

Boxing News: Hasim Rahman Meets the Press

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Hasim "The Rock" Rahman, in anticipation of his November 12 showdown with WBC heavyweight champion Vitali Klitschko, met with the press on November 1, 2005. He was joined by his trainer Thell Torrance, Lee Samuels and Bob Arum of Top Rank, and this is what they had to say.

OPERATOR: Good afternoon everyone and welcome to your Top Rank conference call with Hasim Rahman.

At this time, all lines have been placed on a listen-only mode and the floor will be opened for questions following the presentation.

I would like to turn the floor over to your host Lee Samuels with Top Rank.

LEE SAMUELS, TOP RANK: Greetings everyone. Bob Arum and myself, are in Las Vegas, at the Top Rank offices. Hasim Rahman is here with us, the champion. He's in his training facility in Bend, Oregon. He's getting all set for November 12th, Seek and Destroy, Klitschko versus Rahman, Saturday November 12th, brought to you by Top Rank K2 Caesar's Palace/Wynn Las Vegas and available, of course, on HBO Pay-Per-View.

At this time, let's turn it over to Bob Arum, the CEO of Top Rank. Bob.

BOB ARUM, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, TOP RANK: Thanks Lee. I want to welcome you all to this conference call. This heavyweight championship match is the most significant fight in the heavyweight division in many years. Both fighters have been training like mad. I expect a terrific performance from each of them and I know you're anxious, now, to speak to the former champion, how hoping to become the new champion, Hasim Rahman and – but before I turn it over to him, I think Steve Nelson has a few words to say.

STEVE NELSON: Hi Bob. Well, first of all, we're real happy to be on this line with everyone. You know, training's been doing great in Bend, Oregon and I think everyone's in for a sensational evening, November 12th.

BOB ARUM: Very good and now, welcome to a terrific fighter, a great guy, a man who hopes to make history come November 12th, Hasim Rahman.

HASIM RAHMAN: How you doing?

BOB ARUM: How are you? Do you want to say a couple of words, Rock?

HASIM RAHMAN: No, I'm going to wait for their questions. I'm real happy to be here. I'm ready to fight.

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KEVIN IOLE: Hey, I wonder, first of all, if you can talk about how have you handled the distractions that you've had in camp getting deposed and having the settlement talks with King and everything and all the court situation, has that in any way, been a distraction to you?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, not – I mean, no way at all. I'm ready. No excuses, you know. If I don't win this fight it's because Klitschko's a better fighter. He's a better man. I don't have any excuses.

KEVIN IOLE: Do you feel like you've finally turned the corner and – from the standpoint of being disciplined in your training camp or not letting, you know, in other fights you've indicated that outside factors have affected you, do you think this time around that you know, you've managed to solve that problem and not let anything get in the way of your performance?

HASIM RAHMAN: Yes, I do, actually. I really feel focused, ready and just ready to fight.

KEVIN IOLE: And Rock, what is going – has been the difference? I mean how have you managed to do that? If you can explain where, in past fights, when you're fighting for the title or you know, in fights that would get you to a title fight, you haven't been the fighter you can be, how have, you know, changed that this time around?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I normally think that as long as I show up for the fight that I can win the fight and I don't really need to be 100 percent and that's how I found myself on the losing end of some of these fights, so I feel like, you know, I'm 100 percent and I'm ready to go.

KEVIN IOLE: And one or two other questions, if I might, Rock. Could you comment – I don't know how much (INAUDIBLE) has ever been about Vitali Klitschko's chin, certainly, against Lennox Lewis he exhibited what would be a very good chin by taking some big shots from Lennox, do you believe that he has a good chin and do you believe he can stand in there and trade shots with you or can you trade shots with him?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, obviously, I think, you know, Vitali Klitschko has a good chin. I definitely don't think that he's just going to, you know, quit (INAUDIBLE) hitting him one shot but at the same time, I feel like I'm prepared and I feel like I'm ready to just trade with anybody like that.

KEVIN IOLE: OK. Lastly, do you feel like you can win a decision in this fight or do you believe that you need to win by a knockout?

HASIM RAHMAN: I don't really feel there's going to be any politics involved. I think, you know, the public wants to see what happens and once they see, you know, how I'm fighting, how I'm boxing, then they ain't going to have no choice but to give me my respect, so you know, I feel good about my chance

LEM SATTERFIELD: Hey. A lot has been made of, you know or was made of the fact that you know, people said that Lewis wasn't in shape for you, didn't take you seriously that kind of thing but a lot wasn't paid to the fact that and Klitschko addressed this, in the last conference call that

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really Lewis did not expect to fight Klitschko and in fact, weighed more than he ever did, in any fight, and you hit Lewis and knocked him out and Klitschko hit Lewis and did not knock him out, do you see any discrepancies there are is that valid, what I just said?

HASIM RAHMAN: Do I see any what?

LEM SATTERFIELD: Kind of any, you know, I mean the fact that you knocked him out when you were supposed to and maybe Klitschko didn't and not a lot has been made of that. Lewis really wasn't in great shape when he fought Klitschko either.

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I've always said that but you know nobody hasn't given any credibility to the fact that Klitschko hit him with a million right hands and Lennox, you know, he can go anywhere. You know, I hit him with maybe three or four right hands in the whole fight and knocked him out. So, you know, I mean people are going to say what they want to say and at this point, you know, I just let them say what they want to say. I'm just going to show up and win the fight and then I, you know, I do my talking afterwards.

LEM SATTERFIELD: OK, Rock what is – why do you think you are – I mean its one thing to win six fights in a row, which you have done but a lot of the reason why, you know, I believe you're back in the title picture, is your appeal to the public, your appeal to the reporters that cover you, your personality, your athleticism, you're a family guy, there's a lot about your story. Can you talk about what you think your appeal is outside of the fact that you won six fights in a row?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I mean it's – it's – it's – it's not really, you know, up to me. I – all I can do is just be me and let the chips fall where they may.

LEM SATTERFIELD: Who are you? I mean you say you can sell a fight, you can promote a fight, you've proved that. Can you talk a little bit about that?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I'm not really, you know, I don't know if could sell it or not. You know, I'm just trying to win it, you know, so that's all I'm focusing on.

KARL FREITAG: How did you end up training up in Bend, Oregon?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, my trainer had (INAUDIBLE) up here when he won his title when (INAUDIBLE) against Riddick Bowe, so you know, he felt that it was beautiful place to train and I'm glad he picked this spot.

KARL FREITAG: So you like it?

HASIM RAHMAN: Yes, I love it.

KARL FREITAG: Is that – is being in a place that's kind far away like that helping you past all the distractions that have been going on outside the ring for you lately?

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HASIM RAHMAN: Absolutely. I feel like, you know, it was necessary, you know, so I mean I couldn't be happier.

KARL FREITAG: So, at this point now – you had a pretty rough stretch of fights a couple of years ago but you've been lately, what's the different between the Hasim Rahman today and the Hasim Rahman of couple of years ago?

HASIM RAHMAN: Oh just, you know, I feel like I'm a smarter fighter now. I feel like, you know, I know I just can't show up and win the fights just because people predict me to win the fight, so you know; I'm just giving 100 percent now.

EDDIE GOLDMAN: The question I have, before the first fight you had with Lennox Lewis when you went in, also, as an underdog and very few people gave you a chance, I know you showed up in South Africa, a lot earlier than Lewis did, you trained and you were extremely focused and of course, you won that fight with a knockout. How would you compare your preparation for that first fight with Lewis with the preparation that you're doing in Oregon for this fight with Vitali Klitschko?

HASIM RAHMAN: Pretty – I mean it's similar. I feel like, you know that I'm doing the same things. I'm taking this man serious and I feel like he has a legitimate shot to win, so I have no choice but to take him serious and me taking him serious, I feel like you know, now people will get to see, you know, the best of me.

EDDIE GOLDMAN: A lot of your fights have been followed – the victories have been followed by losses, as everybody knows you lost the second Lewis fight and you've had some wins. You looked spectacular, really, against Kali Meehan and then less than spectacular against Monte Barrett. How do you plan to peak during this fight, given the obvious importance of?

HASIM RAHMAN: I just feel like I've done enough and I'm confident in the work I've done, so I think that's going to be enough. I don't really have to second guess myself and be ready to win.

EDDIE GOLDMAN: OK, do you want to give us an idea of what strategy; in general, I know you can't give away your whole game plan but what we might expect? Are we going to see you come out and try and jump on him or do you plan going the distance or what?

HASIM RAHMAN: I'm really not planning on going the distance, so I feel like I'm – he wants (INAUDIBLE) exciting fight as soon as the bell rings.

EDDIE GOLDMAN: OK. In a previous interview you were quoted as making a prediction, do you want to make a prediction at this point?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I still feel like I'm going to win this fight by stoppage, so you know that's what all my preparation is for and I believe I'm a better fighter than Vitali because – well, he got a lot of strength but I feel like I'm a better fighter.

EDDIE GOLDMAN: You know after this fight would you want to unify the title, the different

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heavyweight titles?

HASIM RAHMAN: No, I think I'm – I think I like the idea of going in and let them try to bring the revenge factor on and bring his glove on.

EDDIE GOLDMAN: Interesting. All right, good luck on November 12th, I'm looking forward to it.

HASIM RAHMAN: Thank you.

CHARLES PRESNELL: Both of you have very good jabs, you're really proficient with the jab, do you think the jab is the key at the beginning of this fight to establish your pace and your range?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I definitely think, you know, jab is – it's going to be an important part of this fight but no, I think you know, whoever is able to land that jab, is going to be able to control the fight.

CHARLES PRESNELL: OK. You came in, in extraordinary shape against Monte Barrett (ph), are we to expect that – you to come into the same shape or better shape than against Barrett (ph)?

HASIM RAHMAN: I'm definitely in better shape. I never really got out of shape from the Monte Barrett (ph) fight, so you know, its just adding on is all, so I'm in a good position right now.

CHARLES PRESNELL: OK and one more question that's not relevant to the fight, how did your wife like the earrings?

HASIM RAHMAN: Oh, she liked them.

CHARLES PRESNELL: OK, great. Thanks Rock.

GEORGE DIAZ SMITH: Hasim, you know we've asked Vitali if there was a rematch clause in the works that he knew from, you know, in the eventuality that he lost to you and he responded with that he felt he didn't – really didn't need one against you, was his exact words. Would you be fighting him again in spite of his feelings about he not needing one or anything like that?

HASIM RAHMAN: Bottom line is if it's an exciting fight and you know, the people want to see a rematch, I have no problem with fighting him again. If that's the biggest money fight for me, I have no problem with doing it again. You know that's the same thing Lennox Lewis said when I was in South Africa and he was till making his move, whatever he was doing. So, you know, I asked well why. He didn't need one. He was going to knock me out. So, I mean you can make your mouth say anything. We'll see what happens on November 12th. I'm ready.

GEORGE DIAZ SMITH: Do you think or feel, in a way that you're the one obstacle standing between the Klitschko brothers for cuddling their two, you know, belts keeping them neutral and

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very possibly, away from unifying together that way? Isn't it some kind of emotional extortion to some degree in keeping champions from virtually fighting other champions some how?

HASIM RAHMAN: Yes, I don't even really, you know, I don't even think about it like that. I'm not, you know, I don't – I haven't given it any thought. I'm just looking at the opportunity to beat Vitali Klitschko for this title.

ROBERT MORALES: Hey listen, you know, over the past 10 years or so, you know, Lennox Lewis is the one guy that most of us have considered a really legitimate guy. A guy who made a lot of defenses, who was champion for a while, as far as, the heavyweight division, you know, you're only 32 years old and it seems to me you've been champion once, if you become champion again, you have an opportunity because of your talent and you're still, you know, a youthful guy, you have a talent – you know, you have a chance to be one of those guys where 10 years from now, we can all look back and say, yes man, Hasim Rahman, he was one of the legitimate heavyweight champions of his era. Is that one of your goals and if not, you know, can you tell us what your goals are?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, you know, I mean everybody's going to have their own opinion, so I'm really not, you know, all I can do is go – show up and give my best effort, you know and I feel like my best efforts are going to merit me a win in this fight and then whatever it is 10, 15 to 20 years down the line, you know, I accept it. One thing I know is that you know, I plan on putting my name in the history book as heavyweight champion twice and you know, I purposely, you know, wanted to go after the linear (ph) championship and you know, now that I have the opportunity, I'm giving, you know, a honest, 100 percent effort.

ROBERT MORALES: And one other thing, you know, being that it looks like Vitali has about five to 5.5 inches on you in height, are you sparring with guys, you know, six-six to six-seven?

HASIM RAHMAN: Yes, I'm definitely sparring with taller guys, you know but let me – I think, you know, the height doesn't really bother me. I feel like, you know, I might make his height benefit me.

ROBERT MORALES: By the way, why did you pick – if I'm not mistaken, I think you said that Vitali wouldn't be able to answer the bell for the 10th round, why did you pick that particular round? Do you think it's going to take you kind of like building a house, kind of putting up a foundation during the first seven or eight rounds and then, maybe, start, you know, taking him apart at that point?

HASIM RAHMAN: Just getting amazingly stronger as the round goes on, so you know, I feel like, you know, my whole camp (INAUDIBLE) strong as the round goes on, so I feel like, you know, if he does make through the 10th round that's going to be the round of the year because I'm going to go out and give it all I got to make my prediction come true.

KEVIN IOLE: Hey Rock, just a couple of things I want to ask you. You don't seem like your normal self today, did you just wake up or is there some reason you seem more subdued than normal?

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HASIM RAHMAN: I just don't feel like talking. I'm ready to fight. I may, you know, I may – and I'll fight, you know, it'll be all good but I mean, you know, really, you know, I just got to respect, you know, Bob Arum and Top Rank and HBO and everybody and all the writers that you know, I like a lot of you guys but don't think it personal but its just that I'm in the mood for fighting right now and that's all I really want to do.

KEVIN IOLE: You know, the other thing is, you know, I kind of felt all along that it was bullshit when they said that you know Vitale's the linear champion because he beat Corrie Sanders and I don't see where the line came from. How do you call him a linear champion when he won a vacant title?

HASIM RAHMAN: Oh, I mean because if you follow the history, you know, I mean how could anybody have been the linear champion once Rocky Marciano retired?

KEVIN IOLE: But he had all the titles, so whoever won would have that. Lennox only had, you know, I mean ...

HASIM RAHMAN: You're saying was the linear champion, right and when he retired, the number one and number two guys fought for the title, so I mean no matter the number one and number two guys were at the time that's how you keep the lineage alive. I mean other that you know; Marciano would've been, you know, nobody would've been the linear champion ever.

KEVIN IOLE: OK.

HASIM RAHMAN: I mean I got to respect that.

KEVIN IOLE: And lastly, I just want you to explain the comment that you made, just a couple of minutes ago, when you said that you might use Vitali's height to your advantage. Can you explain what you mean by that?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, you know, tall people need, you know, a lot of room, you know, I mean so, you know, I feel like, you know, I'm (INAUDIBLE). I'm not going to let him, you know, keep me on the outside or try to box him, you know, from outside. I'm not going to win that way, so we won't fight, so you know, I mean I may shape – I'm going to be able to take his shot and deliver my own, so you know, its time to fight man, next week, next – the 12th is on, you know. I'm coming home and we're going, you know, we're going to do it.

LEM SATTERFIELD: Hey but actually, the precedent was established I guess when Jim Jeffries retired and then Marvin Hart KO'd Jack Root and Jefferies officiated the match and then Gene Tunney retired. Gene Tunney – Max Schmeling wins by disqualification, he's actually on his back but he wins the title by disqualification ...

LEM SATTERFIELD: ... and you have the same scenario Klitschko but that's kind of depressing it but going to your height of your success against taller fighters, Rock, why do you think you have success like that? I mean Lennox Lewis, Corey Sanders (ph), Kali Meehan (ph); can you talk about that a little bit?

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HASIM RAHMAN: Yes. I mean I think it's quite simple, you know. I'm a six-foot 2.5 guy with probably about a six-six guy's wing span, so you know, they really can't judge how – what distance to fight me at properly, so when they think they're getting out of harm's way they're really not. They probably in the most dangerous the can be in.

LEM SATTERFIELD: Why – that's a rare quality to be able to punch up and Bob Arum was talking about that. George Foreman liked to be able to punch down on these guys and you seem to really thrive on being able to punch up, can you talk about why you're able to do that? You talked about the jab but ...

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, it's just, you know, I got a long reach and its just natural for me, you know, I can just ...

HASIM RAHMAN: ... I mean I can just – then they compete with the taller guys. I mean rather than on even terms and really it's kind of deceptive because they feel like that they out of harm's way when they're really not.

LEM SATTERFIELD: One of the things you've mentioned, in the past, was I guess the euphoria or the honeymoon period, not your terms but that you went through the first two or three months that you beat Lennox Lewis, people getting to know you. They liked your personality, you were on Jay Leno, did you enjoy that too much and how do you avoid doing that this time?

HASIM RAHMAN: I know everybody now, everybody now me around the world. I go out of the country and be recognized, so you know, I don't really have to, you know, go out and meet all the reporters and go out and meet all the fans, you know, I feel like you know, well established. I'm known worldwide, so I don't really, you know, I don't have to go through that whole, you know, high world. This is (INAUDIBLE) this is my story. It's a whole lot of thing I don't have to go through and this time, I don't really feel like I'm bound by a rematch clause. Like Bob says, he wants, you know, the biggest and best fights out there, so we can put that on for next, you know. That's all I'm looking for. You know, I don't want to fight the top 20 guy. I want to fight the number one guy, whoever is the best guy provided he brings, you know, decent money and that's the avenue we going.

LEM SATTERFIELD: And you said you're not doing some of the same things, does it follow also that you're not using words like spectacular, you know, those types of things to describe. You're not – you just want to go in there and take care of business.

HASIM RAHMAN: It's just; you know that's what I'm going to do. I'm going to go in there and take care of business. You know, I'm going in and put on a workman like effort and I think its going to merit me a win but I got to have it, you know. I'm going to win this fight.

LEM SATTERFIELD: Is Thell around?

THELL TORRANCE: Yes.

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LEM SATTERFIELD: Can you talk about your relationship with Rock? Rock has said, in the past that you know, he's had great trainers but that he didn't give them, you know, the respect and for whatever reason he's given you that respect, can you talk about why you think he is and what progress you see because of the fact that he is?

THELL TORRANCE: I think personality has a lot to do with it. When I first met Rock, we made a pact at that point in time. He lived to that and it's been good for me. I think it's good for me. I think jointly, we've created a good team. All we need to do is get some of the things done that we've been working on and I think the world will recognize how strong a team we are.

LEM SATTERFIELD: The two – last question, you guys have been training with Kevin McBride (ph) and Tony Thompson (ph), two real tall guys. Can you talk about – I know you don't want to give away too much strategy but can you talk about why that was important to get, you know, two guys with good solid records. One guy's got some momentum from beating Tyson and what intensity they bring to the sparring.

THELL TORRANCE: It's been an asset, to us, number one. We've been able to get two noble guys with a lot pride in themselves. You know you don't want to come in like a sparring partner. We were fortunate to get a small ring to work from. The work's been great. The weather, the conditions have been good. They force Rock to reach a peak that I haven't seen him at before, you know, even though we've been together for a while, so it's been good for us. He's getting sharper as we go along and I feel very good about where we are right now. I know his sparring partners, they're in a unique situation up here but I think when they leave here they'll be better fighters themselves.

ROBERT MORALES: Is Bob still on the line?

BOB ARUM: Yes, I am.

ROBERT MORALES: Bob, the bid – whoever wins this fight whether its Rock or Klitschko, will you have – hopefully, have a hand in trying to make a follow up fight with – maybe, with one of the other champions or how much of a hand might you have in that?

BOB ARUM: We – the – I have an option with each of the fighters. Now, there's a legal situation where King is going to contest the option and he has every right to contest it in court, so we'll have to see but if I do have anything to do with the winner's next fight, then I am not interested in being a slave for the alphabet soup guys. I will suggest that whoever wins the fight, fight the best guy out there because I believe that fighting the best guy out there means the most money for whoever is the champion and I think this is a professional business, professional boxing business and that's what these guys are interesting in, making the most money and they're right. That's what they should be interested in.

ROBERT MORALES: Do you have any idea who you would consider the best guy?

BOB ARUM: Well, I think that would depend. I think, certainly, if Rock wins the best guy out there you can make a case for is Wladimir, the brother because that's certainly the biggest

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fighter out there and Wladimir has credentials. If Klitschko wins then maybe the best guy out there is Brewster, but again, you know, we'll have to see. I can't talk with great authority, in the heavyweight division because I've, frankly, been out of it for a long time and I haven't followed it as much as I have other weight divisions.

ROBERT MORALES: OK.

BOB ARUM: So, you know, I mean you ask me about featherweights and lightweights, I can talk for two hours. Heavyweights, I mean, it's always difficult for me.

ROBERT MORALES: I got you. Thank you Bob and Thell, are you still there?

THELL TORRANCE: Yes.

ROBERT MORALES: Thell, how long have you and Rock been together?

THELL TORRANCE: We've been together going on two years, I think and you know it's been quite a feat.

ROBERT MORALES: During that time Thell, what improvements – I mean I realize that obviously, Rock has admitted to us and good for him that he hasn't always been as focused as he should be and that kind of thing but going from, maybe, when you first got to him to where he is now, especially, for this particular fight, what improvements, mentally and physically, do you see in Rock?

THELL TORRANCE: Some of the basic things that I noticed from the first time we got together. Those areas that I thought needed to be improved were some of the fundamental areas and I'm a firm believer you can't do (INAUDIBLE) if you can't do plain old arithmetic. Rock has been a world champion here but I want to go back and made little adjustments in those areas, you know that I think that would strengthen what he's trying to do now, what he need to do and so far, we've been quite satisfied with it and I've been a little surprised and that is, how motivated and how eager Rock has been to get on board with these kind of things, so its been a good relationship.

ROBERT MORALES: All right, thank you gentlemen. I appreciate it.

BOB ARUM: Thank you Robert.

WILLIAM TRILLO: Oh thanks. Hasim, I wanted to go back to your prediction that you have been quoted at, you not only predicted it, the fight was going to be stopped, you predicted that Vitale was going to throw in the towel. Considering that Vitale didn't throw in the towel against Lennox, when he had that horrible gash, what do you plan on bringing to the table that's going to make this man with, obviously, a big heart quit and throw in the towel?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, how you know he wouldn't have thrown in the towel if they would've got to the 10th round.

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WILLIAM TRILLO: Well it didn't happen. That's what I do know and I'm just wondering how you – what you think you have that Lennox didn't have that's going to make their corner throw in the towel?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I just believe that you know, I'm ready to fight and I'm going to put the pressure on this man and I'm going to give him some of things Lennox gave him and I do believe if the fight would've went on, you know that maybe he would've quit against Lennox Lewis.

WILLIAM TRILLO: OK, fair enough. You're going into this fight, just a slight underdog, do you believe that the champion is just getting his due because he's a champion, in regard to that and then if it was evened up that you would be going in the favorite?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well no. I definitely think, you know, he deserves to be the favorite. He's been looking impressive in his fights, you know, I mean he deserves all the credit he gets and probably should get a little more but you know, I mean I feel like the more credit he gets, the more I'm going to get, so give him all the credit you like to give him.

WILLIAM TRILLO: OK and Mr. Arum, just for you, going back to the heavyweights and the alphabet soups and all the belts, you know, the Ring Magazine has been putting out their own belt ... Would you be considering a ring type of a belt ... to prove who the heavyweight champion is, as opposed to all of these alphabet belts out there?

BOB ARUM: Well, Klitschko, you know is the Ring Magazine champion.

TRILLO: OK, good. No, I didn't know thanks for clearing that up. So, Mr. Arum, do you agree with that then? Do you think that this is a better justification of who the title holder is, as opposed to all of these alphabet soups out there?

BOB ARUM: Well, I think the Ring Magazine belt is very prestigious and I'm delighted to learn from Lee, now that Klitschko holds the belt.

BOB ARUM: But the WBC belt is, you know, the WBC is a prestigious organization and I think the winner of this fight is going to be proud to hold the WBC belt.

WILLIAM TRILLO: Now just ...

BOB ARUM: I think the – some of these other so-called champions, I mean they're nice guys. They're all nice guys but, you know, how do you sell a fight with John Ruiz? I mean you know here's a guy that if the rules are being followed, he would be disqualified. He should be disqualified.

WILLIAM TRILLO: Every fight.

BOB ARUM: Yes, every fight right and in any event, if I'm wrong in that regard, you know, then, I think nobody wants to see him fight any way. I mean he's very, very hard to watch. It's

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not what people want. My – Top Rank, myself, any promoter, who knows what they're doing, is selling entertainment.

WILLIAM TRILLO: So, I guess I have to ask Lee this question and then follow up. Is – will the Ring belt be on the line, also, with the WBC belt for this fight?

BOB ARUM: Of course it will.

LEE SAMUELS: Absolutely.

BOB ARUM: Absolutely. If Rock wins he's the Ring Magazine champion, as well as, the WBC champion, sure and a universally recognized champion. This is – whatever happens, whoever promotes, whatever it is, in the heavyweight division, I hope and pray that this is the start of a new era in heavyweight boxing.

MARC ADAMS: Hey Rock, how you doing? With the quick turnaround being you know, you just fought in August, you've basically been in training camp, I would assume, for the better part of six months and if Klitschko's come off of surgery, rehab and all that how much advantage do you think that plays into thing if the fight goes deep?

HASIM RAHMAN: I'm not so sure that you know that surgery was legitimate, so you know, I don't know if he's been training all along. My folks say ignore them, his injuries or his alleged injuries. I'm just focusing on winning this fight.

MARC ADAMS: How sharp do you feel, a couple weeks before this fight, as opposed to the couple weeks before the Barrett fight?

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, I mean it's night and day. You know I've got legitimate guys, you know that's really not coming to just let me beat on them and bang on them. I got, you know, I got guys that's really, you know, trying – trying – trying – trying to do their thing in the ring and that makes me step my game up, so I feel like, you know, I mean my heart rate is tremendous. My running is tremendous. My boxing is excellent. Everything my trainer ask me to do I'm doing with no problem. I got energy to burn. I'm just ready to fight.

MARC ADAMS: The last question I have, a couple years ago, obviously, you went through that period where things didn't always go your way. Did you ever think for even a millisecond that this fight and this opportunity might not come to you?

HASIM RAHMAN: No.

KARL FREITAG: Hey Rock, just a quick follow up question. With this fight already having been postponed three times by Klitschko, does that give you – what's your mental outlook toward Klitschko and do you have – does that make you angry and frustrated and maybe, want to, you know, get a little payback here?

HASIM RAHMAN: I mean you know I think it's the wise man don't get angry, so you know, I'm

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definitely not going – make me get angry. I'm just happy that you know, everything is where it is now, so ready to fight. You know, I mean hopefully won't be any more postponements, you know. I mean, you know, we still got time, anything could happen, so I'm just praying that you know, everything, you know, be good and every – both of us show up healthy and ready to fight with no excuses.

KARL FREITAG: So, you're pretty well able to step back then and not really have a lot of emotions for this fight and just view it as a professional operation?

HASIM RAHMAN: That's what it always is.

KARL FREITAG: Yes. Well, sometimes you know there's a grudge match but you wouldn't call this that then?

HASIM RAHMAN: I mean you know, I mean really, for me, to be honest, it's basically always is just about, you know, the fight. You know if I – if they want to look at it where's all, you know, the war words, trying to do something personal that's they're problem. You know, I'm coming to win and I'm trying to win this fight and if they take it personal that's on them. I hope they get angry.

KARL FREITAG: Yes. OK, thanks very much.

MICHAEL HIRSLEY: Yes, Rock some of these questions were really addressed by Bob, just a few questions back but I was curious when you said that you were not as interested in unification as you were in a revenge fight with Wladimir if you beat Vitali. Why is that? Is that a Don King factor, a money factor or a feeling that the heavyweight champions aren't just a distinguished list?

HASIM RAHMAN: It's, basically, you know, I feel as those that's the biggest fight out there. You know, the Klitschko's bring a tremendous amount of money to the table. You know, they bring the whole Germany factor, which is paying huge dollars and then you got a story there, you know? You know, little brother wants to step up and avenge big brother, you know, so it's a marketable fight. I feel like, you know, Bob can do wonders with that fight.

MICHAEL HIRSLEY: So, its both economic and you see that there's a back story that would sell this fight easily?

HASIM RAHMAN: Absolutely.

MICHAEL HIRSLEY: The – when – you've questioned the legitimacy of Vitali Klitschko's injuries, a number of times, why would he deliberately stay inactive, as long as he has?

HASIM RAHMAN: I mean I guess he want to hold the title for that much longer. I don't know, you know. Whenever he defended he always got a chance to lose it but if, you know, you on a shelf then you know, you can easily rack up some years. If you spend a year on the shelf, the extra year you reign as champion.

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MICHAEL HIRSLEY: But you don't rack up any money that way.

HASIM RAHMAN: Well, you know, I mean he got a promotional company. He makes money but you know, I mean he won't lose his title either.

MICHAEL HIRSLEY: All right, one last question, are you still, how we say, officially bankrupt?

HASIM RAHMAN: I don't know. That's you know that's the question you can ask my attorney. I know mentally I'm not, physically I'm not, so you know that's all, you know, you as a fight reporter and fight fan should be worried about that I'm not mentally and physically bankrupt and I'm going to come to this fight and be able to fight.

BOB ARUM: Want to thank you all for listening. This has been a very provocative call and you know I commend Rock for what he said and the way he said it. It's very, very appropriate. He's shown himself to be very confident. He's a true sportsman but he's done it in a very dignified and very proper manner and this going to be one terrific fight. The transcripts of this conference call will be e-mailed to all of you, so those who haven't been taking notes can read what was said. I want to thank you all for tuning in and I want to hope – I hope that to see you all in Las Vegas next week because its going to be a very, very exciting week leading up to this fight on pay-per-view television on November 12th. So, Rock thank you. Steve, Thell, everybody who – everybody who has been – took part and continue the training and we'll see you soon. Thank you.