

Top Rank Eyes Asia, Golden Boy Has Abner Mares In Carson

Written by David A. Avila
Friday, 12 July 2013 11:57



Boxing's two promotional titans had events on the same day as Golden Boy Promotions opened with mini destroyers Abner Mares and Leo Santa Cruz. A few hours later, Top Rank propped China's Zou Shiming the former Olympic boxing star.

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Even promotions are like prizefights.

On Thursday morning at El Paseo Inn Restaurant in historic Olvera Street, WBC featherweight titlist Mares and his manager Frank Espinoza attended the Golden Boy Promotions event to promote the defense against former featherweight champion Jhonny Gonzalez.

The lanky Mexico City-based fighter was unable to make his flight and spoke briefly on Skype before digital turbulence cut Gonzalez's remarks completely.

"Thanks for taking this fight," said Gonzalez to Mares (*pictured, after most recent win, over Ponce De Leon, from Hogan Photos*) via the computer image as more than 100 media watched and listened inside the Mexican eatery. "Abner Mares is a great fighter, that's why he is the world champion."

Mares said he was a former sparring partner for Gonzalez when that fighter clashed with Israel Vazquez for the junior featherweight world title back in 2006. Seems Mares keeps getting matched with former sparring mates and close friends.

"He's a good friend of mine," said Mares, who was also very close friends with his last foe Daniel Ponce De Leon. "I only want to fight the best."

Mares knocked out friend Ponce De Leon who had earlier defeated Gonzalez by technical decision. The circle is complete.

As Mares ended, he looked toward Santa Cruz who was seated on the other side of the podium, and said if the public clamor is big enough both could finally meet in the ring.

Santa Cruz will be fighting WBC junior featherweight titlist Victor Terrazas who defeated

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Fernando Montiel and Cristian Mijares to grab the title. The East L.A. raised fighter and youngest of the fighting Santa Cruz brothers has been streaking up weight divisions in Mares's wake.

"It's my dream," said Santa Cruz about the chance to win a WBC world title. "It's my time to show what I've got."

Due to visa problems Mexico's Terrazas was unable to attend.

Hollywood

About 10 miles west, Top Rank was staging a media workout for Zou Shiming who has a fight date on July 27 in Macau. The flyweight will be meeting Jesus Ortega of Mexico in a six-round bout.

[Here is a video interview with Shiming](#) for your viewing pleasure.

It's just the tip of the iceberg for Top Rank.

Bob Arum said that the Las Vegas-based Top Rank will be making a concerted push into Asia. This is not a temporary showcase but a stake to claim the billions of potential fans on the other side of the Pacific Ocean.

"Every country poses a different challenge," said Arum who intends to stage fights in Singapore, Japan, Philippines and other parts of Asia. "Our goal is to fight Zou Shiming in Macau and build a following."

Shiming is a sports hero in China and Top Rank seeks to translate that to Chinese-Americans in

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the U.S.

Arum said when Shiming made his professional debut in Macau last April, more than 70 journalists from China covered the fight.

“All of them work for newspapers,” said Arum about the Chinese journalists covering Shiming’s first pro fight.

In November it will be Manny Pacquiao’s turn to fight in Macau when he faces Oxnard’s Brandon “Bam Bam” Rios. Both will meet on Nov. 23, at the Venetian resort.

Top Rank will be promoting many fights in Asia from now on says Arum.

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Bernie Campbell says:

On Merit Mr. Arum. No free rides! The plan is to infiltrate Asia huh! Explain why friggun Chris John has been WBA featherweight champion and hasn't fought a friggun contender in over 5 years! What kind of farce is that! Is it all about money? Is it about political influence? Is it about racial sh..! Just once get Jason Litzau in Jakarta to fight that bum and may the chips fall where they may!

Radam G says:

Wow! B-Camp! It is always about money. Dang Friscoes' papers. Hehehe! Holla!