**WBO FEATHERWEIGHT KINGPIN JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ
TO DEFEND AGAINST EX-CHAMP ORLANDO SALIDO
SATURDAY, APRIL 16, LIVE ON SHOWTIME®**

**Top Puerto Rican Contenders Luis Cruz and Roman Martinez Clash in Co-Feature
Live at 10:30 p.m. ET From Ruben Rodriguez Coliseo in Bayamon, Puerto Rico**

NEW YORK (April 1, 2011) – Unbeaten Juan Manuel "Juanma'' Lopez has caught the attention of most everybody in boxing with his exciting, explosive style and unwavering charisma. Following in the footsteps of his countrymen like Puerto Rican superstars Felix Trinidad, Wilfred Benitez and Miguel Cotto, Lopez has been virtually unstoppable as he's compiled a record of 30-0 with 27 knockouts.

On Saturday, April 16, Lopez, of San Juan, returns to SHOWTIME® to defend his World Boxing Organization (WBO) featherweight title against former International Boxing Federation (IBF) 126-pound belt-holder Orlando "Siri'' Salido (34-11-2, 22 KOs), of Ciudad Obregon, Mexico, in the main event live on SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING (10:30 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast).

In an excellent co-feature from Ruben Rodriguez Coliseo in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, undefeated Luis Cruz (17-0, 14 KOs), of Philadelphia by way of Las Piedras, Puerto Rico, will take on fellow world-ranked Puerto Rican and former WBO champion Roman "Rocky'' Martinez (24-1-1, 15 KOs), of Vega Baja, in a 12-round junior lightweight bout. Top Rank, Inc. will promote the doubleheader.

The 27-year-old Lopez, a two-division world champion, is coming off the most significant win of his career, an eighth-round TKO over Mexico's boxing legend and future Hall of Famer, Rafael Marquez, in a tense give-and-take slugfest last Nov. 6 on SHOWTIME. The victory came in the crowd-pleasing, powerful southpaw's second title defense and third fight at 126 pounds.

Lopez came away victorious after Marquez, who was vying for a world title in his third weight division, could not answer the bell after the eighth round due to a shoulder injury. Despite a point deduction in the fourth, Lopez was ahead by the scores of 78-73, 77-73 and 77-74.

A five-year pro, Lopez made five successful defenses of the WBO 122-pound title before abandoning the division to challenge WBO 126-pound champion Steven Luevano on Jan. 28, 2010.

If triumphant on April 16, Lopez could be looking at several possible compelling matchups, but he isn't underestimating the challenger.

"I expect a very tough fight against a strong fighter like Salido, who is a true warrior,'' Lopez

said. “But at the end of the day, I will be victorious and will give my Puerto Rican fans a fight to remember."

An aggressive power-puncher who has knocked out 90 percent of his opponents, Lopez may not remain at 126 pounds for much longer. He recently stated he intends to move up to 130 pounds after two more fights – the defense against Salido and a possible rematch with Marquez.

“I really feel strong at 126,” Lopez said. “I’m eating well. I’m doing my diet the proper way. I definitely feel better than I did at 122 and I’m much stronger. But I may be moving up after the end of the year.”

Salido dropped defending champion Cristobal Cruz twice en route to winning a resounding decision and the IBF featherweight crown on May 15, 2010, in Ciudad Obregon. A convincing points victory – 117-109 twice and 116-110 – came in a rematch of a fight for the vacant IBF belt won by Cruz via split decision by the scores of 116-112 twice and 113-115 on Oct. 23, 2008, in Spokane, Wash.

In his last start, Salido lost a decision to his WBA counterpart, Yuriorkis Gamboa, in a wild knockdown affair on Sept. 11, 2010, in Las Vegas. Salido dropped Gamboa in the eighth, but went down twice himself in the 12th. At the finish, Gamboa had survived by the scores of 114-109, 115-109 and 116-109.

Salido, who turned pro at the tender age of 16 in March 1996, also went the distance while losing a decision to pound-for-pound mainstay and then-World Boxing Association (WBA)/IBF featherweight kingpin,, Juan Manuel Marquez – Rafael’s brother – in September 2004.

"It’s never easy to fight in a champion’s backyard, but I will give it my all to win and bring the belt back to Mexico,” said Salido, who’ll be making his sixth appearance in a world title fight. “I know one thing, Lopez is a great champion who likes to fight and with my style it should make for a great and exciting fight."

The 25-year-old, hard-hitting Cruz is ranked No. 11 by the IBF at 130 pounds and has won six in a row by knockout, including a TKO 2 over Wilfredo Acuna in his most recent start last Dec. 4, and 11 of his last 12 inside the distance. Cruz has gone the route only three times since turning professional in March 2007. The furthest he’s gone is 10 rounds.

But Cruz will be getting his sternest challenge to date against Martinez, the WBO’s No. 3-ranked contender whose only setback came in his last start on a close nod to local favorite Ricky Burns in an explosive, hotly contested match on Sept. 4, 2010, in Glasgow, Scotland.

The 28-year-old Martinez scored a knockdown in the first and won the early rounds, but Burns rallied to earn a victory after 36 minutes of gripping action by the scores of 115-113 and 115-112 twice.

Martinez captured the WBO belt in March 2009 with a fourth-round TKO over Nicky Cook in

Manchester, England, and made two successful defenses in Puerto Rico. He scored a ninth-round TKO over Feider Viloria in September 2009 and stopped Gonzalo Munguia in the fourth in May 2010.

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