Final Press Conference

rtinez vs. Macklin, Rodriguez vs. George

NEW YORK (March 15, 2012) - The final press conference was held today at the famed Madison Square Garden for Saturday night's "THE REAL Middleweight Championship - Get Your Irish Up" card, presented by DiBella Entertainment.

The 12-round main event features World Middleweight Champion Sergio "Maravilla" Martinez (48-2-2, 27 KOs), Ring Magazine's No. 3 pound-for-pound fighter, defending against former European champion Matthew "Mack the Knife" Macklin (28-3, 19 KOs). Undefeated super middleweight contender Edwin "La Bomba" Rodriguez (20-0, 14 KOs) takes on Don "Da Bomb" George (22-1-1, 19 KOs) in the 10-round "Bombs Away" co-feature that has possible future world title shot implications. Martinez-Macklin and Rodriguez-George will both air live on HBO's "World Championship Boxing," starting at 10PM ET/7PM PT.

Tickets, priced at $505, $355, $205, $125 and $65, are available to purchase through the Madison Square Garden Box Office, through Ticketmaster at Ticketmaster.com or by calling (866) 858-0008. Call DiBella Entertainment at (212) 947-2577, visit www.dbe1.com and @loudibella on Twitter for more information.

Press Conference Quotes

Sergio Martinez, World Middleweight Champion: "It's a great, great honor fighting at Madison Square Garden, the dream of my life."

Matthew Macklin, Challenger: "The only Irishmen I'll need Saturday night are Seamus (left fist) and Paddy (right first). It's been a long road to get here. I won everything on the way - Irish Championship, British Championship and European Championship twice. I should have won the

WBA Championship but was stiffed by a horrible decision. Everything happens for a reason and I'm here now."

"Sergio Martinez is the real middleweight champion and one of the best pound-for-pound fighters in the world. I'll be really proud when I win the world championship at Madison Square Garden."

"I trained 10 weeks in Manhattan and had world-class sparring. This is it for No. 1. I'll step in the ring 18 years to the day I started boxing. I have nothing bad to say about Sergio Martinez but every dog has his day. I'm going to be the new world middleweight champion."

Edwin Rodriguez: "Donovan George is a very good fighter. I like watching him fight...he's entertaining. He comes to fight and so do I. It's going to be a war. I'm ready to send a message to all of the top super middleweights in the world that I've arrived. I'm ready to go to war."

Donovan George: "I can't tell you how excited I am to be fighting on HBO and in Madison Square Garden. I have a lot of respect for Edwin; he's a great man and great fighter. I've prepared well and made a lot of sacrifices. I know I'm going to put on a great show and win."

Lou DiBella (promoter of the show and of Martinez, Macklin and Rodriguez, co-promoter of George):

"Saturday's going to be a terrific night of boxing. There will be a lot of rockin' and rollin' with all the Irish there for Macklin. I want to thank HBO and Madison Square Garden."

"Sergio Martinez has been the centerpiece of my company for the last four years. There's no man in the entire world of boxing that I have more respect for than Sergio. His work against domestic violence and bullying is a lot different than a fighter giving out turkeys for Thanksgiving. And he does it without cameras around."

"There's no 'stinkability' factor. They're going to come into the ring and fight. They will entertain."

"Matthew Macklin is as good a guy as you'll find in the sport. He fights three minutes every round. He went to Germany and beat the hell out of Felix Sturm. He's getting this opportunity because he did win that fight to earn this fight against the best middleweight in the world. There's going to be an explosion. It's going to be a tremendous fight."

"The two best fighters in the world - anyway you want to list them - are Sergio Martinez and Floyd Mayweather."

"Somebody's going to get knocked out in both HBO fights. Fight fans will win Saturday night like they're supposed to."

"The first HBO fight is 'Bombs Away' - Edwin Rodriguez and Donovan George. They're both knockout-punchers and that makes for excitement. I'd be very, very surprised if it goes the distance."

"Donovan George is a Greek/Cypriot fighter with some Irish blood. He's an exciting fighter."

"I consider Edwin Rodriguez to be one of the top prospects in boxing and he also has one of the best stories. Edwin's wife got pregnant and their two babies (twins) were born under a pound. They survived and walked them down the aisle at their wedding the summer before last. They're special needs kids who need a lot of care. Edwin has overcome the odds and I'm proud to promote him."

Kerry Davis (HBO): "It's always great television at Madison Square Garden, the Mecca of Boxing. There's talk about others coming to New York but there's no place like The Garden. And throw in St. Patrick's Day."

"Sergio is must-see TV for us. He's certainly one of the best fighters in the world. He is a

champion in and out of the ring. He takes on bigger challengers and always puts on exciting fights. Macklin is a willing opponent. There will be a few Irish lads there.

"The co-feature on HBO - the nicknames are 'La Bomba' and 'Da Bomb' - you can't get any better than that. I'm looking forward to a great night of television."

Brian Peters (Macklin's co-promoter): "I've worked with Mathew since 2006. He's an old-fashioned type of guy - virtues and values. And he's an old-school fighter. Fighting in The Garden and walking in the footsteps of so many greats is where he will prove himself. Fighting on St. Patrick's Day tops it off. Sergio is a great fighter. Out of 5,000 people, only 20 or 30 will be for him and the rest will be shouting for Mathew."

James "Buddy" McGirt (Macklin's trainer): "I'm excited about Saturday and pleased to be working with Matthew who is fighting a great fighter in Sergio. I'd like to be in the audience watching them. I'm glad to be here. I fought close to 25 fights in this building. It's going to be a great fight. Matthew Macklin will leave the building as world champion."

Pablo Sarmiento (Martinez' trainer): "I've worked very hard with Sergio for this fight. Every fight he improves. No doubt Sergio Martinez will finish the fight before the distance. I want everybody to see the real No. 1 middleweight champion."

Sampson Lewkowicz (Martinez' manager): "I went to promoters - Golden Boy and Top Rank - and nobody wanted Sergio Martinez, the second coming of Manny Pacquiao. The only one smart enough to sign him was Lou DiBella. This one (Sergio) is better than Manny Pacquiao because he has no problems outside the ring.

"I always say the Irish and English are the Mexicans of Europe - they always come to fight. All of the Irish cannot help him (Macklin). He will be lonely in the ring. It'll be a great fight."

Larry Army (Rodriguez' manager): "It's been a long journey for us, the last 4½-5 years. We've made a lot of changes and I believe we've assembled one of the best teams, if not the best. I'm very confident about this fight, not over-confident. At the end of the day, I believe we'll walk

away 21-0."

Ronnie Shields (Rodriguez' trainer): "I'm looking forward to this fight. Edwin's a great guy and one of the top guys in the super middleweight division. He trained very hard. There's going to be fireworks. I expect to come out on top."

Pete George (George's father/trainer): "We've brought 'Da Bomb' to explode at The Garden. We're going to reap what we have sown, hopefully, with a win."

Mike Michaels (George's manager): "It's great for us fighting at Madison Square Garden. We immediately accepted when Lou and Leon offered the fight. Donovan has the ability to win and go onto bigger and better things. It's going to end-up like World War III. I expect him to pull out a victory. I expect a great, great victory from Donovan George."

DIBELLA ENTERTAINMENT

DiBella Entertainment builds upon the unique insights Lou DiBella developed as a television executive and matchmaker to combat the contractual exploitation of professional boxers. DiBella Entertainment creates a business model that shifts the balance of power from promoters to boxers; and establishes a legacy of matchmaking excellence, both in an effort to improve the health of the boxing industry. DiBella Entertainment represents its athletes with honesty and integrity all while making the best and fairest financial deals for its clients.

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brownsugar says:

Sergio is good.... but he doesn't give a good middleweight the time of day. Would rather he focused on Golovkin, Korobov, N' Jikam, Pirog, Quillin or Sturm rather than small welterweights, and ultra-green paper champs...

deepwater says:

Fighting at the garden is a great dream for sure. Martinez is not a middleweight great yet,not

even close.