

Undefeated Dominican boxer headlines Broadway Boxing show Aug. 20

WORCESTER, Mass. (August 8, 2011) – Undefeated **Edwin**“La Bomba” **Rodriguez**, arguably the premier super middleweight prospect in the world, has switched head trainers and now two-time world title challenger

Ronnie Shields

is his chief second.

Rodriguez, a 26-year-old native of the Dominican Republic, returns on August 20 to fight at home in Worcester (MA) for the third time in as many years, headlining a special edition of *Broadway Boxing*

, presented by DiBella Entertainment, at historic Mechanics Hall against intra-state rival and Iraq War veteran Chris Traietti (10-2, 6 KOs).

Rodriguez’s manager, Larry Army, explained the head trainer change: “After Edwin’s third pro fight we switched trainers and went with Peter Manfredo, Sr., but after the McGirt and Pryor fights, Edwin and I talked about things that hadn’t been fixed— balance, wide punching and fighting out of control. So, we decided to make a change and sent Edwin to Houston to start working with Ronnie Shields. We knew that Edwin was more of a boxer as an amateur, but he had become a puncher as a young pro, and we felt he was losing his boxing skills.

“We conducted a two-month search to find the right trainer for Edwin and found him in Ronnie, who refocused Edwin on boxing without compromising his power. We didn’t send a raw prospect to Houston. Edwin had beaten three very good fighters in McGirt, Pryor and (Marcus) Upshaw, as well as veteran Darnell Boone, who had knocked off two undefeated prospects. In the August 20 fight, people are going to see an improved Edwin Rodriguez, but they’ve only been working together for three months, and he’s still a work in progress. He’s going to need an edge against better opponents and Ronnie gives him that edge he didn’t have before.”

Rodriguez (18-0, 13 KOs) is coming off of impressive back-to-back performances in high-profile

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victories against the sons of great fighters, James McGirt, Jr. and Aaron Pryor, Jr., respectively, on *ShoBox: The New Generation* and *ESPN Friday Night Fights*. In his last fight, Edwin suffered a dislocated shoulder during the early rounds from which he is now 100-percent fully recovered.

“I’m listening to somebody who has accomplished so much in boxing,” Rodriguez commented about working with Shields. “He knows what he’s talking about because he’s been there. The mistakes Ronnie may have made, he doesn’t want me to make, and really knows what styles work best against other styles. I feel real good about now going into a fight with several game plans, instead of just one, and being able to adjust during the fight. What I was missing in the past was more than only one game-plan; I made no adjustments during the fight, even if our game-plan wasn’t working.

“Ronnie’s been working on little things with me like blocking punches, proper balance, setting-up shots and using my defensive skills more. Now, I know what to do after hitting the body. When I used to throw a good body shot, I didn’t follow-up with a side-step, move around my opponent, and then throw a left hook upstairs. Not only wasn’t I finishing up after throwing a body shot, I left myself open for counters. I’m turning my shots and working everything off my jab. All of these changes have made a huge difference.”

The Lou DiBella-promoted Rodriguez is presently rated among the top 13 by all major governing bodies in professional boxing: International Boxing Federation (#8), World Boxing Association (#11), World Boxing Council (#13) and World Boxing Organization (#13). The 26-year-old is the reigning WBC USNBC titleholder.

In the past, the highly-regarded Shields worked with superstars such as Mike Tyson, Evander Holyfield, Pernell Whitaker and the late Vernon Forrest. Today, in addition to Rodriguez, Ronnie handles WBA Interim super bantamweight champion Guillermo Rigondeaux, Erislandy Lara, Kermit Cintron, Jermall Charlo and Mike Lee, to mention some of the more notable boxers.

“Edwin is a good fighter and it didn’t take much to fix the few things that needed fixing,” Shields evaluated his new protégé. “He lacked defense and needed more head movement. He’s tall but fought like he was short. He likes to mix it up –nothing wrong with that – but nobody understood that he has such a great jab. He has a very pleasing style but, since I’ve had him in camp, I’ve tried to convince him that he’ll have a much longer career if he boxes on the outside. So far,

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he's been great and he's getting great sparring with light heavyweight Cornelius White. They have wars in the gym.

"As long as he stays focused and continues doing what he's supposed to do, Edwin is going to be champion of the world. Timing is everything, and getting the right fights is important. Everybody knows he's a good fighter, and he's coming off of a shoulder injury. They're going to see how good he really is August 20th."

Edwin started boxing in 2001 and he developed into one of the top amateurs in the United States, compiling a solid 84-9 record, including gold-medal performances in the 2005 USA Boxing National Championships and 2006 U.S. National Golden Gloves Tournament. Rodriguez, who has dual citizenship in the U.S. and Dominican Republic, became the first Massachusetts boxer to win the middleweight title at the Nationals since "Marvelous" Marvin Hagler in 1973.

The *Broadway Boxing* co-feature showcases the return of former WBA junior middleweight champion Joachim Alcine (32-2, 19 KOs). Also seeing action are a pair of boxers from Traietti's hometown of Quincy –Rodriguez' stable-mate junior lightweight Ryan "The Polish Prince" Kielczewski (10-0, 2 KOs) and junior welterweight Gabriel Duluc (1-0, 1 KO). Also scheduled to be in action are welterweight prospect Vincent Arroyo (11-1, 7 KOs), of Amherst, New York, popular, female heavyweight Sonya Lamonakis (5-0, 1 KO), fighting out of New York City, unbeaten prospect Kelvin Price (10-0, 6 KO), and New Haven super bantamweight Luis Rosa (7-0, 5 KOs). All fights and fighters are subject to change.

Tickets for *Broadway Boxing* are on sale now through DiBella Entertainment, and start at only \$35. Main Floor tickets are priced at \$55, \$75, and \$125. Rear Balcony tickets are \$35 and \$75. Tables for groups of 10 are priced at \$1,000. Tickets can be purchased by calling DiBella Entertainment: [\(212\) 947-2577](tel:(212)947-2577), and more information can be obtained by visiting www.dbe1.com

Go online to www.edwinrodriguezboxing.com or www.dbe1.com for more information about Rodriguez or the Aug. 20

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