

Boxing News: Lacy-Calzaghe Meet the Press

Written by News Article

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On Saturday, March 4, SHOWTIME presents another world-class title fight when talented, undefeated, hard-hitting super middleweight world champions Jeff "Left Hook" Lacy (IBF) and Joe Calzaghe (WBO) collide in the main event on SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING. The most significant unification world title bout in years will air live on SHOWTIME at 9 p.m. ET/PT (delayed on the west coast) from the MEN Arena in Manchester, England. The highly anticipated, long-awaited matchup is promoted by Gary Shaw Productions, LLC, in association with Frank Warren's Sport Network.

Begin Opening Comments

Lacy: My training is going great. We are expecting a great fight on March 4. I am 110 percent ready for this battle between me and Joe. This is the beginning of my stardom as a professional fighter and I am taking Joe very seriously. I have not looked past him and I am doing everything I can in the gym, making sure I am staying healthy and everything else. So it is going to be a fight. From where I see it, it is going to be a really good fight.

Calzaghe: Yeah, it is a big fight. It is the biggest fight in a long time. I know Jeff is going to be possibly the toughest fight of my career, so I am under no illusions that this is going to be a tough night. Like I have shown in the past, I have always risen to the occasion. I have the heart of a champion and the ability. It is just getting everything right and performing on that night. So I am excited. It is an exciting fight. It is great for the division and great for boxing. I cannot wait for that night. It is going to be a great fight.

Begin Press Questions

Jeff, how do you prepare for a fight that begins 2 a.m. local time?

Lacy: It will be 10 p.m. over here so, for me, it is according to our time zone over here in the US (so it will be like fighting at 10 at night).

So are you training later then?

Lacy: No, I am training at the same time.

Joe, what is it like for you to fight at 2 a.m.?

Calzaghe: It is a pain (chuckling). It is wintertime and gets dark at 5 o'clock, but it is one of those things. Just training later and adjusting.

Jeff, Joe has ruled the super middleweight division for eight years. Is he one of the best 168-pound boxers of all time?

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Lacy: That is why we are having this fight. He thinks he is and I think I am. He dominated the weight class since 1997 and I do give him credit, but I was not here before.

Joe, do you have any game plan you are willing to divulge?

Calzaghe: I am a boxer-fighter. I have my own strength of speed. I also have power. So come the night when the bell rings, we will see what happens.

Jeff, is it in your mind at all that you are today's version of a lighter Mike Tyson?

Lacy: They see me as, as one of those throwback fighters. When I enter the ring, I am coming in there to fight. And that is what this fight is all about. It is going to be a fight to where everybody is going to get their money's worth and they are going to get to see a great fight.

Joe, do you feel like Lacy may be underestimating your quickness and your power?

Calzaghe: He knows it is a big fight and has been coming for a long time. I am sure he is well prepared. I am well prepared. I am just looking forward to it.

Joe, has your hand recovered since your last bout when it sustained some damage?

Calzaghe: I was off for five or six weeks, but everything has gone fine. I think the hand is fine.

Jeff, once the best has been established in the division, where does he go from there?

Lacy: Right now, the only fight that is on my mind is the March 4 fight between me and Joe Calzaghe. Ask that question after that fight is over with.

Joe, there is concern coming from the Lacy camp that you still might possibly pull out of this fight. How do you answer that?

Calzaghe: I have no intention of pulling out of the fight. I am 100 percent focusing on training. So unless anything should fall out of the sky and land on my head, I will be there on March 4.

Jeff, did you ever say Joe had a problem with his ticker?

Lacy: I do not know Joe that well to say he had a problem with his heart. That is a hard question for me to answer. I am not a doctor either.

Joe, why do you suppose it is that you do not get the credit that most fighters get when they reach the level, 40-0 and such a long reign as champion? How come it has taken this fight for people to think that at the outcome, if you win, will you get that kind of credit?

Calzaghe: Probably because I have unfortunately been unable to get unification fights and there has not been any stars in the division. The big names are in the super middleweight

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division, and that has not happened.

Do you think that is a criticism?

Calzaghe: Actually, I am fine. I have beat good fighters – some former world champions. I have achieved a lot and I have tried to get fights together in the past, but they have just fallen through. It has taken a couple of months to get this fight on. I am looking forward to it. I cannot wait until March 4 and to unify the belts.

Do you think that if you win the fight that you will get the credit in the United States that has not come your way thus far?

Calzaghe: I hope so, yes.

Jeff, you are getting this sort of defining fight after only 20-something fights. It has taken Joe 40-something. Do you feel that you have been rushed to get to this point?

Lacy: No, I feel like I am right where I am supposed to be. I am learning more and more each and every time I step into the ring. Everybody needs a shot, and this is just my shot.

Jeff, in the initial press conference in London, you accused Joe of sloughing. Do you think it is wise to wind someone like Calzaghe up like that?

Lacy: It does not matter because when you are in the fight, you are in a fight. I mean, it is just like someone is trying to tell you what to do in the ring and you are on the outside looking in.

If Joe needs any extra motivation in this fight, those kinds of accusations are just what he is after, right?

Lacy: I am prepared and may the best man win. That is the only thing I can say.

Jeff, someone spoke about the credit that Joe does not get in America among the American fraternity. Is he big box office in America?

Lacy: It is hard to become a big box office if you do not fight in the United States. Yeah, you have the boxing fans that watch you, but you do not have the working people knowing who Joe Calzaghe is.

Joe, have you ever thought that this big unification fight would ever come?

Calzaghe: In boxing, things are out of your hands and there are always politics involved. You just learn to be patient and if it comes, it comes. So like I said, it can take years, but it is finally here and I am looking forward to it.

Now you get to take out all your frustrations on Lacy?

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Calzaghe: It is going to be a good fight and I am looking forward to it.

Joe, when you envision the fight taking place, do you envision knocking out Lacy?

Calzaghe: I just see myself winning, obviously, but cannot make predictions. I always look for a tough fight and I am sure it will be a tough fight. I am 100 percent confident in my own ability and I am looking forward to it.

Jeff, when you picture the fight, do you see an early knockout, a late knockout, a devastating knockout or any knockout at all?

Lacy: I see me winning the fight. That is what I envision.

Joe, do you see this fight as a stepping stone towards unifying at 168 pounds, or possibly moving up to light heavyweight?

Calzaghe: I just see it as my career-defining fight. I have been champion for eight years, but have not had the big unification fight against a top fighter. Now, I have the opportunity. I have just got to concentrate on March 4. Obviously, after March 4, then you look at the next step in your career.

Jeff, you have said that your dream was to unify the super middleweight division. Win, lose or draw, are you going to continue that quest after this fight?

Yes, if the other champions are willing to step up. I am in the business of unifying the division. That is my goal, not my dream.