As evidenced by the multitude of recent big fight postponements, things rarely go to plan in boxing. When Francisco Bojado's junior-welterweight showdown with Steve Forbes was thrown into doubt after the cancellation of the September 15 Juan Manuel Marquez-Rocky Juarez card, it was yet another setback in the stuttering career of "Panchito."

But the postponement of a fight is a minor issue for Bojado given the disappointments that have encompassed the Mexican Olympian since he entered the pro ranks as a 132-pounder in 2001.

After amassing a 168-15 amateur record, Main Events snapped up the 17-year-old California resident and loudly predicted the second coming of Oscar De La Hoya. And the promotional outfit looked like they would back up their promise as Bojado leapt into ten round contests in just his eight outing and demonstrated remarkable speed in defeating respected fighters such as Eleazar Contreras and Mauro Lucero.

"What we saw with Bojado from the get-go was a kid with tremendous speed and power, the two elements that can really seduce the promoters, the television executives, and the fans alike," says Ted Bodenrader, who has written for The Ring and Boston Herald.

But whether he was burdened by the weight of expectation or just too much poundage, a 143-pound Bojado stumbled on his sprint to stardom in his tenth fight when he was soundly out-pointed by the durable Juan Carlos Rubio.

"When Bojado finally got in there with a guy like Rubio, a guy who stood up to his power and could take his punch, there really was no plan B," adds Bodenrader. "Rubio took Bojado's big hooks and then answered back with three or four of his own.

"I'll never forget the look of confusion on the kid's face. He was mesmerized."

Subsequently, Bojado developed a reputation for having a shaky dedication to the sport and his ensuing inconsistent performances added credence to the belief that he was a "spent bullet". He showed flashes of brilliance in recording unanimous points wins over Rubio and Emmanuel Clottey, but a lethargic display en route to a 2004 decision loss to 37-year-old Jesse James Leija sent Bojado into three-year hiatus from boxing.

And so began the debate as to whether Bojado's demise due to his own ability or an impatient management team.

"His handlers may have done him a disservice by unleashing him into the wilds before he could fully become a man," says Bodenrader. "There was really no rush in turning professional, but I think some folks get seduced by the memories of the teenage Mike Tyson and the thrills of watching such a young phenom go in there and take care of business.

“They may have been molding Bojado into the same shell, but it seemed to be a mistake. That’s usually a recipe for disaster, as sometimes the effects of a bad fight here and there can be irreversible for such an impressionable psyche.”

Yet maybe Bojado’s handlers simply adhered to the modern prizefighting environment in which style takes preference over substance.

“When I look at a guy like Bojado, I can't help but wonder how a guy like that might have turned out in a different era, back when fighters were much more active and records weren't as important,” says Don Stewart of the Reading Eagle. “The way the sport is structured now and the way fighters are marketed, guys like Bojado can't afford early setbacks. At the same time, you have to build your prospect against increasingly better competition.

“So, basically, there's a lot of luck involved with becoming a star in this sport. Bojado hasn't had much of it.”

But the Guadalajara-born “Panchito” did receive a boost to his career when he was signed by Golden Boy Promotions last April and was selected to help President De La Hoya prepare for his showdown with Floyd Mayweather. And now that his bout with Forbes has been rescheduled for this Saturday on the undercard of the Manny Pacquiao-Marco Antonio Barrera show, Bojado, 18-2 (12), has reason to feel optimistic about his future.

“This is a rebirth for me, I'm just excited to be back and I’m very hungry,” said the 24-year-old fighter last month. “I would rather be on this card than the last one [Marquez-Juarez]. It's a blessing for me to get on this card against Forbes.

“I’ve been training with a lot of different fighters and I’m just trying to get better and involved overall as a fighter.”

But given that he looked relatively uninspired while out-pointing Dario Esalas and Rogelio Castaneda in his first two GBP outings earlier this summer, a matchup with a highly-rated veteran like Forbes looks like a big gamble by his new promoter.

“After coming in overweight in his last win [142 pounds], I'm questioning [Bojado’s] dedication,” says Stewart. “He didn't look bad in either of those two comeback wins, and he got plenty of rounds, but I think he could have used at least two more tune-ups. Bojado's only 24, so what's the rush?”

Even though Forbes, 32-5 (9), has lost his last two bouts, few observes thought he deserved to lose a decision to the unbeaten Demetrius Hopkins, and his points defeat to Grady Brewer in the finals of The Contender was a close affair. Moreover, the former junior-lightweight titlist has a smooth style similar to that of Leija, and at 30-years-old Forbes figures to be fresher than the man who convincingly defeated Bojado.

So why are GBP giving the comebacking Bojado such an arduous test?

"Oscar sparred with Bojado before the Mayweather fight, so he's obviously formed an opinion," believes Stewart. "Maybe he feels Bojado is ready for anybody. Or maybe he doesn't think Bojado is going anywhere, and he'd rather see him lose to a significant opponent on a pay-per-view undercard than to some no-name on ESPN2."

But if Bojado produces a scintillating performance on Saturday his promoters will find it difficult to resist making big plans for their newly acquired asset.

"If he can overcome the Forbes test, maybe Bojado can get himself back on track and on the road to bigger things," adds Bodenrader.

"But that's the beauty of this sport – the drama of the unknown."