

Showtime Crew Analyzes Cotto-Mayorga

Written by The Sweet Science
Tuesday, 08 March 2011 18:45

SHOWTIME RETURNS TO PAY-PER-VIEW BUSINESS WITH

VETERAN CREW ON BOTH SIDES OF CAMERA

Boxing Announcers Steve Albert, Al Bernstein, Antonio Tarver and Jim Gray

Give Their Keys to Victory for Cotto vs. Mayorga

LIVE on Saturday, March 12 at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT on SHOWTIME PPV®

NEW YORK (March 8, 2011) – From the network that brought boxing fans the blockbuster fights of **Mike Tyson** and **Julio Cesar Chavez**, SHOWTIME returns to the pay-per-view business with a cast and crew of veterans. The March 12 card headlined by **Miguel Cotto**

vs.

Ricardo Mayorga

will be called by

Steve Albert

with

Al Bernstein

and

Antonio Tarver

serving as expert analysts and

Jim Gray

reporting from ringside.

David Dinkins Jr.

is the executive producer for

SHOWTIME Sports®

with

Ray Smaltz

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producing and

Bob Dunphy

directing. All of whom bring to the table a tremendous amount of pay-per-view experience to the

MGM Grand

in

Las Vegas, Nev.

,
LIVE

on SHOWTIME PPV

,
beginning at

9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT

In addition to countless editions of SHOWTIME Championship Boxing, the experienced group last worked together in a pay-per-view capacity to produce and distribute the highly anticipated rematch between **Diego Corrales** and **Jose Luis Castillo** in 2005.

Cotto, the Pride of Puerto Rico, will defend his World Boxing Association (WBA) super welterweight title against two-division world champion Mayorga in the main event. Cotto, of Caguas, Puerto Rico, has held a world title every year since 2004 and has won 15 of the 17 world championship bouts he has fought. Mayorga, of Managua, Nicaragua, is known for his reckless abandon and fearlessness inside the ring – a style of fighting that has produced 23 knockouts in 29 victories and legions of fans.

The veteran SHOWTIME announcing crew has some words of advice and keys to victory for the world championship event between Cotto and Mayorga:

A member of the prestigious World Boxing Hall of Fame, Albert has called some of the biggest and most memorable world championship fights in boxing history. Albert, who will serve as play-by-play announcer for the pay-per-view telecast, has drawn up a game plan for each man to walk away with the WBA title.

“Cotto needs to get inside Mayorga’s wide shots with compact, accurate punches,” Albert said. “Cotto is one of the best short-distance punchers in the sport. He needs to jab and move and

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blast that left hook, which is still one of the best in the business. He should use the entire arsenal. Fans want to see if that right hand is effective since the shoulder surgery. And make sure he has a Plan B, C and D.

“Mayorga, don’t smoke between rounds! Seriously, he’s physically bigger so he should impose his will and do what he always does, keep punching from all angles. He needs to keep Cotto guessing and make it wild.”

Bernstein, who has called more than 2,500 fights and 67 pay-per-view telecasts and will serve as expert analyst for this Saturday’s event, had similar thoughts for each fighter.

“Cotto needs to get inside the wide punches and work the double left hook,” Bernstein said. “He should go to the body – Mayorga is 37-years-old and a smoker.

“On the other hand, Mayorga needs to straighten out the right because wide ones won’t land. He should attack from the beginning because Cotto has been hurt by smaller fighters. Finally, he should make it a street fight – rough him up.”

The newest member of the SHOWTIME announce team, Tarver, is a former undisputed light heavyweight world champion and the first man to knock out former pound-for-pound king **Roy Jones, Jr.**

He joined SHOWTIME in 2008 as a boxing analyst. In ‘06, Tarver displayed his versatility and crossover appeal when he portrayed heavyweight champion Mason “The Line” Dixon in the blockbuster motion picture “Rocky Balboa,” the final installment of the legendary film series created by and starring **Sylvester Stallone**.

“It’s been a while since Mayorga has been in a significant fight after having some tough losses. For Mayorga, it’s the opportunity of a lifetime,” said Tarver, who is in the process of transitioning from the ring to ringside, “It could be his final chance to get back into the mix in the weight division so I see him being focused.

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“He’s going to have to use his erratic and unpredictable style to win and he needs to fight really hard. When Cotto is forced to fight out of his rhythm he has some problems, so it will be important for Mayorga to press and not let Cotto time his punches. No rhythm, just wow! Be aggressive and fight hard. Mayorga has to make it nasty.”

While Mayorga needs to get wild and push Cotto out of his comfort zone, Tarver feels Cotto needs to do the same things he’s done to become one of the best fighters of the past 10 years.

“Cotto needs to keep the pace, continue to fight his fight, time his punches and move,” Tarver said. “As long as he can do that without being hurt he’ll be OK. Cotto needs to get up under those wild shots -- that’s Mayorga’s style and Cotto can’t fall prey to that.

“I’m curious to see how much wear and tear Cotto has from his past fights and how that will affect him.”

Versatile, Emmy® Award-winning Gray, who will serve as roving reporter on the telecast, believes Cotto’s speed will be the difference maker and warns Mayorga to be patient against the talented champion.

“Cotto needs it more and is going to be able to take advantage of Mayorga, who has had long layoffs,” Gray said. “While Mayorga is colorful with his taunting and his words, the older you get the harder it is to back up all that commentary.

“I believe that Cotto will be much faster and should be able to avoid getting hit. Emanuel Steward will not let Cotto veer off course. Mayorga is very crafty and will have to pace himself and I believe he will have to pick his spots and try and do some damage if he can find an opening. He will have to be very patient.”

You can follow Bernstein and Tarver on Twitter at [@AlBernstein](#) and [@AntonioTarver](#).

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“RELENTLESS” will be produced and distributed by SHOWTIME PPV®, beginning at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT, at a suggested retail price of \$49.95. **Bernardo Osuna** will call the blow-by-blow on Spanish simulcast will call the with **Raul Marquez** providing color commentary.

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