

## Antonio Margarito Meets The Press

Written by David A. Avila  
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LOS ANGELES-Sitting in the middle of a dozen reporters Antonio Margarito probably wished he was in the ring instead of getting blasted and bombarded with questions about his suspension, suspected guilt and why he's fighting in Mexico.

No Paul Williams right hand or Shane Mosley left hook ever hit him like that.

Ambush at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles was more fierce than facing the California State Athletic Commission as Margarito sat in the middle of a table full of reporters from the Southern California area on Tuesday afternoon.

Even some journalists felt sorry for the Tijuana Tornado.

The former welterweight world champion was in attendance to promote his upcoming fight against Robert "La Amenaza" Garcia on May 8 in Aguascalientes, Mexico. The Top Rank promoted card is called Latin Fury 14. Also on the card will be Oxnard's Brandon Rios facing Maywood's Urbano Antillon.

Both bouts should be furious.

But reporters gathered did not really care much about the proposed fight card or whether the two fights are potential Fight of the Year candidates. Most wanted to know whether Margarito accepted responsibility for not knowing that his trainer had tried to use illegal knuckle pads for the fight that took place in January 2009 at the Staples Center against Sugar Shane Mosley.

"I don't know anything," said Margarito when asked the same question in different variations over and over. "I didn't know that anything was wrong."

Margarito professes that he did not know what his former trainer was doing as he wrapped his hands. He only knows that when Nazim Richardson asked to inspect the other hand, he offered the already wrapped hand to be unraveled though one inspector had allegedly said it was unnecessary. When that hand was unwrapped it was found to have an old used knuckle pad that is illegal under the California rules.

Reporters continued to badger both Margarito and his team on whether he would now accept responsibility in the future for his hand wraps?

"I just put my hands up there and they wrap them," Margarito answered.

; He never answered that question directly.

In his defense, the questions by reporters were fired at him before the translator could finish so in many instances they were nullified by the rapidness of each question. It was a frenzy of

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discontent.

One thing is clear, Margarito seemed to be coached on what questions he could address and what answers he could give. The California Court of Appeals will be listening to his case soon and it served him no purpose to answer reporter's questions and face damaging himself for that court date.

Forty minutes after the verbal firefight began, Top Rank's Bob Arum walked over to lend a hand. Arum did admit that the former trainer Javier Capetillo was at fault and that anyone who does not follow the rules should face punishment.

"The lawyers talked to Capetillo and he said he made a mistake," said Arum.

Margarito seemed to take a breath when Arum took over. Boxing was never as difficult for the Tijuana prizefighter as facing the wrath of journalists.

"I just have to prove myself in the ring," Margarito said.

Other boxing chatter

Boxer Daniel Hernandez is in stable condition after receiving a gun shot wound to the head in Los Angeles almost two weeks ago. He had been deposited in front of a hospital bleeding by an unknown person or persons last week. Hernandez, of South Gate, has fought several times in local boxing shows including the Thompson Boxing shows in Ontario.

Long time boxing supporter Julian Eget, a former member of the World Boxing Hall of Fame, passed away last week. Eget lived in San Fernando Valley and had participated toward improving the lives of professional boxers after their careers had ended. "It's a very sad day," said Johnny Ortiz a boxing journalist and friend.

Coachella's Orlando Lora (26-0-1) fights Chicago's David Estrada (23-6) in a 12 round welterweight clash on Saturday at the Agua Caliente Casino Resort and Spa in Rancho Mirage. Lora is trained by Big Bear's Abel Sanchez. The fight card also includes bantamweight phenom Chris Avalos and is promoted by Gary Shaw Productions.

Riverside's Miguel Garcia (21-0, 18 KOs) knocked out Tomas Villa (22-7-4) at 1:07 of the first round of their featherweight fight in Corpus Christi, Texas last Saturday. Garcia, who is promoted by Top Rank, is the younger brother of former world champion now retired Roberto "Grandpa" Garcia. He is trained by his father Eduardo Garcia who tutored Fernando "El Feroz" Vargas.

Andre Berto defends his WBC welterweight world title against Puerto Rico's former world champion Carlos Quintana on Saturday at BankAtlantic Center in Florida. Berto was originally supposed to fight Shane Mosley in March but the fight was postponed due to the Haiti earthquake. Berto lost several members of his family. Quintana's best win came against Paul Williams several years ago.

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Cuba's Erislandy Lara (11-0, 6 KOs) defeated San Diego's Danny Perez (34-7, 17 KOs) by unanimous decision last week in Las Vegas. In another fight, Lancaster's Cleotis "Mookie" Pendarvis (10-2-2, 4 KOs) upset Puerto Rico's Hector Sanchez (18-1, 8 KOs) with a fifth round knockout of a junior welterweight fight.