

## Judah, Baldomir meet the press

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SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING begins its 20th year of televising fights with a world championship doubleheader on Jan. 7, 2006 (9 p.m., ET/PT, delayed on the west coast). Undisputed world welterweight champion Zab "Super" Judah defends against WBC No. 1 welterweight contender Carlos Baldomir in one of the world title fights. In the SHOWTIME co-feature, WBC/WBA champion Jean-Marc Mormeck faces IBF champion O'Neil Bell in a cruiserweight world title unification bout.

Judah: I respect Carlos for making it to the point where he made it at, but I am at a point right now where I am proving to the world that I am the best pound-for-pound fighter out there. And it just so happened that Carlos Baldomir is in my weight and he is going to be a prime example of how I am going to show everybody that I am the best.

Baldomir: I would like to thank everybody and wish them a happy holiday, Merry Christmas, and Feliz Navidad. Zab's record speaks for itself, so nobody has to confirm the greatness he has already achieved. We are honored to come into the ring with him, but we still have to lace him up.

Question: Zab, do you have any further opening comments?

Judah: I am honored to be fighting the No. 1 mandatory challenger. I look forward to this. I am just looking to go in and prove to the world that I am the best. I am sorry that it has to be Carlos right now, but I am definitely going to go in there and I definitely am going to prove a point. I am happy to be back home in New York City. It is going to be beautiful.

Question: Carlos, do you have any further opening comments?

Baldomir: I really think I am going to win. I am confident in my preparation and in myself. For me, it will not be a surprise when I win.

Question: Zab, what will it be like defending your title in your backyard, New York?

Judah: It is a dream come true. I have not fought here since capturing my undisputed crown over another good fighter, another mandatory fighter. I knocked him out on the first round and I am going to go out there to show that I am the best. I am looking for the big matchup and a big showdown with "Pretty Girl" (Floyd) Mayweather and I want it to look good.

Question: Zab, how difficult is it to focus on a guy like Baldomir when the prospect of a real big money fight looms if you win?

Judah: Well, I would never overlook Baldomir because he is the person coming in who could spoil all the stuff. I am most focused on him because of the Mayweather fight. I am looking to go in there and show to the world that I am the best.

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Question: Zab, are you predicting a first or second round knockout?

Judah: I am not going to predict that, but that is what I am working on. I am looking to go in there and come out in spectacular fashion. I am home. I have got to give him a good New York welcome.

Question: Zab, will all of your title belts be on the line in this fight or just your WBC title?

Judah: I put everything on the line. I have got my pride, my ego and my career, which is most important above anything, that is on the line. But the WBC belt is what this fight is about.

Question: Zab, is it difficult to have to be in training over the holiday season when most people would rather be enjoying the time off at the end of the year?

Judah: I want to be home with my family, but it is an accomplishment to be on the road working right now, because at the top of the year, I start boxing. I start the year 2006 with the first fight of the year – a mega fight – and I am going in to set the tone. That is what boxers have got to do, and those who cannot follow are going to look very, very bad.

Question: Zab, what about Cory Spinks? Do you feel any responsibility to give him a rematch?

Judah: I will give Cory Spinks a rematch at any point, any time that he chooses. I think right now, Cory does not want a rematch. I think he is looking to move on to other things. But he is a good friend of mine and I have the utmost respect for him.

Question: Zab, do you think it could be a problem staying focused on this fight?

Judah: The fight is really what I am focused on, the whole event of the fight. The event of the fight is Zab Judah coming home to New York City. Our fans are very, very tough on you. So if you do not go in there and do what you got to do, you get no love around here. Carlos Baldomir is coming to my backyard, and believe me, this will not be another Zab Judah-Cory Spinks – trust me.

Question: Zab, are you taking any lessons from what you did with Cory?

Judah: Definitely. I watched everything that Cory did leading up to the fight. I am the best fighter in the world. I am not worried about Baldomir. I have been training since September for this fight. I am in tremendous condition.

Question: Carlos, what are your strengths and what are Judah's weaknesses?

Baldomir: I think the weakness for Zab is he cannot take a good punch in the chin. I definitely think I can put him down. Having Amilcar Brusa as my trainer gives me a lot of confidence because he already fought Judah once (Brusa trained Omar Weiss).

Question: Zab, what do you think the odds are that the Mayweather fight will be made?

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Judah: We had a good meeting the other day and it is looking really good right now. Mayweather wants to have a non-title fight where he can get all the money. Everyone he calls out, money issues always come to that. As long as I come to the board and I walk away with what I want, I am happy.

Question: So (but would) you really would not be surprised if the fight did not happen?

Judah: I would not be surprised.

Question: Zab, how is training going for you in New York?

Judah: Oh, it is excellent. All it does is put me back to where I belong. I can adapt very well to where I am at right now.

Question: Who are you using for sparring partners right now?

Judah: I am burning two dudes. I have knocked out like eight different sparring partners, world champions and all. I am not going to use anybody's name, because I am not trying to embarrass anybody. But I am on a roll right now and I am not playing.

Question: Zab, tell us about the journey you have had, from the low point in your career to becoming an undisputed champion?

Judah: To once be on top, and then to lose everything and come back and get it again, it is a beautiful thing. I am just proud of myself and proud of my team and everybody that participates with the whole Zab Judah camp in preparing us and getting us ready for every fight.

Question: Zab, in the weeks and months after it first happened, did you ever doubt yourself or did you always know that you would bounce back like this?

Judah: I knew I would bounce back because I knew I had to fight with Kostya Tszyu. It is not that you are a bum or a garbage fighter, it can happen to anyone. It is how you come back and show the world that you are the best. I came back with flying colors.

Question: Zab, are you frustrated by having to fight two mandatories in a row?

Judah: The IBF, WBA and WBC have all been great to me. This is what they put in front of me, so I have to go in there and deal with it. But I would love to be right now, Jan. 7, in a lockdown date with Mayweather or (Shane) Mosley or a rematch with Cory Spinks. That would be beautiful to me. But I do not want anybody to overlook Carlos Baldomir because he has done a great deal of putting himself here. His team has done a great thing in bringing him to this point. We want to give him his 30 seconds of fame because that is probably all the fight might last. Give him 30 seconds of fame and let him live.

Question: So you look at the mandatory fights as part of the job?

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Judah: It is a job. I look at it as more like extra credit.

Question: How do you expect to knock out a guy who has only been stopped once?

Judah: If he wants to stand up and get beat up then that will be it. But at the end of the fight, I will still be the undisputed. Take it how you want it, but there will be no lucky shots. Carlos Baldomir is another person that is going to find out what Zab Judah is made up of.

Question: So with the possibility of a Mayweather fight, do you feel like it is in your best interest to try to get him out of there as quickly as possible?

Judah: Well, definitely. (But) Whether it goes one or 12, it is all about a win.

Question: Zab, if a Mayweather fight does not come off, how about inviting Tszyu for a rematch?

Judah: He has a personal invitation from Zab Judah and anytime that he feels that he is ready to step up to the plate, I am ready to show the world that that was a fluke. I showed everybody with Cory Spinks when I came back. I am ready for Kostya Tszyu.

Question: Carlos, do you have any experience with the type of quick southpaw that Judah is?

Baldomir: I have a special game plan and I will not reveal it now. But definitely I will throw the counter punch and use my right and my left hook to the victory.

Question: Zab, would you take Tszyu out quicker than Hatton did?

Judah: I promise you. I had him in the first round; you saw that. He was holding on for life. My speed and power is nothing to play with. A lot of guys look at it and take it for a joke. But you see time and time again they hit the floor like dust.

Question: Which is the biggest fight? What means the most to you?

Judah: The Mayweather fight, definitely. It is a bigger money fight. The world wants to see it. Excitement is what thrills the people. If somehow the Mayweather fight does not happen, I am welcoming with open arms Kostya Tszyu.

Question: Carlos, are you feeling disrespected about hearing all the questions about future fights for Judah?

Baldomir: I really do not care what people are saying. And to Mayweather, do not feel disappointed (if) you do not fight with Judah. You will be fighting with me.

Question: Carlos, can you comment on Zab's claims that his sparring partners are beating you up in camp?

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Baldomir: Let him think that is what is happening and we will just go by that.

Question: Zab, how hard do you think this fight is going to be?

Judah: I am focused. That is it. I will get him out of the way so I can go on to bigger and better things.

Question: Carlos, you are 17-0-2 in your last 19 fights. What fight, after starting your career, turned it around for you where you got the confidence to go on?

Baldomir: After I won the WBC International title in Italy in April 1999, I definitely felt I would be a world champion. So I trained really hard. That is when my mind changed.

Question: Zab, what is your walking around weight between fights and how long do you feel you will be at 147?

Judah: I do not know. Usually I walk around like 155, sometimes 160. It depends on how long the layoff. If a fight at 154 opened up and it looked good, I would definitely take it. But I will always hold on to my undisputed crown.

Question: Zab, confidence-wise, what is the difference between the Judah of today and the Judah of the past?

Judah: I am at the point in my career right now where I am going to do big things. So basically I think what got me so confident and so excited right now is that I am coming home to the Garden and in spectacular fashion.

Question: So the expectations are going to be real high when you are in front of your home fans?

Judah: I am looking to come here and blow them away. He is a puncher and he is stronger, but meet me in the middle of the ring and let us see where he is at. I have never been scared.

Question: Zab, talk about the pressures of fighting at home in front of your own crowd from a different perspective – friends calling for tickets, everybody wanting a piece of you. Does that bother your training?

Judah: I have been in the Garden before. So know how to prepare for things. You have to train hard, you have to get here, stay low, and then fight. You do not stay out in the open. You do not make yourself accessible to people.

Question: Carlos, how do you plan on dealing with Judah's speed and power?

Baldomir: I know what I am going to do in the ring. I will definitely go forward. I will never go back. I will go forward.

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End Press Questions. Begin Closing Comments.

Baldomir: I am really annoyed with everything Zab is saying about me. I will just wait until Jan. 7 and that will be the end of Judah.

Judah: I understand what Carlos has accomplished in the past, but trust me, this is not an easy task. Ask all those guys in L.A. They will tell you I am not an easy task.