McEwan, Dzinzi, Martinez and Lee, from left to right, in NYC. (photo by the estimable Teddy Blackburn)

NEW YORK, NY (Feb 9, 2011) – The “Diamond Elite” WBC Middleweight Diamond Championship showdown between Sergio Martinez and Sergiy Dzinziruk was formally announced today at a kick off press conference Wednesday afternoon from the BB King Blues Club in Times Square. Also in attendance were Andy Lee and Craig McEwan who will battle in a “Celtic War” in the HBO-televised undercard. All four fighters and representatives from their respective camps were in attendance at today’s event.

“Diamond Elite: Martinez vs. Dzinziruk” will be presented by DiBella Entertainment in association with Gary Shaw Productions and Banner Promotions. Lee vs. McEwan will be presented by DiBella Entertainment in association with Golden Boy Promotions. Both bouts will be broadcast live on HBO’s World Championship Boxing beginning at 10:30pm ET / 7:30pm PT.

Tickets for “Diamond Elite: Martinez vs. Dzinziruk,” are priced at $450, $250, $125, $75, and $50 and are on sale through the MGM Grand at Foxwoods box office. Tickets can be purchased online at http://www.mgmatfoxwoods.com/, by calling the MGM Grand at Foxwoods at 1-866-646-0609, or in person at the MGM Grand at Foxwoods box office.

Below are quotes from the participants:

Sergio Martinez: I know Dzinziruk is the best champion at 154-lbs. and he will make for a great fight. This year will be the year that I become the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world. I am training very hard to make sure that this is the best fight to bring to the fans.

Sergiy Dzinziruk: I am very happy to be here. I want to thank everyone who worked on my behalf to make this fight happen. I am training very hard to make this opportunity and I want to make the most of it in the ring.

Andy Lee: Unfortunately, the only time most people have seen me fight was when I lost, because it was on ESPN. I don’t intend on letting that happen again. Now we’re on HBO, which has always been our team’s goal. I want to thank my new promoter, Lou DiBella, for this opportunity.

Craig McEwan: I've known Andy for a long time, dating back to the amateurs. I always thought if we would fight again it would be for a championship. I guess I will have to get through him to get my shot at a championship.

Lou DiBella, promoter of Martinez and Lee: When this fight was first brought to me, I said no. Sergio Martinez said yes. Sergio Martinez has all the qualities of a star and wants only the best fights. This is a great fight for boxing because not only are Martinez and Dzinziruk great fighters, they are entertainers. Boxing is about entertainment and these guys bring it. The MGM Grand Arena at Foxwoods is already over half sold out for this event. Get your tickets for what will be a great night for the sport of boxing.

Sampson Lewkowicz, advisor to Martinez: The press is wrong for trying to be a matchmaker. Everyone wants to be matchmaker, but HBO got it right. This is the best fight that can be made at this time. Thanks also to the WBC for lending their support to a tremendous fight like this.

Gabriel Sarmiento, trainer of Martinez: This is a very good challenge for Sergio Martinez. Sergio is training very hard and you will see it on March 12.

Gary Shaw, co-promoter of Dzinziruk: Boxing is all about the best fighting the best. No one wants to see easy fights. When great fighters fight great fighters, that is when boxing is at its best. Everyone in Europe knows about Sergiy Dzinziruk, and after March 12 everyone [in America] will know about him as well. Sergiy Dzinziruk will be the next middleweight champion of the world.

Artie Pelullo, co-promoter of Dzinziruk: I think that this is going to be a great fight. Martinez and Dzinziruk are two of the best fighters in the world fighting at the prime of their lives.

Emanuel Steward, trainer of Lee: We were supposed to fight Sergio Martinez, so we want an impressive win and we want Andy to fight Sergio next. We know the importance of winning impressively. I am training Andy to score a knockout in this fight.

Monica Sears, Director of Communications & Events at Golden Boy Promotions, McEwan's promoter: We are very excited about this opportunity. It is a great chance for Craig on the big stage. I want to thank everyone involved for putting together this event. It is sure to be a great night.

Mauricio Sulaiman, Executive Director of the WBC: Sergio Martinez is a great champion and a great ambassador for the sport of boxing. Sergiy Dzinziruk has been a champion for many years. Both fighters have great credentials, making this fight worthy of the Diamond Championship.

Comment on this article

brownsugar says:

a lot of people are going to shocked at how competitive this fight is going to be.

Isaiah says:

It looks like Sergio is heading straight for the pound for pound number 1 spot because this man is not playing around. He caught a couple of tough luck breaks in the Kermit Cintron draw and narrow points loss in the first Paul Williams fight, but has bounced back greatly. With the pick of Dzinziruck for his next opponent, Sergio is OBVIOUSLY out to prove to the world he is best in the game. Don't be surprised to see Sergio take over as pound for pound king or at least, knock inactive Fraud Mayweather out of the number 2 spot that for some reason, Floyd is still in on most sites.

FighterforJC says:

This is horrible news. Pacquiao is retiring???