



Middleweight contender **Matthew "Mack the Knife" Macklin** is gearing up for his Las Vegas debut on September 15th where he will take on former World Champ,

Joachim Alcine

on a card headlined by the eagerly awaited World Middleweight title clash between

Sergio Martinez

and

Julio Cesar Chavez

. Macklin pushed Martinez close in a brave effort to dethrone the middleweight kingpin at Madison Square Garden on St. Patrick's Day and has been rewarded for his efforts with another opportunity to showcase his talents in front of a US television audience with the fight live on HBO Pay-Per-View.

Macklin revealed that he can't wait to step between the ropes at the Thomas & Mack Center and will be keen to impress on his Vegas debut. "I've been going to Las Vegas for a long time both as a fight fan and when I was in the Ricky Hatton camp for his big fights over there," said Macklin. "I was due to fight Winky Wright there last year but he pulled out and the fight fell through so I'm looking forward to finally fighting there on such a big night for the middleweight division."

Macklin faces a stiff test in the shape of former WBA Light Middleweight Champ Joachim Alcine with the Canadian based Haitian coming off an excellent win over the hard hitting David Lemieux and the former Irish, British and European Champion admits it will be a hard nights work. "Alcine is a proven fighter, he's a former World Champion who has campaigned at the highest level and it's a massive opportunity for both of us to feature on a live HBO pay-per-view event. He's coming off a great win over Lemieux so I'm sure he will be coming into this with a lot of confidence so it's up to me to burst his bubble."

Macklin Will Meet Alcine on Sept. 15

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Macklin is hoping that he can take care of business inside the ring and then take his seat for the main event, a fight that he definitely has a vested interest in. "It's probably the most important middleweight fight since Bernard Hopkins fought Felix Trinidad back in 2001 so it's a fight I would definitely have been ringside for even if I wasn't fighting on the card. It's an intriguing fight, I'm leaning towards Sergio because he's an exceptional athlete but Chavez was very impressive last time out against Andy Lee. He's a huge middleweight, he's very strong, closes the distance well and varies his punches. However Sergio has quicker feet, he's very hard to pin down and his reflexes are excellent so I'd slightly favour him but it wouldn't be a huge surprise if Chavez pulled it out.

"Regardless of how the fight goes I'd love a shot at the winner but obviously I'm going to have to take care of business against Alcine first and that's my only priority right now. I think my last two fights have proven that I'm right up there at the top of one of the most exciting weight divisions in boxing right now. I have the utmost respect for Sergio, he won fair and square but there was nothing between us going into the eleventh round. I was ahead on one of the cards by three rounds and only a point down on the other two cards so it was very much all to play for. I still feel like I can improve an awful lot on that performance, I'd been out of the ring for 9 months beforehand and had just started working with Buddy McGirt again as my trainer so I think with another camp with Buddy under my belt I will be able to show that I'm still an improving fighter."

Macklin has been in training camp in Spain for the fight where he has opened up his own gym. "I've just opened up my own gym in Spain called Macklin's Gym Marbella", explained Macklin. "I've been a bit of a nomad when preparing for fights so it's good to have a base to literally call my own for training camps. I'm really enjoying working with Buddy again because he is such a knowledgeable trainer and I'm just enjoying my training in general so I can't wait now for September 15th."

Macklin's promoter Lou DiBella believes it's an opportunity for the 30-year-old to put himself back in the mix for another World title fight. "Macklin put his name into the world boxing scene with great back-to-back performances against Felix Sturm and Sergio Martinez," said DiBella. "While he came up a little short in those world title opportunities, he is hungrier than ever and looking to move himself back into the title picture. In his way stands Joachim Alcine, who is a former world champion and coming off the huge upset victory over David Lemieux. This is a do-or-die fight for both of these guys and they are going to leave it all on the line come fight night."

Macklin's manager Brian Peters echoed DiBella's thoughts. "It's a big opportunity for Matthew to shine and put himself right back in contention for another World title fight" said Peters. "In back to back fights he has proved he is right up there with the Worlds best and last time out he pushed a man recognised as the best fighter in the sport outside of Mayweather or Pacquiao very close. Matthew's hunger to become World Champion is stronger than ever and I'm expecting another big performance from him next month."

Macklin admits that one downside of his Las Vegas debut is that he has had to sacrifice his normal summer routine of regular trips back to Ireland to watch his beloved Tipperary hurling

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team.

"Tipperary are playing Kilkenny in the All-Ireland semi final at the weekend and it's a massive, massive game but I'm going to have to watch it from Spain. I'd love to be heading back for it but I can't really break training camp so close to my fight. I'm confident that the Tipp lads can pull it off as I think they have an extra few gears from what they have had to show so far in the Championship this year. Obviously Kilkenny look to be back with a vengeance after that defeat to Galway earlier but I'm quietly confident Tipp can progress to the final. The only problem with that is I'll have to miss the final as well as it will be the week before the Las Vegas fight! I'd be gutted to miss the final as well but I'm expecting a few of the lads to celebrate winning another All-Ireland by coming out to my fight in Vegas the following weekend so hopefully we can have a double celebration!"

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deepwater says:

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