LAS VEGAS, NV (April 25, 2005) Four months into 2005, and already another "Fight of the Year" candidate has emerged - at least on paper. Can two-time WBC lightweight champion JOSE LUIS CASTILLO solidify his claim as the top dog in his division? Or will he be stopped cold by the hardest hitting champion he has ever faced, three-time world champion and reigning WBO lightweight titlist DIEGO CORRALES? One thing is for sure, the winner of this megafight will see his stock soar to the top of the mythical pound-for-pound list.

Promoted by Gary Shaw Productions, Top Rank and Banner Promotions, this world lightweight title unification debate gets settled o Saturday, May 7 at the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, in Las Vegas, Nevada. SHOWTIME will televise it live beginning at 9 P.M. ET / 9 P.M. PT (delayed on the West Coast). Remaining tickets for this exciting evening of boxing are priced at $400, $250, $125, and $50, and are on sale at the Mandalay Bay Box Office and all TicketMaster outlets. To order tickets by phone, call (702) 632-7580.

But until then, let the chads fall where they may. Here are the results of the media exit-poll:

"Castillo by split-decision in a slug fest. Both Castillo and Corrales can punch, but Corrales -- despite his height advantage -- will have trouble keeping Castillo away. It will all come down to who can take the best shot. That guy is Castillo."
Rick Folstad, TheSweetScience.com

"Corrales W12 Castillo. Corrales has been on a hot streak as of late, and so has Castillo. The only difference is that I think Castillo was schooled by Joel Casamayor, a fight in which I thought the Cuban won, and Corrales was able to beat him, albeit by narrow decision. Both men get tagged more than they should, so it should be an interesting fight. Corrales' boxing skills and power will be the difference in this bout, and I expect him to win a close decision."
Armando Alvarez, MaxBoxing.com

"Castillo-Corrales is a guaranteed slugfest. Castillo has a great chin and breaks down his opponents with a grueling attack. Corrales is a big-time puncher with incredible heart. This is a hard one, but I'm going with Corrales."
Carlos Arias, Orange County Register

"I like Diego in this one. He has the heavy hands and even though he has picked himself off the canvas in fights, I don't think Castillo has the power to really hurt Corrales. Castillo’s methodical style will suit Diego, who will use his superior height, reach and punching power to eventually break down the WBC champ."
Kevin Barry, Professional Trainer

"While Castillo's boxing skill and ability to make adjustments are often overlooked, I think Corrales has the tools to win this one. If Chico can establish the jab early, he will put Castillo in a position where he must come forward more recklessly to score points. That plays into Chico's

hands, and he'll land enough power shots to win this one on points. Corrales survives a late Castillo rally to win a majority decision."
Kevin Beck, Fightworld.us

"I like Corrales, he has become a boxer that can punch. If he uses his jab and boxes like he did with Casamayor, no problemo, Chico by decision."
Dan Birmingham, 2004 BWAA "Trainer of the Year"

"Corrales winner by TKO 9."
Teddy Blackburn, The Fist (Australia)

"This fight will be all about pressure, and Diego won't be able to handle it. Castillo wins on points"
Ted Bodenrader, The Ring

"Castillo by decision."
Ron Borges, Boston Globe

"Castillo is an overall better fighter. He can box, move, punch hard, and most of all, he has heart. Castillo should win by decision."
Oscar Borras, 20 de Mayo

"I lean slightly towards the younger, fresher Corrales but wouldn't risk the mortgage."
Freddie Burcombe, News of the World (London)

"Corrales has the required smarts and heart to overcome the bull-like Castillo via decision in an intriguing encounter."
Mark G. Butcher, SecondsOut.com

"Castillo proves to be tough as nails, taking Corrales' power shots and rises from an early knockdown to win a close unanimous decision over the heavy-handed Corrales. Corrales doesn't go home empty handed putting on a big-time show for his fans in the loss, but gets worn down by Castillo's rough tactics and bodywork. Castillo by unanimous decision."
Luke Callahan, Talkingboxing.com

"No one can question the skills and experience Castillo brings to the ring, and s smarter than most people think. Castillo realizes how hungry Corrales is to finally get this shot at the title. For that reason I don’t think the champion will take anything about Corrales lightly. Castillo will be well-prepared for a determined Corrales â€¦ and pull out a 12 round victory."
Paul Cicala, KTNV-TV (ABC Las Vegas)

"Castillo's recent activity combined with his iron chin and relentless work ethic should see him get the nod from the judges and the plaudits he deserves."
Anthony Cocks, DoghouseBoxing.com

"Corrales by decision. His reach and height advantage mean he will be able to control the fight

early on. If he lands big shots against Castillo, he can slow him down enough to survive the later rounds where Castillo will take over."
Ben Cohen, Secondsout.com

"A legitimate candidate for the year's nastiest brawl. Castillo's roughhouse tactics are geared to wear down and frustrate opponents. I'll count on Corrales fighting smart, staying outside and boxing his way to a close decision win. But if he decides to rumble on the inside, it goes the other way."
Dave "The Thermometer" Cokin, ESPN Radio-Las Vegas

"Corrales proves to be tougher than many give him credit for as he hangs with Castillo and trades knockdowns before posting a disputed majority decision. Castillo, of course, says he was robbed."
John Cotey, St. Petersburg Times

"Castillo will wear Corrales down and win a decision."
Tim Dahlberg, Associated Press/Author of Fight Town

"Castillo W 12. I like Castillo's experience and strength over Corrales' bigger punch and weaker chin in a great shootout."
Bill Dettloff, The Ring

"Corrales TKO 8. Punching power prevails in this one."
George Diaz, Orlando Sentinel

"Chico by KO. How long it lasts depends on which Castillo shows up. Castillo looked like "El Temible" of old against Julio Diaz, but "The Kidd" is about a zillion miles left to Chico in terms of fighting styles. Prior to that, Castillo had to depend on some second half rallies in order to prevail. Chico is Chico - if you're there, he's eventually going to catch you. Giving Castillo the benefit of the doubt and assuming the best available version shows up, I say he lasts long enough to get sliced up and stopped on cuts toward the latter stages of the fight. Corrales TKO10."
Jake Donovan, Fightworld.us

"Corrales' courage will be tested in this fight. If he can withstand the bombs from JLC, he can take a UD. Otherwise, Castillo will knock out Corrales by the ninth."
Jose Duarte, PuroBoxeo.com

"Castillo on points, perhaps after getting up from a knockdown. Corrales hasn't fought since last summer and was outboxed by Freitas for much of that fight while Castillo has quietly put together a hugely impressive run."
Ant Evans, SecondsOut.com / Boxing Monthly

"I’m going for Corrales over Castillo. Good sense says that Castillo is clearly the cream of the crop in that division right now, but it’s Diego’s time. It’s pretty much now or never and I think Diego is up to the task."

Dennis Evans, KTNV-TV (ABC Las Vegas)

"Corrales outboxes the slow-starting Castillo and moves just enough in the late rounds to blunt the Mexican's body attack. Corrales by unanimous decision."
Steve Farhood, 2002 BWAA Broadcast Journalist of the Year

"Corrales-Castillo is another early candidate for Fight of the Year. I picked Corrales over Freitas last year, which turned out to be a smart move, but for this one, I'm leaning toward Castillo on a spirited, competitive decision. Why? Maybe because he fared better against Mayweather than Corrales did."
Bernard Fernandez, Daily News (Philadelphia)

"Corrales by decision."
Norm Frauenheim, The Arizona Republic

"Castillo by points - Castillo has just a little too much know-how that will help him through to victory."
Scott Fyfe, Sunday Post (Scotland)

"Diego Corrales by TKO 9."
Ron "G-man" Gerrard, American Urban Radio Networks

"Corrales could always punch, but he is also boxing smart and using the jab of late. Add in Corrales' height and reach and he'll have a little too much for Castillo. Corrales by Decision."
Chris Gielty, TheSweetScience.com

"Corrales by KO."
Nick Giongco, The Manila Bulletin

"Castillo is a guy who can't be hurt and he figures out a way to hurt you, by fair means or foul. You can get to Corrales, but he makes you pay. I believe Diego will hold off Castillo with his jab and knock him out in the later rounds. The man hits hard."
Ivan Goldman, The Ring / KO Magazines

"I see Castillo winning by decision. I believe the WBC champion has a great chin, but doesn't posses a terrific power on this division."
Ramiro Gonzalez, La Opinion

“Corrales is too big, too fast and too strong for Castillo and when Castillo decides to go toe-to-toe with Corrales be will get stopped. Corrales by late KO."
Butch Gottlieb, BoxinginLasVegas.com

"Corrales, TKO 9. Chico's questionable chin always leaves the possibility of a knockout loss, but his fists will be too powerful."
Tim Graham, Buffalo News

"I think that Castillo will stop Corrales in the late rounds. He is magnificent at applying educated pressure and he can slip the big bombs. The chin decides the outcome and Castillo has the better chin."
Tom Gray, DoghouseBoxing.com

"No knock on Corrales, but after watching Castillo dismantle two worthy opponents in his most recent fights, I plan to cash a ticket on the underdog in this one. Castillo TKO 7."
Jeff Haney, Las Vegas Sun

"Corrales having beaten Joel Casamayor must command respect. But Castillo having lost just 3 times in the last 7 years will I believe prove too strong, determined and skillful and I take him to win a decision."
Colin Hart, The Sun (London)

"Corrales by close decision. He has turned himself into one of boxing's most exciting fighters."
Jay Heater, Contra Costa Times

"Corrales has the power but I see Castillo utilizing his speed to escape the big punches to take it to the later rounds earning himself a ninth-round show stopping TKO."
Benny Henderson, Jr., DoghouseBoxing.com

"Corrales wins. Both fighters will start cautiously but the fight will escalate into a slugfest which Corrales will win."
JD Hernandez, World Wide Boxing

"Jose Luis Castillo is the physically stronger and tougher of the two, and has a better chin. Corrales is more talented and the harder puncher. It will make for a highly entertaining fight. Corrales will jump off to an early lead, but Castillo's non - stop pressure will ultimately erase that deficit and pull out the decision with a late rush. Castillo on points."
Jack Hirsch, Ring Sports Magazine

"Corrales, TKO 10, in a battle of tough guys, Corrales has better one-punch power."
Michael Hirsley, Chicago Tribune

"This compelling fight boils down to who is the most versatile fighter and that's Corrales. There's no doubt Castillo will force the fight and be there all night, but the outcome will hinge on “Chico's” ability to box a bit, slug a bit and stay out of harm's way. Corrales also throws great short punches and that should be the key to a victory. “Chico” will become “The Man” at 135 pounds and take an exciting 12-round unanimous decision."
Mike Houser, Nevada Appeal

"I love Corrales' heart and respect his ability and firepower but I think the guy with the better chin wins this type of fight. Castillo by decision."
Graham Houston, Boxing Monthly

"Corrales over Castillo, split decision. Corrales will wisely try to use his height and reach

throughout the bout, but Castillo will nevertheless do damage inside (like always) and make this a 'Fight of the Year' candidate."
Keith Idec, Herald News (New Jersey)

"Corrales by decision. I've really struggled with the decision and consulted with experts such as world-famous sports writer Jack Welsh."
Kevin Iole, Las Vegas Review-Journal

"Corrales TKO 8."
Jim Jenkins, Sacramento Bee

"Diego Corrales should defeat Jose Luis Castillo in a narrow split decision in what possibly could be a Fight of the Year candidate."
Michael Katz, The Detroit News

"I'll probably change my mind a dozen times on this one even as they're walking to the ring. This has DRAW written all over it. Seriously."
Mike Katz, MaxBoxing.com

"Castillo TKO10 Corrales. Offensively Corrales can be a monster, his fluid power hitting lethal. Against Castillo however Corrales has to face a big lightweight, who has strength on the inside and a proven ability to grind down even the toughest, most talented fighters.
And that's the way this fight is likely to go."
Patrick Kehoe, SecondsOut.Com

"Castillo KO10 Corrales. Castillo will walk through some early fire to wear down 'Chico'"
Steve Kim, MaxBoxing.Com

"Corrales TKO 9."
George Kimball, Boston Herald

"Corrales by KO9 or KO10. Corrales is too strong and too hungry."
Pat Knighton, ESPN

"Corrales by late-round KO."
Doug Krikorian, Press-Telegram (Long Beach, CA)

"Corrales by KO 4."
Jeff Lacy, undefeated IBF Super Middleweight Champion

"Corrales by unanimous decision. Castillo shows he's a lightweight; Corrales, a champion."
Franz Lidz, Sports Illustrated

"Corrales all the way."
Thom Loverro, The Washington Times

"Diego Corrales will defeat Jose Luis Castillo by a hard fought majority decision. Both fighters have looked great in recent bouts but I feel Corrales still has more in the tank and better mobility then Castillo."
Ed Ludwig, BraggingRightsCorner.com

"I like Diego Corrales. Something in my gut (there's a nice boxing term) tells me this guy is going to get the job done."
Chris Maathuis, KLAS-TV (Las Vegas CBS)

"The Corrales-Castillo bout is one which will conclusively prove that styles not only make fights, but determine the outcome of fights. Castillo's style, which has proved so potent against boxers like Floyd Mayweawther, Joel Casamayor and Julio Diaz will work against him this time. As Castillo walks in with his usual relentless pressure, he will find himself also walking into Corrales' right hand. I look for Corrales to rain right crosses on Castillo all night long. These will be the differences in the bout, and Chico will take a clear-cut decision."
Rich Marotta, TV Boxing Analyst / KFI & XTRA Sports Radio (LA)

"The Mexican Champion is very hungry for money and glory. Therefore, Jose Luis Castillo’s relentless attack and bruising inside style, once he gets through Diego Corrales’ strong left jab, will be the difference in the outcome. Castillo wins late in the fight by TKO."
Efrain Martinez, KINC-TV (Las Vegas Univision)

"Castillo is proving himself to be on the top tier of the game. Corrales has seen better days. It's Castillo's to lose. Castillo on a decision."
Joe Maxse, The Plain Dealer (Cleveland)

"Corrales defeats Castillo in an exciting decision similar to the Morales-Pacquiao battle."
Dave McCann, KLAS-TV (Las Vegas CBS)

"This one's likely to go the distance, but don't be surprised if it's over in 10. Either way, Jose Luis Castillo will walk away with another belt around his waist. He'll be in Diego Corrales' face throughout and unlike Joel Casamayor and Acelino Freitas, Castillo can handle whatever the WBO champ has to offer. Castillo's punching power, stamina and solid chin will decide this fight."
Franklin McNeil, Star-Ledger (Newark)

"I like Corrales. I think he will punch too hard. He's much taller so he'll use his reach and catch Castillo as he comes forward."
Wayne McCullough, The Ring / Former WBC Bantamweight Champion

"Corrales will win a close decision because of his superior punching power. Castillo might be a better boxer, but Corrales' power will be the deciding factor."
Gunnar Meinhardt, German Press Agency

"The Corrales-Castillo bout is one of the most competitive matchups in years. Either guy could win this fight explosively, but I think Castillo will out-hustle Corrales over the long haul. If Castillo

was able to give Floyd Mayweather fits, he should be able to do the same with Corrales. Castillo TKO 10."
Bob Mladinich, Boxing Digest / The Fist / TheSweetScience.com

"Castillo said that Julio Diaz' punch made him see stars' .... just imagine what Corrales' punch will do! I'm going with 'Chico' Corrales by TKO!"
Teddy Molina, 15rounds.com

"Corrales over Castillo by late-round TKO (10th round if I have to pick a round). As good as Castillo is, Corrales is simply the best, most dangerous lightweight in the world"
Robert Morales, Los Angeles Daily News Group

"Castillo's one guy I just can't get excited to watch fight, but there's no doubt that the guy gets it done in the ring, and he's been on a roll lately against quality opposition. But his strength is walking through opponents, smothering them, wearing them down. I don't see him doing that to Chico, who will keep him at a distance, and pepper him with jabs and straight rights all night, while moving enough that Castillo can never get set. I think this will be a rough night for Castillo. Chico by wide UD or TKO by cuts."
Kieran Mulvaney, BoxinginLasVegas.com / TigerBoxing.com

"Castillo over Corrales in a hard-fought 12-round decision. While Corrales has the better punch, Castillo will neutralize that power just like he was able to neutralize Floyd Mayweather's power in both of their fights. This fight will be close, but I think that Castillo will dominate enough early rounds to squeak by."
Steve Nelson, Kuffler News Service

"The layoff since the Freitas bout could hurt Corrales. He's not mobile enough and he'll get hit. Castillo has too many tools. I like Castillo to win on a late stoppage."
Rich O'Brien, Sports Illustrated

"Corrales KO 9."
Jorge Ortiz, San Francisco Chronicle

"Castillo by decision."
Tony Paige, WFAN Radio (New York)

"Corrales by KO."
Manny Pacquiao, Two-Time World Champion

"I like Castillo late and Trinidad in four or five rounds. In the Castillo fight, Jose Luis is just too strong and, after one of his customary slow starts, I see him getting through Chico's guard in the later rounds, when Chico begins to tire, and eventually knocking him out."
Jorge Parez, El Nuevo DÃ-a (San Juan, Puerto Rico)

"Castillo by split decision."
Santos Perez, Miami Herald

"Castillo by decision. He's shrewder."
Jeff Powell, Daily Mail (London)

"Corrales by decision. If he uses his jab, it's an easy fight. If he doesn't, it's probably the fight of the year. Castillo's style is tough for a lot of fighters, but coming after Corrales is something nobody has ever done successfully, and he'll be right there for "Chico" to unload on with both hands. I think Corrales' tools are going to make him look fantastic in this fight, and he'll do a lot of damage early and hang tough down the stretch to take a unanimous decision win."
Jason Probst, MaxBoxing.com

"It came up heads; Castillo to win by decision."
Pat Putnam, Sports Illustrated Emeritus /TheSweetScience.com

"Tough fight to pick, but I'm going with the sturdier fighter, and that's Castillo. He'll weather a storm but prevail on a close decision in an excellent fight. Castillo W12."
Dan Rafael, ESPN.com

"Castillo by late KO. Castillo is too strong for Corrales."
Freddie Roach, 2003 BWAA "Trainer of the Year"

"Viva Castillo!"
Mitch Roberts, KVBC-TV (NBC Las Vegas)

"Corrales' big punch will be the deciding factor against Castillo. Corrales by KO."
Michael Rosenthal, San Diego Union-Tribune

"Castillo's been the more active fighter and is more suitable to fight a toe-to-toe war than Corrales. Both fighters have good power, but Corrales has made it clear that he wants to stand and trade with Castillo and that will be his downfall. Look for a late round KO for Castillo"
Mike Samuels, Boxingtalk.net

"Corrales by late-round TKO or decision."
Lem Satterfield, The Baltimore Sun

"Diego Corrales has made a believer out of me, and I think he will win by TKO."
John Scheinman, Ballroom Boxing / The Washington Post

"Castillo's toughness and aggression will earn him at least a decision. He could stop Corrales late."
Ed Schuyler, Associated Press Emeritus

"If there was ever a fight that has that aura of "whoever wants it more - will win," this is it. Both fighters are proven 135-pounders who really don't really have a lot of advantages over the other. With that being said, I know one fight doesn't mean anything, but if Corrales shows the determination and chin like he did with Freitas, I can see him with the win. Castillo's size and power will be his assets. Who will win? No one. 12-round Draw in the fight of the year."

Rob Scott, Doghouseboxing.com

"I like Corrales."
Colonel Bob Sheridan, International Commentator

"Jose Luis Castillo is one tough hombre. But so is Corrales. I like Corrales in a nip and tuck battle over 12 rounds. Corrales by decision."
Tim Smith, NY Daily News

"Corrales has been dying to get his shot at Castillo. Now he's got it and he'll make the most of it. Corrales TKO 11."
Steve Springer, Los Angeles Times

"I am going with Castillo on this one. He is the stronger fighter. It will be close and action packed early on, but Castillo will wear him down with his persistent body attack and constant pressure. Castillo by a 10th round TKO."
Julius Stecker, TalkingBoxing.com

"I would be very surprised to see Corrales lose."
Don Steinberg, Philadelphia Inquirer

"Diego is primed and ready for this fight. He will win a decision over Castillo."
Rick Strasser, KVBC-TV (NBC Las Vegas)

"Castillo is certainly a tough, talented customer, but there may be nobody fighting with more confidence these days than Corrales. He's loose, relaxed, and even when he starts off slow and gets behind on the cards, he doesn't panic. Safe in the knowledge s got the power to end a fight quickly, he rebounds and impresses. s never looked so good. I think ll knock Castillo down, but not out. I have Corrales in a unanimous decision. "
Tim Struby, ESPN The Magazine

"In a very exciting fight, Corrales boxes and brawls his way to an 8-4 (in rounds) unanimous decision in a fight with multiple knockdowns."
Tom Thompson, Tigerboxing.com

"I give this to Castillo by a close majority decision. Both are brilliant fighters, both have talents that can dominate opponents, and both will have to fight a tactically smart fight here if they want to have a chance. I see Castillo coming out ahead in the late rounds."
Trae Thompson, Ft. Worth Star-Telegram

"Diego Corrales will use his reach and height advantage while taking a decision from Jose Luis Castillo. Jose's heart will keep him advancing, but right into Corrales counterpunches."
Larry Tornambe, Boxingtalk.net

"Corrales boxes intelligently and wins a decision over Castillo -- both will bleed."
Jess E. Trail, Doghouseboxing.com

"Great fight! I like Castillo over the distance as I think he is one guy who can take Corrales best bombs. Castillo W12."
Paul Upham, Secondsout.com

"Corrales has a hammer in his left hook and I don't think Castillo has ever been in with a fighter with Diego's power so I think the fight will end in a knockout by Corrales."
Huel Washington, San Francisco Sun-Reporter

"Corrales W12 Castillo. I like Corrales in a close decision. Expect Castillo to rock Corrales in the early rounds, but Corrales rallies to win."
Calvin Watkins, Dallas Morning News

"Benny Leonard by KO 15. Love the way he fights from right to left."
Jack Welsh, World Famous Sports Writer

"Castillo will wear down Corrales and win by late TKO."
John Whisler, Express-News (San Antonio, TX)

"Corrales by decision: Chico can win more rounds by boxing, and has the power to prevent Castillo from rallying late."
Johnnie Whitehead, The Ring / KO Magazines

"I'm a little concerned about Corrales' relative inactivity having not fought in nine months and the fact Castillo is coming off his big win over Julio Diaz last March, but I still like Corrales in a real close tough fight. Corrales, who is four years younger and three inches taller, should control the fight with his size and reach and I like his chemistry with trainer."
Joe Goossen, Trainer

"I'll take Corrales in a split decision, but I wouldn't bet Tim Smith's paycheck on it."
George Willis, New York Post

FINAL TALLY: CASTILLO 41 / CORRALES 64 / DRAW 2