You can call it a prize fight if you want, though it's probably more appropriate to call it the Arturo Gatti Extravaganza, a one-man demolition show that packs the house, wins awards and makes grown men act giddy.

Gatti (36-6, 28 KOs), who fights out of New Jersey, has acquired a special knack for being the lead man in a string of appearances that have earned "fight of the year" honors. He's already been a participant in four and there are still a few good years left in his career.

He doesn't win the award alone. It takes two to make a fistfight. But he is the star attraction, the big name that draws crowds and keeps popping up at the top of the marquee. It's not coincidental that he was won it that many times.

Still, the guy who came up with the catchphrase describing Gatti as "the human highlight film," didn't do him any favors. That's a heavy load to shoulder. Expectations are always high. We want to see Gatti in a war, when all he wants is a simple win.

That's what he hopes to get Jan. 24 when he faces undefeated junior-welterweight contender Gianluca Branco of Italy (32-0-1, 15 KOs) for the WBC title at the Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City. It would be Gatti's second world title.

"I'm looking forward to being world champion again," he said on a conference call Thursday, promoting the fight that will be televised on HBO. "I'm going to walk out of that ring with a world title no matter what it takes."

You don't argue with a guy's history or his heart. Besides, he got the blessings of the man who shared the ring with him in two of his "fight of the year," appearances.

"How's your golf game, Arturo?"

It was former contender and retired fighter Mickey Ward. The first person to ask Gatti a question, Ward faced Gatti three times in the ring. And those fights will always define both fighters.

"Hey, Mick," Gatti said. "I can't wait to see you at the fight."

"You know I'm behind you," Ward said.

Ward, who recently played a round of golf with Arturo in Florida for a feature in a golf magazine, jokingly asked Gatti how tough it was going to be to make 140 pounds.

"You fought me at 142," he said.

"I'm going to lose those last two pounds on Friday," Gatti said.

Ward is the reason Gatti is so confident against Branco. He said when you've fought the "greatest warrior out there (Ward)," you're ready for anything.

"I'm always prepared for the worst," he said. "After three fights with Mickey, that's how I feel. Hopefully, it won't be another war."

But if it is, it won't break a lot of hearts.

"When you're promoting Arturo Gatti, you just announce when he's fighting and where he's fighting," said Carl Moretti of Main Events. "And then you let the ball go."

Morretti said the only question fight fans ask is when is Arturo fighting.

"They'll call back later and ask 'who is he fighting,' after they've already bought their ticket."

His name is Gianluca Branco and he should expect a long night on the 24th.