

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ VS. JUAN DIAZ SET FOR FEBRUARY 28TH EDITION OF HBO'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING

LOS ANGELES, December 22 - In 2008, Mexican icon Juan Manuel Marquez solidified his place among boxing's elite and became Mexico's number one fighter by knocking out Joel Casamayor and winning a championship in a third weight class. As 2009 opens, Marquez will not be resting on his laurels, as he accepted the challenge to face former three-time lightweight champion Juan "The Baby Bull" Diaz on Saturday, February 28th in what promises to be an early Fight of The Year candidate.

"This fight between Marquez and Diaz will shake the lightweight division to its core and truly determine the best 135-pounder in the world," said Oscar de la Hoya, President of Golden Boy Promotions. "As a fan, I can't wait to see this fight."

Marquez vs. Diaz, a 12 round bout for the Ring Magazine World Lightweight Championship, is presented by Golden Boy Promotions and will be televised live on HBO's World Championship Boxing beginning at 10 pm ET / 7 pm PT.

Mexico's premier fighter and a future Hall of Famer, Juan Manuel "Dinamita" Marquez (49-4-1, 36 KO's) has signified excellence for over 15 years and in three weight classes. A world champion at featherweight and junior lightweight, the 35-year-old Mexico City native made an immediate impact at 135 pounds when he won the Ring Magazine World Lightweight Championship by becoming the first man to stop Cuban great Joel Casamayor on September 13, 2008.

"Juan Diaz is a talented young fighter with a bright future," said Marquez. "But this is still my time and I am not about to let Diaz take my belt away from me."

Just nine years old when Marquez made his pro debut, 25-year old Juan Diaz (34-1, 17 KO's) has roared through the pro ranks during his eight-year career and built a stellar reputation as one of the fight game's most exciting young stars. The Former Three-Time World Lightweight Champion defended his crown seven times, beating the likes of fellow World Champions Acelino Freitas and Julio Diaz along the way. In his last bout in September of 2008, "The Baby Bull" thrilled his hometown fans at the Toyota Center in Houston, Texas with a dominant 12 round decision win over Australian warrior Michael Katsidis.

"Juan Manuel is one of the greats in the game and it's an honor to fight him, but I will be victorious on February 28th," said Diaz.

A site for Marquez vs. Diaz will be announced shortly. For more information please visit www.goldenboypromotions.com.