory challenger.

KALI MEEHAN: In the [my] fight with Danny Williams, I came out and threw some punches at him and I thought to myself 'he is so easy to hit.' I had my hands down and he hit me with a good shot. When I went down, I jumped to my feet in a second and he got me again. I went down and I got back up and the referee stopped the fight. I have no excuse—he won fair and square. I wish the ref didn't stop the figh, but he did, and he [Williams] won, and he was the better fighter that night. I learned a lot from that fight.

This is a true match of two heavyweight fighters. Each fighter should be able to knock the other fighter out because we are trying to knock people out. We are two strong men. I can't stand here and say there is no way in the world Rock can knock me out because I am only human and he is only human, too. But at the same time. I can say I can knock him out. I know how to box and how to move and knock people out. That's what makes boxing interesting. It makes good fights.

Do you feel you deserve to be at this level fighting Hasim Rahman?

KALI MEEHAN: First of all, I am honored that I am considered good enough to fight [LAMON] Brewster and Rahman and to be in this mix. A lot of people think that I shouldn't be, but I like to prove these people wrong. Few people gave me a chance against Brewster, and I excepted that. Few people give me a chance against Rahman. I accept that and I expect that, too.

That was a 12-round fight for a heavyweight title. You have to become a better fighter after that. I had a fight with Damon Reed on the Brewster-Klitschko card, and that was my first fight in over two years, so a lot of the ring rust was gone.

On training at the Parramatta Rugby League Team Training Facility in Sydney, Australia :

KALI MEEHAN: I've got a good facility here and I've got a lot of support from the club. We've got a house here we are camping out of. The players love the fight game. Everyone here loves the fight game.

On his fight with "Relentless" Lamon Brewster on Sept. 4:

KALI MEEHAN: I made a lot of mistakes in that fight and found a lot of things that I can work on differently for this fight than the last fight. I know these things will benefit me here.

Do you think referee Jay Nady should have stopped the fight in round eight?

KALI MEEHAN: The referee has a job to do, but at the same time if it was me being pummeled in the ropes, I wouldn't want the referee to stop the fight. If it gets stopped, I want to be out cold. I don't want to walk out. When I look at that fight with Lamon, it will help me into this next big fight with Rahman.

A lot of people here in Australia don't give me much of a chance, and I don't blame them. I am a person working two jobs and trying to fight—now for a year as a full time fighter. That's why a

lot of people in Australia were shocked. It means a lot to me.

They love the fight game, especially at heavyweight, especially one who is a battler. That's what they call someone who goes up there and gives it their all. Where my mom is from, a little island in Fiji, they have the fight on live there and they are all behind me as well. I don't know if I am a big star here, but I do get a few more phone calls.

On making his first appearance at the famed Madison Square Garden:

KALI MEEHAN: It is awesome. It is everything to me to be able to fight at Madison Square Garden and to fight a former world champion at Madison Square Garden. It means everything to me.

Whom would you prefer to fight, Ruiz of Golota?

HASIM RAHMAN: Obviously I would prefer to fight John Ruiz because he owns a victory over me. If Golota beats Ruiz, I will just exact my revenge on Golota.

What is your opinion of Golota?

HASIM RAHMAN: Good fighter, strong fighter. As long as he doesn't break down like he has in some fights. He is one of the most dangerous heavyweights out there.

Thell Torrence (Rahman's trainer): What I see in Rock is that he is a real gentleman and has respect to the point that I am surprised. There are things that I have heard about him. He is a very dedicated and diligent worker. He is open for information that can assist him and improve himself. He not only has big hands, he is a very strong kid. He's got natural strength. That is where we want to direct some of those things, so it would enhance what he is doing. We work on his fundamentals and make some minor adjustments to benefit him.

He is doing great. I am surprised that he is more agile than I thought he was. You show him things and he picks them up, and I am surprised at how he picks them up and works on them. I don't expect him to take on all of the things but he is a smart kid. I don't plan to try and change anything. There are some adjustments we are making that will enhance what he is doing. As time goes along we will make those adjustments.

KALI MEEHAN: I wanted to break on the scene with a knockout. When I lost that fight I wasn't as busted up about it because the whole world saw the fight. Nobody that saw the fight would have felt bad for me. Everyone saw it so it was good for me. So a month or two later, against Rahman, you can see that I am still fighting these big fights. I've got confidence that I am going to get myself a world title.

Like I said before, to be considered able to fight Brewster, and Rahman at Madison Square Garden, means a lot to me. I will continue to prove that I am good enough to be fighting at this level.

HASIM RAHMAN: I've never been in a position where I am now. I always could bounce back into a big fight. If I lost a fight, I still had a recourse. Now I have no other choices. I have to win. I have no other strikes. This is it. I know I have said things before. Now I feel like I am learning. I feel good about going into the gym. I just feel so good. My weight is perfect. I am strong. I didn't have to go on a diet to lose weight. It is going to be a beautiful night for me on November 13th. I'll tell you what. If I don't win this fight, you won't have to hear me say it again, because I won't fight again. How about that?

Did you hear me say that? I won't put on the gloves again. I will not put on the gloves again if I don't win this fight. I am going to win this fight in spectacular fashion. And I don't want anybody knocking Meehan after he loses this fight. He probably will be at that level of certain guys, but I am just taking it to a higher level.

Not to put a knock on some of my other trainers, but the fact is that me and Thell hooked up at the time where my mind is on the same page as his mind. I am in the best condition I can be in. I am like a sponge, listening to everything he says. I respect him and respect everything he's done in the boxing game. He's got me doing things that I don't normally do. I may go in and say 'I don't want to shadow box, I don't want to hit the speed bag.' I just tell them I don't like to do it, so I don't do it. I told Thell the same thing, but he told me to go ahead and shadow box. After that, you hit the speed bag and after that I may have to shadow box some more. It is about me putting my trust in Thell, and Thell believing in me, and I think it's a winning combination. So far so good. I can judge by now, based on the gym work, which has been excellent in my mind. Fights are won and lost in the gym preparation. If there is any truth to that, we are going to hit a grand slam.

Optimal weight?

RAHMAN: I will probably come in between 259 and 263. I feel good at about 259. Right now I am about 259, but when I eat I may go up to 263.

Why do you change trainers so often?

RAHMAN: The bottom line is that I'm on a different page. I'm not knocking any of those trainers, but I haven't always given the best 'me' to work with. Now I am on the same page as my trainer. My trainer is giving 100%, and I feel like all of my trainers gave 100%, but maybe I didn't necessarily give 100%. So the difference is I'm giving 100% along with my trainer giving 100% and I think that's what makes this a winning combination.

THELL: I am not concentrating on weight at this point here. I am just concentrating on his performance and when we get a little closer to the fight we will pay a little more attention to his weight. Now he is right where I want him.

RAHMAN: I believe that the boxing community is going to judge me on the way I perform and I don't really think they are focusing on what trainers I have been through. They are looking at where I am now. What can I do now? What can me and this trainer do? Can we take it to another level? Can we win a heavyweight title now? I believe, yes. I know my trainer believes

[in me]. So we just have to go out and show the public that.

THELL: Prior to my being with Rock, I had a good look at him. He was honest and he was fair. He attempted to tell me about his past. I am not interested about what he did in the past. I am interested in what he does in the present and what he does in the future. It started the day we started working together. That's all that I am interested in.

RAHMAN: I feel like all of the momentum I built up in the first Lennox Lewis fight – there were no expectations for me going into that fight – so I feel that what you look like in your fights is what people are going to expect from you. Therefore, all I have to do is show up and do what I know I'm capable of doing in these fights and give the public what they want to see. They want to see exciting fights. I believe I am capable of being an exciting fighter and being the most exciting fighter in the game. If we can do that, then we will just pick up where we left off from the Lewis fight.

The bottom line is there was the one fight, which I thought was a win but it was a loss. I can overcome that. Boxing is a game that you can overcome. If you straighten it out and take care of what they put in front of you and start knocking these guys out, starting with Kali Meehan, then go on to win the title by knockout. Then go on to defend the title a couple of times. It's all about, 'what have you done for me lately?' I feel like lately is now for me.

KALI MEEHAN: I had been fighting the same people that I had already fought. It is just a big headache for me to box in Australia.

I played rugby when I was younger – growing up. But it doesn't interfere with my boxing at all. I never played rugby professionally.

RAHMAN: I feel like he has enough time to prepare for this fight and so do I. I feel that the better athlete who prepares the best will be the better boxer that night and win the fight.