Written by Rick Folstad
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History could be made if the son follows the same path his dad traveled 27 years ago. That's when the legendary Julio Cesar Chavez Sr. won his first world title.

It was September 1984 at the old Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, just a few blocks and a couple decades south of the newer, brighter, richer Staples Center, home of the Lakers when no big fights are scheduled.

The Staples Center is where Julio Jr. (42-0-1, 30 KOs) will fight Saturday night for what he hopes will be his first world title. He faces undefeated WBC middleweight champion Sebastian Zbik (30-0, 10 KOs) of Germany on HBO.

It's a big night for Junior, a chance to create a little history of his own, sneak outside the huge shadow cast by his dad, if only for a night.

"Hopefully," Junior says. "It will be the start of my own legacy."

A chip off the old block.

But different.

Being a middleweight, Junior's fighting weight is a little heavier than his dad's. Back in '84, the older Chavez won the vacant WBC super-featherweight title with an eighth-round TKO of Mario Martinez. It gave us a quick peek of what was to come, what the new super-featherweight champion could do.

But like his son said on a conference call Tuesday promoting Saturday's fight with Zbik, "it was a different place and a different time."

And they are two different fighters from two different generations. It's just their names that are alike.

Zbik is a good test for Chavez. He's a world champion and that means everything. He's also undefeated. That gives him at least two advantages. Fighters hate to give up that zero.

Chavez - coming off big wins over John Duddy last June and Billy Lyell in January - says he's watched Zbik on tape and he's a very good boxer. But any world champion is going to be a test.

"I know he's a tough guy," Chavez said. "But you can never tell if a guy is a big puncher by watching him on tape. You have to go into the ring to find out."

Trainer Freddie Roach tells us Zbik fights in straight lines, moves in standing up like a guy

trying to flag down a taxi.

“Julio’s boxing ability will give Zbik a lot of trouble,” Roach said. “We’ll use angles on him. He pretty much follows you wherever you go.”

But Roach doesn’t sound worried. He never does.

“This is the big one and we‘re ready,” he said. “We‘ll bring it home on Saturday.”

As for Chavez, Roach said early in the call that his fighter’s weight wasn’t a problem, which means at some point it probably was. He also said they were just finishing one of the best training camps yet for Chavez. But again, that’s the usual mantra coming out of most training camps. But it’s easy to believe this time. The longer they work together, the easier and smoother things should go. And that’s what both men are telling us.

“Without a doubt this has been the toughest training camp I have ever been through," Chavez said. "But I’m looking forward to Saturday night. I spend so much time with Freddie now that we know each other better, so my performance should be better.”

Chavez knows what he’s up against. He knows Zbik is dangerous because he’s a world champion.

“This is the most important fight of my career and I think it’s the most important fight of his career,“ Chavez said. “He wants to be well-known and this will give him the opportunity. I know he‘s coming to fight.”

Chavez Sr., who will be inducted into the International boxing Hall of Fame next weekend, offered Junior a little advice early in his career.

“He told me to just work hard,“ Junior said. “Go to the gym and give it 100 percent every day you train. As long as you train and work as hard as you can, the fight will be the easiest thing in the world. The gym is the key to the whole thing.”

Worked pretty well for Dad.

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Radam G says:

The jury is still out on JC Jr. Holla!