Juan Diaz may be small in stature but he's the Mighty Mouse of the lightweight division who's not afraid to call out the best.

"I want to fight the best," said Diaz (29-0, 14 KOs). "My plan is to get a fight with any of the other champions."

WBA lightweight titleholder Diaz faces the big Filipino slugger Randy Suico (24-2, 21 KOs) at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino on Saturday. The fight will be shown on HBO pay-per-view and is promoted by Main Events and Golden Boy Promotions.

"He may be the biggest guy I ever faced," says Diaz, 22, almost matter-of-factly. "Yes, I think he is."

If world champions were super heroes than Diaz is the Mighty Mouse of the lightweight division willing to step up against the other champions of a division many call the best in boxing.

With Acelino Freitas, Jesus Chavez and Diego Corrales holding lightweight world titles it's almost scary. And with contenders like Julio Diaz, Joel Casamayor, Juan Lazcano, Nate Campbell and Zahir Raheem roaming the landscape it's downright petrifying.

But Diaz doesn't even blink.

"I want to fight Diego Corrales, Acelino Freitas and guys like them," says Diaz, who captured the WBA world title by defeating Mongolia's Lavka Sim almost two years ago in his hometown Houston, Texas. "I'm ready to step up."

In his last title defense, he blitzed through undefeated Jose Miguel Cotto of Puerto Rico like a runaway lawn mower on wild grass. The one-sided beating had Cotto shaking his head after the fight.

Corrales, who's considered one of the most dangerous fighters in the lightweight division or any division for that matter, said he saw improvement in Diaz and considers him a worthy adversary.

"He's a pretty good boxer," Corrales said while watching a boxing match in Las Vegas recently. "He moves real well."

In Coachella, it's another Diaz, named Julio, who might figure to meet Houston's Diaz in the near future.

"I would love to fight him," said Julio Diaz, who beat Ricky Quiles last month to secure the number one position in the IBF lightweight rankings. "But first I have to see if I fight Jesus Chavez."

Last year, many felt Houston's Diaz was being wheeled away from potentially dangerous opponents to protect him. True or not, Diaz wants to stand on his own merit like a real superhero… I mean champion.

Now the littlest champion finds the bigger guys asking for rain checks.

"All the guys that wanted to fight me, don't want to fight me now," said Diaz. "I'm looking to put myself in against the best."

Still enrolled at the University of Texas, Diaz plans to use his education for his career after boxing. Right now, boxing and his world title belt are at the forefront.

With the much taller Corrales, Julio Diaz and Lazcano penciled in as possible opponents for the diminutive Texas fighter, Diaz realizes the daunting tasks that lie in front of him.

"I've come to realize I have to go against these guys," Diaz said, adding that before winning the world title he did harbor some doubt. "But I've been sharpening my skills the last two years."

The mouse has roared.

Other lightweights

Diego Corrales (40-3, 33 KOs) is looking for an opponent after his showdown with Jose Luis Castillo was scrapped. Most consider Chico to be the best lightweight in the world without hesitation. With those snapping fists in both hands Corrales knows how to decapitate opponents. He also knows how to beat runners. The most difficult opponent for him so far was Floyd Mayweather Jr., who kept Corrales off balance. Joel Casamayor also gave him trouble with his sneaky left hand. Skillful fighters have a chance against him, but other sluggers and runners can forget it. Corrales cleans their plate.

Acelino Freitas (38-1, 32 KOs) has only one loss in his career to date, but several near misses. That one loss came against Corrales. No shame in that. But his near misses against Jorge Barrios, Zahir Raheem and Joel Casamayor were close enough to do over again. Freitas has a frenetic style he learned in the streets of Bahia. He's a natural fighter who imposes his style on others. That's how he wins. And if someone rushes him, Popo can take them out with his pop.

Jesus Chavez (43-3, 30 KOs) comes to every fight with a zeal and tenacity that makes him more el toro than el matador. Who can forget his fight against Erik Morales where he staggered the Tijuana fighter twice before tearing his shoulder and knee? Then he proceeded to attack "El Terrible" for the next 11 rounds with one arm and one leg. It was the grittiest performance I ever saw. Sadly, his last fight was against an equally tough fighter Leavander Johnson who died from injuries suffered in the ring. The big question is if Chavez can recover from the tragedy?

Julio Diaz (33-3, 24 KOs) the Coachella Kid has height, speed, power and he can switch-hit if needed. It's amazing to me that he ever lost a fight. He's the dark horse, the secret weapon, a gambler's dream, because he'll be an underdog and can beat anyone in the lightweight division.

Since losing to Jose Luis Castillo, he's pumped himself up to another level.

Another rematch

WBO junior featherweight titleholder Daniel Ponce De Leon (28-1, 26 KOs) defends the title at the MGM Grand that he won by defeating Sod Looknongyangtoy (27-1, 10 KOs) last year in Tucson, Arizona. I attended that fight and it was a real slugfest. It was also the first time I ever saw Ponce De Leon resort to jabbing. Usually he slugs his way out of predicaments with brute force. The problem is Looknongyangtoy likes the same method of madness. Both are strong southpaws who like to slug it out. Let's see, Thai versus Mexican? It should be spicy.

Local fight cards

Riverside's Jose Lopez leads a fight card on Friday July 14 at the Omega Products International in Corona. The outdoor fight site is located at 1681 California Avenue. For tickets and information call (951) 737-7747.

In Montebello, Manuel Roman meets Valentin Leon on Friday July 14, in a battle of flyweights at the Quiet Cannon Golf Course on Friday night. For tickets and information call (323) 781-4871.

Fights on television

Fri. ESPN2, 6 p.m., Jason Litzau (18-0) vs. Marcos Ramirez (21-0)

Fri. Telefutura, 9 p.m., Carlos Hernandez (41-6-4) vs. Shawn Plessis (17-2)

Sat. HBO pay-per-view, 6 p.m., Shane Mosley (42-4) vs. Fernando Vargas (26-3); Juan Diaz (29-0) vs. Randy Suico (24-2); Daniel Ponce De Leon (28-1) vs. Sod Looknongyangtoy (27-1)