NEW YORK (Feb. 1, 2010) – SHOWTIME Sports® will present a fight card from Mexico for the first time in nearly 12 years when devastating, undefeated knockout artist and two-time world champion Edwin Valero (26-0, 26 KOs), of Las Vegas, Nev., by way of Merida, Venezuela, defends his World Boxing Council (WBC) lightweight crown against streaking, once-beaten WBC 135-pound interim titleholder Antonio DeMarco (23-1-1, 17 KOs) of Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, on Saturday, Feb. 6.

In the SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING co-feature, unbeaten, world-ranked Luis Carlos Abregu (28-0, 23 KOs) of Salta, Argentina, will be opposed by Richard Gutierrez (24-3, 14 KOs), of Miami, Fla., via Arjona, Colombia, in a 10-round welterweight bout. The doubleheader will be shown live on SHOWTIME® (9 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast).

The event at Arena Monterrey is promoted by Gary Shaw Productions, LLC, and will take place during the celebration of the bicentennial of Mexico's Independence.

The last time a SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING broadcast aired from Mexico was March 7, 1998, when Julio Cesar Chavez boxed a draw with Miguel Angel Gonzalez. It's the first card on SHOWTIME from Monterrey in more than 15 years, or since Chavez stopped Tony Lopez on Dec. 10, 1994.

The 5-foot-7 ½-inch, 28-year- old Valero was victorious by first-round knockout in his initial 17 starts after turning professional on July 9, 2002. He has 18 opening-round KOs overall.

"There was pressure on me when I was winning all those fights in the first round, but once that ended so did the pressure,'' said Valero, who'll be making his debut on SHOWTIME. "Now, I take it round by round and let the knockout come. I don't go into any fight looking for a quick knockout.

"I try and measure my opponent and get my timing down and go from there. I'm in there to do a job, which is to win and stay undefeated and keep my title. If this goes the distance and I win, I'll be just as happy as if I win by knockout. I am a pressure fighter, but I know I have to also fight smart.''

Valero captured the World Boxing Association (WBA) super featherweight championship in his 20th outing, and made four successful defenses of the 130-pound belt before stepping up a notch in weight and winning the-then vacant WBC title with a second-round TKO over Anthony Pitula on April 4, 2009.

In his lone WBC defense and most recent start, Valero registered a seventh-round TKO over Hector Velazquez on Dec. 19, 2009.

"I'm very excited about this fight and thrilled to be fighting on SHOWTIME,'' Valero said.

“DeMarco is a good young fighter who has great aspirations, like most young fighters, and I respect him a lot. But I believe my experience will be an important key. He hasn’t fought the kinds of fighters I have and he hasn’t fought in world title fights. I’m very confident that once I connect with one of my power punches, he will feel it.’’

Valero is a world traveler who has fought in many countries, including the United States, Venezuela, Panama, France, Argentina and Japan. This will be his second world title fight in Mexico. On Dec.15, 2007, he scored a third-round TKO over Zaid Zaveleta in Cancun, Mexico, to retain his WBA belt.

“Fighting in Mexico is actually a benefit for me and I look forward to it,’’ Valero said. “Mexican fans are great fans and they know this sport very well.’’

Valero, who doesn’t watch tapes, will be spotting DeMarco a few inches in height and reach.

“I like to make adjustments in real time, in the ring,’’ Valero said. “Fighters give you tapes but then they fight differently. I’ve fought a tall lefty once before and won so I expect to be comfortable in the ring. If I’m patient and fight my fight, I’ll get inside and land my shots.’’

DeMarco will be making his seventh appearance on SHOWTIME. He’s fought thrice on both SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING and ShoBox: The New Generation. If triumphant, DeMarco will become the 41st ShoBox alum to earn a world title belt.

“I'm sincerely thankful to SHOWTIME for the support they’ve given me,’’ said the son-in-law of former WBC 122-pound champion Raul “Jibaro’’ Perez. “I am going to do everything possible and use everything I can -- my reach, height, you name it – to win. This is a huge privilege to fight in my country. Words cannot describe how very honored I am to have this fight in my backyard and in my territory.

“This is going to be a very emotional night not only for me but for my family, who have given me unconditional support, and to my countrymen, who have supported me in that same manner.’’

The Valero-DeMarco clash of southpaws is a classic puncher-boxer matchup, although the 5-foot-10, 24-year-old DeMarco is anything but a runner.

“Valero’s a great champion of the world and it’s an honor to get into the ring with him,’’ he said. “I have a lot of respect for him as a person and for what he’s accomplished. There’s a reason he’s champ and he deserves all the accolades. But, for me, once I get in ring, it is my job to win and walk away victorious.

“That means I have to not only box and move but also to fight and earn his respect. I know what kind of fighter he is, I know his record and that he hits hard. But I’ve been working on several strategies with my team. In the event one doesn't work, you have to switch it up and make the proper adjustments to win.’’

A winner of 12 and a row and unbeaten in his last 16 (15-0-1) dating to May 2006, DeMarco is

coming off a superlative 10th round TKO over former world champion Jose Alfaro to secure the WBC interim title last Oct. 31 on SHOWTIME.

"I will absolutely have the same mentality on Feb. 6 as I had last time,'' DeMarco said. "I'll walk into the ring knowing I have to win and that nobody is going to keep me from my destiny. Winning this fight would be the highest honor. Nothing can compare and I can't describe it in words. But it will be every emotional.

"I will have many motivations when I enter the ring. In order, they are (1), my daughter, (2) my wife and (3) my parents and family, and when I say my family I also mean my adoptive family in Tijuana. They were ones who gave me a blanket to cover myself and food to eat when I came to Tijuana.

"A win would be so incredibly significant for all of us. Every win I get is a step in the right direction but this would be the absolute best. This is not just another fight, it is everything. The way I see it, I'm the challenger and he's the absolute champion. I win and I walk out of the ring as champion of the world.''

The five-foot-10-inch, 27-year-old Abregu registered a fourth-round knockout over Diego Gallardo in his last start on Aug. 4, 2009. Two outings back, on ShoBox, Abregu got floored twice (in the first and fourth) before bouncing back to score a fourth-round KO over Irving Garcia in a wildly entertaining affair on May 1, 2009. Abregu is ranked sixth in the WBC and ninth in the International Boxing Federation (IBF).

Gutierrez went 21-0 at the outset of a career that began in December 2001. The five-foot-nine-inch, 31 year old has fought some good ones, including Joshua Clottey and Alfredo Angulo. He is coming off a close 10-round decision loss to Antwone Smith on May 22, 2009.