

“Josesito” Lopez Overcoming 1 Challenge at a Time...GONZALEZ

Written by Ralph Gonzalez

Friday, 02 September 2011 19:58



Every other day, N.A.B.F. 140 pound champion Jose “Josesito” Lopez, receives a very important phone call. It’s not from his promoter or manager.

Instead, Lopez (29-3, 17 KO’s) hears from the father he hasn’t seen as a free man for seven years. Lopez Sr. finds himself incarcerated for reasons his son would rather not discuss. “My dad’s incarceration at the start of my career was very difficult,” said Lopez. “I had to step up and be the head of the household. Having to go through tough times without him at my side was hard but I’m a stronger man because of it.”

Unfortunately Lopez Sr. won’t be at his son’s most important fight on September 17th as part of the Mayweather vs. Ortiz card. “My dad is my biggest supporter and he’ll be there in spirit,” he

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said. “I’ve learned to persevere through difficult situations and it’s actually helped me become a better fighter.”

The Riverside, California native will be opening the televised segment of the Golden Boy Promotions pay per view event against the highly touted prospect Jesse Vargas (16-0, 9 KO's).

Lopez, 27, is part of the talent laden 140 pound division where the likes of Amir Khan, Tim Bradley and Marcos Maidana dwell. It’s arguably the most competitive weight class in boxing. “I believe I’m right up there with any of those guys. I’m at the top of my game and getting better,” Lopez assured. “Even though I’m young, I consider myself a veteran. I fought high caliber fighters from the start. I’ve never been babied. I definitely came up the hard way.”

It was soon after graduating high school that his boxing career came calling. “My former trainer, Andy Suarez, (R.I.P.) got a call a week and a half before a fight in Las Vegas,” he recalled. “They needed an opponent for Allen Litzau.”

It took all of 53 seconds for Lopez to make his pro debut with a first round stoppage.

Since then, he's been building his reputation as an all-action fighter, one war at a time.

Fighting under the Thompson Boxing and Goossen-Tutor Promotions banner, his record is littered with wins over very respectable opponents. Luis Arceo, Patrick Lopez, Marvin Cordova and Sergio Rivera are some of the fighters he’s faced so far.

Just to get a sense of the quality of opposition, it should be noted that the combined record of the above named fighters is eighty wins and twelve losses. Far different than most of today's young prospects who are treated with kid gloves and spoon fed an assortment of no-hopers.

His biggest win came at the expense of heavily hyped and undefeated prospect Mike Dallas Jr. “It was a fight where one of us got to go forward and one of us would take a step back,” remembered Lopez. “I’ve been there before. I lost to Edgar Santana in a close fight that I took on five days notice. Having your career stalled by a loss is never easy and I don’t plan to be in that position again.”

Lopez took on boxing the old fashioned way. "No money, facing tough fighters one after the other in real wars," he said. "Having to work, you name it, I’ve been through a lot and in order

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for me to get to the next level I have to go through Jesse Vargas."

Although fighting Vargas seems to be a high risk, low reward situation, Lopez is more focused on the potential exposure that being on a huge pay per view event will bring. "This will get me recognition on an international level," he said. "I'm fighting a very good undefeated prospect and hopefully I'll impress enough to get me where I want to be."

Where he wants to be is fighting the likes of world champion Amir Khan. "I think it would be a great fight between us. I've been watching him and he has his weaknesses," Lopez stated. "He's never faced a fighter like me. I'm tough, fast and I'm at my peak. It's a great match up."

Anyone who's watched Lopez in the ring will attest that he's a difficult match for any of the top five 140 pounders. But when will he get his chance? Manager Henry Ramirez, who's been involved in Lopez's career since he was sixteen, says there's no way he's looking past Vargas. "I've heard a lot of reports about wanting to fight Bradley and Amir Khan but right now were focused on Vargas," Ramirez said. "That's the fight that really matters. He's ready. He's done all the work and he's more dedicated to the sport than he's ever been. He's ready to fight tomorrow. It's his time."

When Ramirez got the call for Lopez to fight on what he says is arguably the biggest pay per view of the year, he jumped at it. "No risk, no reward," Ramirez answered when asked about taking the bout against such a dangerous opponent like Vargas. "These are the fights Jose has to take to get to the next level. The exposure he'll be getting will be huge." Ramirez also manages the career of heavyweight contender Cris "The Nightmare" Arreola.

As the date nears for his fight against Vargas, Lopez can't help but think about the man who helped him get his start in the sport. "My dad is my biggest fan and inspiration. When I'm in training, he's in training," he said. "We make the best of the situation. We're very close. As far as communication, we talk every other day. It's been so long. I can't wait for that moment until he's with us again. To me he's been a better father than other fathers who aren't incarcerated. This fight, like every fight, is for him."

On the web:

Josesito Lopez fight clips and interview after defeating Mike Dallas Jr.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAdQgtm8HzA>

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