

Boxing News: Fernando Vargas Meets the Press

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In anticipation of his February 25 showdown with Sugar Shane Mosley, Ferocious Fernando Vargas met with the boxing press via telephone this week. The transcript of that conference call is below.

FERNANDO VARGAS: I have been training like never before. I have been going 14 rounds. In between rounds, before the minute is up, I am ready to go. I am going to do 14 today. I am going to take it to another level. I want to thank my strength and fitness coach Robert Ferguson for keeping me strong and being able to help me with effective weight loss. He's the man when it comes to that. And I want to thank Danny Smith – with all of the offense I am working on I am very excited. I am excited about this fight and I have been working very hard. I am going to be putting on constant pressure from round one.

Will being in the movie Alpha Dog have a negative impact on you in preparation?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I am not even thinking about losing. I am preparing for this, and when I win on February 25 we will talk about Alpha Dog after that. Obviously I have been offered a lot of movie roles that I am excited about. That will continue after my boxing career, but right now against Shane Mosley you will definitely see a very hungry and ready for action Fernando Vargas.

I know that Shane is a comfort fighter. When he is comfortable he's all right and when he's not comfortable is when he gets in trouble. So I am not going to make him uncomfortable. I am in such great shape and I feel great and I have been working so hard and when it comes time to fight he better be ready from round one. I am very excited about what you are going to see.

You are going to see the old Fernando with a lot sharper and with new moves from Danny Smith on my offense. You are going to see a lot of intensity from round one and I am excited about that.

I will definitely look forward to bigger and better things. I have been at this weight for over ten years. I went to the Olympics at 147 and shortly thereafter I went to 154 and I have been sitting here. Why? Because I have a big size and shape advantage. I am a big guy. I look for more advantages than anything. I don't need to fight anymore if I don't want to. But I want to take care of business this year and do what I've got to do to top off this great year by beating Shane Mosley. And then I've got vengeance on my mind.

There is only one fighter out there that beat me that is still active, but the only person on my mind right now is Shane Mosley but vengeance is on my mind. I've got to look great for me and myself to demand and for my fans to demand vindication.

Titles don't matter to me. Fighters pay the bills and the belts don't. There are people with belts that don't get paid much and there are fighters like myself that are able to make a substantial

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amount of money thanks to my team. Thanks to Shelly Finkel, Rolando Arellano and Main Events and everybody around me.

You have been at 154 for a decade.

FERNANDO VARGAS: Yes, and I am tired. I am tired of being at 154 and I want to be on top this year. And like I said, I don't want to be in this game until I am 40. I hear some fighters say they want to be in the game till they are 35 or 40 and I say, "good luck to you!"

Is this the last we will see of you at 154?

FERNANDO VARGAS: No, I have one more in me. Then we will see what happens. I am a naturally big guy and it is a lot of work to come down. People don't understand that I have to work hard and I have a great team with Robert Ferguson and I have been able to eat more than ever and still lose weight, but I've still got to work. I am in great shape but at the same time I am just tired. I can dedicate everything to this year and thank God I am blessed with my family and my health and we will see where we go from here.

Where did you come down from?

FERNANDO VARGAS: For the Castillejo fight I came down from 194. For this fight I was in the low 180s and I am stronger now than ever. Last week I was at 164. I have lost ten pounds in three days not knowing how I lost it, before I had anybody like Robert Ferguson to teach me how to lose weight. Teaching me how to eat and lose weight effectively and be strong.

What is the difference between this training and Castillejo?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I am running outside now. I couldn't run outside because of my back. Now I am able to run outside because of the strength exercises I have been doing and I feel great and I feel strong. I feel like I'm in better shape than I ever have. I go a few rounds to simulate the fight and I sit down on the stool and I am up before the bell is even ready to ring. And even in the 14th round.

What do you need to do to get De La Hoya?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I said it before, that I need to look great. For my fans and for me to demand the fight and that's what I am looking forward to. I have been working hard and right now the only person on my mind is Shane Mosley. I will stay at 154, weigh my options and see what happens.

I am glad I have this opportunity and now it is right in front of me and I am excited about it.

Shane is a great fighter and I take nothing away from him but with everything I've learned from Danny Smith and all of the offense I've learned...the offense that I know and the offense I've learned you are going to see something special. Shane better be ready, I'm not going to even let him breathe. I am going to be on him and he can't take the pressure – I know he can't.

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What Feroz will show up?

FERNANDO VARGAS: It is going to be the El Feroz from the past but with a lot more offensive work that I have learned from Danny Smith. I didn't have to lose 40 pounds in 11 weeks and have to go into the sauna for an hour and then got out and passed out and thank God a could box and have different style of boxing style that I can box. I not only can brawl, but I can box because certain fighters can only do one thing. I can mix up my game and I was able to do that and be successful. Now I feel strong like I am in the best shape of my life. I am looking forward to this fight.

What have you learned from Shane's losses?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I have learned a lot and if he thinks David Estrada put pressure on him he doesn't even know what pressure is. I'm on him. I am excited about this fight like I haven't been excited in a long time. I am as excited like I was when I fought Ike Quartey. I have learned so much and I am strong at 154 thanks to my strength coach who helps me eat and I am excited. I am going to be on him from round one.

Are you predicting a knockout?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I feel in my heart that if I put the pressure on him from round one like I say I am going to do that he cannot take it. I know he can't.

Do you view yourself as the puncher in this fight?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I have power and I have power even when I am boxing. Even when I was dead from losing weight in the last fight, you saw Castillejo when I hurt him with the one-two punch. So just think about me being aggressive and jumping on him. can feel it and I have learned so much from Danny Smith in pure offense that you guys are going to see me display on February 25 that this is a great opportunity for me to showcase what I have been able to learn and not have to come in and lose weight and kill myself to the last moment.

How will you neutralize his speed?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I didn't see him being to quick against David Estrada and there is a way to neutralize it. You can only do so much if you give a person enough breathing room. He can do all of the little things that he thinks he can do but I am not going to let him have a chance.

How do you feel about your performance in Chicago?

FERNANDO VARGAS: I feel bad because I had t lose a lot of weight. I did not check my weight while in training camp. It was me losing it. I was eating all of the right stuff so I felt good and I thought I was all right. I would eat good all week but on the weekend eat a little food that wasn't too healthy. But this camp has been way different and I feel great and I'm looking forward to this fight.

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I let myself down but in that fight from the first round I was so tired and I said to myself and I was asking for help to get through this and I would never let that happen again. But this time I was able to do it and keep an eye on my weight between camps. But my weight wants to gradually go up and I can gain ten pounds easy. I am 28 years old and I've been that way for ten years. I want to stay here because I have a power advantage and that's where I want to stay for the remainder of my career.

I am thinking capitalizing on this with a great performance and a stoppage. I know certain things that I can do that Oscar couldn't do. But I am not going to talk about those things. I am looking forward to this fight. He is a great fighter and I take nothing away from him but it will be my fight.

He was at 147 against David Estrada, and there is a way to neutralize all of that speed and he is going to see it on February 25th.

Do you think you may be better off at 160?

FERNANDO VARGAS: Right now I just want to capitalize at 154. The Castillejo fight had to be at 154.

Carl Moretti: Even though there is not a title on the line, Fernando is the true champion at 154.

Rolando Arellano: During the promotion they stripped Castillejo of the title, we just honored the event.

Moretti: It is Fernando's body and he has got to say to us, "Listen guys, no matter what the fight is, I can't make it to 154." Then he would move up. But because of the camp he has had and the work that he puts in and the motivational fact because it is Mosley, he fights at 154. When he says he can no longer make it no matter how big the fight, then you move up.