

Brandon Rios Gets Title Crack On Feb. 26

Written by The Sweet Science
Thursday, 17 February 2011 21:40

BRANDON RIOS CHALLENGES MIGUEL ACOSTA FOR WBA LIGHTWEIGHT TITLE ON SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING

Antonio DeMarco Tangles With Reyes Sanchez in Lightweight Co-Feature

Saturday, Feb. 26, Live on SHOWTIME® at 10 p.m. ET

NEW YORK (Feb. 17, 2011) — Four of the world's best lightweight boxers highlight the year's first **SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING** event as unbeaten No. 1-ranked contender **Brandon Rios** (26-0-1, 18 KOs) challenges World Boxing Association (WBA) lightweight champion **Miguel Acosta** (28-3-2, 22 KOs), while talented Mexican fighters **Antonio DeMarco** (24-2-1, 18 KOs) and **Reyes Sanchez** (20-3-1, 11 KOs) battle in the co-feature.

All the action takes place Saturday, Feb. 26 **LIVE on SHOWTIME** at **10 p.m. ET/PT** (delayed on the West Coast) at split sites with Acosta and Rios fighting at the **Palms Casino Resort** in **Las Vegas** in a 12-round main event while DeMarco and Sanchez square off in a 12-rounder also at 135 pounds from the **Heartland Events Center** in **Grand Island**, **Neb**.

The 24-year-old Rios of Oxnard, Calif., has never met a fighter as talented as the power punching 32-year-old champion Acosta from Caracas, Venezuela. A native of Texas, Rios is currently working with **Antonio Margarito's** trainer **Robert Garcia** and had nearly 275 amateur fights under his belt before making his pro debut in July of 2004.

Acosta is riding a 19-fight winning streak and has not tasted defeat since 2003. He won his world championship belt with a 12-round split decision over **Paulus Moses** last May. In his last fight he knocked out **Armando Cordoba** in the first round. He first made a name for himself in 2009 when he upset

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Urbano Antillon

by ninth-round TKO to capture the interim WBA lightweight title.

He is currently training at the “Knockout Drugs Gym” in Caracas and has been sparring with **Fernando Zuniga**

Marco Avendano

, and

Jabar Parra

. Acosta said he will adjust to whatever style Rios brings to the ring. “I think Rios is a strong fighter and he comes forward. I’ve been preparing for that – I plan to box him, take him into the late rounds and break him down. My sparring partners have been coming forward like him, so I can slip the punches – not get hit, and do the damage.”

He added: “I’m going to defend my title and beat Brandon Rios on his home turf.”

Rios, who will be assisted in his corner by his father Manuel, is currently ranked No. 1 by the WBA and No. 3 by the World Boxing Organization (WBO) at 135 pounds. The former NABF lightweight champion, Rios was a 2004 U.S. Olympic alternate at 125 pounds and a 2004 U.S. National Championship Gold Medalist.

“This is a dream come true,” said Rios. “Ever since I was little I always told my dad, ‘You know what? I’m going to fight for a world title. I’m going to be a world champion.’ Now that I have this opportunity to fight for a title, I was so excited that the first thing I did was call my dad and said, ‘Hey, you want to come over here and help me out?’ He got the time off and he came over here from Kansas to help me out.”

Rios has won eight fights in a row, seven by knockout, since a 10-round draw in October 2008. He is coming off a fifth-round TKO win against **Omri Lowther** in his last fight on Nov. 13, 2010, which was one of the co-featured bouts on the Manny Pacquiao-Antonio Margarito main event card at Cowboys Stadium.

On Sept. 11, 2010, he scored his career-best win in a seventh-round disqualification against previously undefeated and favored **Anthony Peterson**.

National pride will be on the line when the exciting 24-year-old DeMarco, who is coming off a loss to **Edwin Valero**, takes on the 25-year-old Sanchez, who will be making his United States debut.

A former WBC interim lightweight world champion, DeMarco is currently the WBC’s No. 1 ranked lightweight contender. In his previous fight in February of 2010, he challenged WBC lightweight world champion Valero but was stopped in the ninth round. It was his first loss in his previous 16 fights, having gone 15-0-1.

DeMarco has been training at the Crea Gym in Tijuana and sparring with **Marvin Quintero, Orlando Lora**

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Juan Pablo Lopez

and

Omar Estrella

The streak included several impressive wins: a 10th-round TKO against former WBA lightweight world champion **Jose Alfaro** in October 2009; a ninth-round TKO against world-ranked contender **Kid Diamond** in February 2009; a 10-round decision against tough veteran

Jose Reyes

in September 2008; a fifth-round TKO against previously undefeated prospect

Juan Castaneda

in May 2008; and a 10-round decision against prospect

Nick Casal

in September 2007.

Ranked No. 2 by the WBC, Sanchez is the current WBC Silver lightweight champion. He has won three fights in a row since his last loss in December 2009. Sanchez knows the importance of this fight. "I'm very motivated for this fight, because I know that it's a big opportunity for me to get those big paydays – they pay a lot more money in the U.S.," he said.

Steve Albert will call the action with **Al Bernstein** serving as expert analyst in Las Vegas. **Curt Menefee**

will handle the lead role from Nebraska with

Steve Farhood

on hand for color commentary.

The fights are being promoted by **Top Rank Inc.** and **Gary Shaw Productions.**

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Radam G says:

Brandon Rios has a goofy aura, but he can fight a bit, and that is all that counts. Acosta is in for a tough rumble -- physically and psychologically. Brandon has a great mental edge over Acosta. And since boxing is about 75 percent mental, Rios already has the bout 75 percent won. Holla!

Boxingfan2011 says:

' Every Boxer is One Punch Away from Greatness'