Written by Michael Woods
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Promoter Bob Arum acknowledged that his Saturday fight card, entitled “In Harm’s Way, has been snakebit.

“One guy broke his shoulder, another got the flu, he said at a press conference to hype the PPV attraction, which was to be topped by Julio Cesar Chavez Jr-Pawel Wolak.

Chavez, it is said, has the flu, so Wolak, who stepped in after Alfonso Gomez pulled out because of an injured shoulder, will fight a fill in. The Nonito Donaire-Wlad Sidorenko fight will be the headline attraction at the Honda Center and the Urbano Antillon-Humberto Soto title clash is a solid co-feature. Arum, as is his way, which makes sense, because his way is the only way to ensure longevity in a business notable for the regularity in which speedbumps appear to mess up the road to fruition, didn’t seem down as he talked about the card. He said he didn’t consider pulling the plug on the production, as it would not have been fair to all the men who trained so hard.

Arum said that for the last 1 ½ years, he’s been trying to get HBO to do lighter weight dates. He said he’s happy that HBO is onboard, as they’re putting on a Feb. 19 show, with Fernando Montiel versus Nonito Donaire. He said that the cabler will show more lighter guys, once they see how action-packed the bouts are, and how the fans lap it up. Arum said HBO knows it’s possible that Wlad Sidorenko upsets Donaire, and HBO has agreed to put Wlad on against the 24-1 Montiel (WBO, WBC bantam champ) if Wlad gets the upset win on Saturday. “He’s coming make no mistake about it to win this fight, because he knows what it means to him, Arum said of the Russian.

Sidorenko (22-2, just 7 Kos). Wlad said in Russian that he’s 100 percent ready to go.

Co-promoter Fernando Beltran said that Montiel is geared up for the Donaire clash. You’ll recall he was hurt in a dirtback accident in October, but his leg is on track to heal properly.

Donaire thanked Arum for not pulling the plug on the show. He promised “fireworks in the Wolak-Pinzon and Soto-Antillon bouts, and said his own bout will also be fan friendly. “This is the best so far of what you’ll see of the Filipino Flash, he said. “I want to make a statement in this fight…Hopefully we can make it happen with Montiel. He better be at his best because I’m going to be at my best, but Sidorenko is first.’

Arum said the winner of the Urbano Antillon-Humberto Soto fight, for Soto’s WBC lightweight championship, will get a date on Showtime, on Feb. 26 versus Brandon Rios. The No. 6 WBC Antillon (28-1), a bomber, said he’s had the best training camp ever and is confident he’ll get the Rios gig. “I’m going to bring it on Saturday and take home that crown, he said. Soto (58-7) thanked the media for covering the event, and said the fans will be the winner, that the bout will be a goodie.

The promoter said of the middleweight fight pitting Wolak against 19-1 Mexican Jose Pinzon, “I’m convinced this will end up the fight of the card. Pinzon, trained by Guty Espadas, said that he foresees a tight clash, and that this is the opportunity of his young career. Arum called the Pole Wolak (27-1) “one of the hardest working fighters in the game. “He is a real treat to watch because he never stops throwing punches. Wolak said, in Polish, that he wanted to thank his boss at his construction job. “I work with some of the toughest people, guys that make stuff with their hands, real men, he said. He admitted that he’s been frustrated that the fight with Chavez fell through, but that he respects Pinzon, and is looking forward to the tangle.

Arum talked about the Olivier Lontchi-Mikey Garcia (23-0) fight. Garcia is trained by his brother Robert Garcia, Antonio Margarito’s trainer. The Oxnard fighter said he didn’t know much about Lontchi, but he realizes that whoever wins this bout gets a title shot, so he’s not looking to let Lontchi (18-1) get the nod.

TSS Universe, please drop your predictions on these bouts here, now!