

## Showtime Championship Boxing Comes of Age

Written by News Article

Saturday, 07 January 2006 19:00

---

NEW YORK (Jan. 7, 2006) – Coming off a tremendous 2005, America's No. 1 Boxing Network picked up right where it left off with an incredibly exciting, action-packed world championship doubleheader Saturday on SHOWTIME.

Let the network's 20th Anniversary Celebration of televising meaningful, competitive fights begin!

Huge underdogs Carlos Baldomir and O'Neil Bell got the year off to a rousing start by registering major upsets in the SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING co-features. In what in all likelihood will be the 2006 Upset of the Year, Baldomir registered a close, unanimous 12-round decision over undisputed welterweight champion Zab Judah. In what may turn out to be a leading candidate for 2006 Fight of the Year, Bell knocked out Jean-Marc Mormeck in the 10th round to become the first undisputed cruiserweight champion of the world since 1988.

Not bad for starters, eh?

The thrilling world title fights at The Theater At Madison Square Garden were promoted by Don King Productions and aired at 9 p.m. ET/PT (delayed on the west coast).

By defeating Judah, a prohibitive favorite, Baldomir (42-9-6, 12 KOs), of Los Angeles, by way of Santa Fe, Argentina, not only spoiled the homecoming of the Brooklyn-born Judah but destroyed the chances of Judah fighting Floyd Mayweather later in the year. Baldomir took home the World Boxing Council (WBC) belt, but he did not pay sanctioning fees to the International Boxing Federation (IBF) or World Boxing Association (WBA) so those belts are expected to become vacant.

It mattered little to the gallant, albeit lightly regarded Argentine.

"I said before the fight that this was going to be better than a Cinderella story, and it is," he said. "This is a dream come true. I am the new Cinderella man."

Dictating the pace throughout, the aggressive Baldomir won by the scores of 115-112, 115-113 and 114-113 despite fighting the last half of the fight with cuts over both eyes and on the bridge of his nose. It was his sixth consecutive victory and upped his record in his last 20 starts to 18-0-2.

His biggest round may have been the seventh when he connected with a right hand that badly shook and staggered Judah.

"Judah never hurt me, but I knew I was hurting him," Baldomir said.

Despite the crushing loss, Judah (34-3, 1 NC, 25 KOs) offered no excuses. "Baldomir is a good

## Showtime Championship Boxing Comes of Age

Written by News Article

Saturday, 07 January 2006 19:00

---

fighter, and he put up a good fight. He took the fight to me,” Judah said. “I am not going to make any excuses or argue with the judges, but I will be back.”

Judah was making the second defense of the undisputed 147-pound title he won with a ninth-round TKO over defending champion Cory Spinks on Feb. 5, 2005, on SHOWTIME. In that one, the slick-boxing southpaw defeated Spinks before 22,370 fans in Spinks' hometown of St. Louis. On Saturday, Baldomir shocked Judah in his hometown. So much for homecourt advantage.

Bell (26-1-1, 24 KOs), of Atlanta, by way of Montego Bay, Jamaica, flattened Mormeck at 2:50 into the 10th round. The IBF champion was leading the WBC/WBA champion on two of the scorecards (87-84 and 86-84) and behind on the other (86-85) at the time of the stoppage. Bell, now unbeaten in his last 26 starts (25-0-1) dating to April 1998, became the division's first undisputed champion since Evander Holyfield defeated Carlos DeLeon in 1988 – and just its second since the division's inception in 1980.

Mormeck (31-3, 21 KOs), of Rosny-sous-Bois, France, by way of Point-a-Pitre, Guadalupe, France, had a 28-fight winning streak end.

Bell-Mormeck was a slugfest from the outset. Each took turns clubbing each other with his best shots. Mormeck was slightly ahead on two of the scorecards and tied on the other after six rounds before Bell edged ahead.

SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING's Steve Albert and Al Bernstein called the action from ringside with Jim Gray serving as roving reporter. The producer of the SHOWTIME telecast was David Dinkins Jr. with Bob Dunphy directing.

In addition to Monday night, Saturday's fights also will be replayed in their entirety on SHOWTIME TOO at 11 p.m. ET/PT on Tuesday, Jan. 10.

The next SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING telecast is Feb. 4 at El Paso, Tex. “In the War To Settle The Score On Feb. 4,” Diego “Chico” Corrales (40-3, 33 KOs) and Jose Luis Castillo (53-7, 47 KOs) will collide in an eagerly awaited rubber match to decide once and for all the No. 1 135-pounder on the planet. It will be their third meeting in less than 10 months. In the 2005 Fight of the Year, Corrales won the epic first meeting when he dramatically rallied from the brink of near-certain defeat to register a memorable 10th-round TKO and capture the WBC lightweight title on May 7. Castillo avenged the loss with a suddenly shocking, controversial fourth-round knockout on Oct. 8. Corrales kept his title belts, however, as Castillo failed to make the 135-pound limit.

Rounding out the greatest opening quarter (first three months of the year) in SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING history, SHOWTIME will deliver a special 20th anniversary gift to fans on March 4 with the most meaningful world title unification fight of the decade when IBF super middleweight champion Jeff “Left Hook” Lacy (21-0, 1 ND, 17 KOs) squares off against World Boxing Organization (WBO) titleholder Joe Calzaghe (40-0, 31 KOs) to determine the best in the 168-pound division. The Lacy-Calzaghe fight comes almost 20 years to the day of

## Showtime Championship Boxing Comes of Age

Written by News Article

Saturday, 07 January 2006 19:00

---

the first SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING telecast when “Marvelous” Marvin Hagler defeated John “The Beast” Mugabi in a spectacular and unforgettable 11th-round knockout.

For information on SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING and “ShoBox: The New Generation” telecasts, including complete fighter bios and records, related stories and more, please go the SHOWTIME website at <http://www.sho.com/boxing> .