

Boxing News: Duran Says He Never Said No Mas

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The legendary Roberto Duran, who celebrated his 54th birthday on Thursday, spoke on a national conference call to promote the June 24th Team Freedom pay-per-view fight headlined by Yory Boy Campas vs. Matt Vanda. The fight will be at the Target Center in Minneapolis, and will also feature a celebration of the 25th anniversary of Duran's victory over Sugar Ray Leonard - the first loss in Leonard's career - to win the WBC welterweight title.

Asked why he is now promoting fights for Team Freedom, Duran said, "I want to be remembered as a great fighter and great person. I want to keep the Roberto Duran name out there so people don't forget."

Asked how he felt after beating Leonard, Duran said, "I was elated after that win. He was the Golden Boy, the idol of the U.S. But I was ready mentally and physically. I felt I had won over the Montreal fans. I was very happy."

Asked if the fighters of today in his division could have beaten him when he was champ, Duran said, "I know all the fighters well. Some of them might be hard fights, but it would be very difficult for any of these fighters to beat me because I am on a different level."

Someone asked Duran if he had regrets about the "No mas" rematch against Leonard. "Leonard's people outsmarted my people," Duran said. "They knew I was going to party hard after the win. They outsmarted us by having the rematch so soon after the first fight. I had a difficult time making the weight. I was really upset at the management team . . . I never said 'no mas.' How could Howard Cosell hear what I was saying? He was on the other side of the ring."