

Brandon Rios Jaws With Urbano Antillon In L.A....AVILA

Written by David A. Avila

Wednesday, 08 June 2011 12:17



LOS ANGELES-Drove over to downtown L.A. yesterday to cover the Top Rank press conference for the upcoming Brandon “Bam Bam” Rios and Urbano Antillon lightweight world title fight on July 9. Showtime will televise.

“I will knock (Antillon) out and show the world why I am the best 135-pound fighter in the world. That’s why I became the champion. That’s why I beat (Miguel) Acosta and you didn’t. I knocked him out and he knocked you out,” Rios told Antillon.

“We were sitting down and he started talking. It is what it is. I don’t care if it’s heated up there,” said Antillon.

Rios (27-0, 19 KOs) and Antillon (28-2, 20 KOs) jawed at each other nose to nose and looked pretty pissed at each other after many taunts and jibes at the Wilshire Grand Hotel in the heart of downtown. They’ll be fighting at the Home Depot Center and you can bet both fighters will be well represented by their constituents.

Chicanito

As I was driving home I received a phone call from one of my friends who told me that Genaro

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“Chicanito” Lopez had passed away today. A flood of memories hit me like a wild river.

It was not long ago I remember watching Chicanito fight at the Inglewood Forum and even more so I remember those brutal sparring matches at the old now defunct Brooklyn Gym in Boyle Heights.

Chicanito was a regular at the makeshift gym that was actually an old gas station garage where a boxing ring was placed. The large garage door was often open as boxers pummeled each other while residents walked by on the sidewalk like looky-loos during a freeway accident.

In those days Sugar Shane Mosley, Zack Padilla and Chicanito could often be seen tearing each other apart at full speed. Others like Oscar De La Hoya, Julio Cesar Chavez and Hector Lopez would occasionally drop by for sparring.

His older brother Rudy Hernandez was his trainer and other brother Victor could often be seen in his corner.

Perhaps my biggest memory of Chicanito was when he was preparing to fight De La Hoya. I remember writing it down as a Roosevelt High vs. Garfield High kind of story. In East L.A. when those two schools meet it's civil war. Often crowds of 30,000 would arrive to see the two schools battle it out in football.

Chicanito attended Roosevelt and De La Hoya went to Garfield. And when the fight finally happened after several years of taunts and speculations, it resulted in one of Chicanitos few losses. But it was great while it lasted.

One thing is that Chicanito was always the gentleman. If ever a fighter deserved the nickname “Gentleman” it was Genaro Hernandez.

Ironically, Hernandez fought under Top Rank and it was Bob Arum who helped with Chicanito's hospital costs. The lanky Hernandez battled cancer for several years.

Back to Rios and Antillon. This fight was going to occur earlier but an injury forced the fight to be postponed. Words were tossed and meanings were distorted; now both fighters are looking to destroy the other.

One bystander was Mercito Gesta, the quicksilver Filipino lightweight who was recently signed by Top Rank. When his name was mentioned to Rios he claimed he could knock Antillon and Gesta out on the same day.

Gesta liked the invite.

“I can't wait to work my way up and fight these guys,” said Gesta, who is going to begin sparring at the Wild Card gym with Amir Khan.

Bob Arum

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Arum said though the Staples Center crowd of about 8,000 for Julio Cesar Chavez and Sebastian Zbik last Saturday night was a lot smaller than expected, the television ratings were very good.

“The HBO Boxing After Dark show had its best ratings in four years,” Arum said while at the Rios-Antillon press conference.

[Comment on this article](#)

ultimoshogun says:

Aww yeah, Rios vs Antillon...there will be blood. This one's guaranteed action from start to finish...RIP Genaro.

riverside says:

Rios need to come well prepared! Antillon is no walk in the park, I'm surprised Why Rios took the fight, Antillon is the better boxer, Rios the bigger puncher, only because he normally outweigh his opponent on fight night!