

Andre Ward To Fight Edwin Rodriguez Nov. 16

Written by The Sweet Science
Friday, 20 September 2013 16:19

HBO BOXING

SHERMAN OAKS, CA (September 20, 2013) - Following slightly more than a year's absence from the ring due to injury, 2004 U.S. Olympic gold medalist and current WBA and Ring Magazine World Super Middleweight Champion, Andre "S.O.G." Ward makes his highly anticipated return to the ring defending his title against Edwin Rodriguez on Saturday, November 16 at the Citizens Business Bank Arena in Ontario, CA.

Simply and appropriately billed as "The Return," Ward (26-0, 13 KOs) will risk his title against the undefeated Rodriguez (24-0, 16 KOs) in the scheduled 12-round World Championship main event which will be televised live on HBO World Championship Boxing® beginning at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT.

Tickets are priced at \$200, \$125, \$75, \$50 and \$25 (parking included with purchase) and will be available at Citizens Business Bank Arena Box Office or online at AXS.com or by calling AXS at [888-929-7849](tel:888-929-7849) starting on Friday, September 27. For more information, please visit www.CBBankArena.com

Following last year's 10th-round destruction of then-WBC Light Heavyweight titleholder Chad Dawson in his biggest and most impressive defense of both his WBA and WBC belts in his hometown of Oakland on September 8, Ward was scheduled to take on former WBC/WBO Middleweight Champion Kelly Pavlik back in January. However, the bout had to be scrapped because Ward required surgery to an injured right shoulder, keeping Ward out of the ring for over 12 months and costing him an intriguing fight and sending Pavlik into retirement.

With Ward's Super-Six Tournament demolition through the 168-pound division against the likes of Mikkel Kessler, Arthur Abraham, Allan Green, Sakio Bika and Carl Froch, Ward now puts his attention toward the currently ranked #1 WBC, #3 WBA, IBF and WBO Rodriguez.

"I'm excited to get back in the ring on November 16," stated the champion Ward. "The opponent is Edwin Rodriguez. He's a young, hungry, undefeated fighter who doesn't believe he can lose and it's my job to change his mind. I think he and his team feel like they are going to catch me slipping coming off of surgery and the layoff. I try to live like a champion. I stay in the gym, eat

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well, and don't abuse my body and this rest that I got was needed. I don't feel like the layoff will hurt me, I feel like it will help me. It allowed me to rest mentally and physically, and I want to show the fans on November 16 that I'm better than I was before I left."

So now the 29-year old Ward can't wait to make his return against the Dominican-born super middleweight, who now lives in Worcester, Mass. Having made a huge statement in his last bout stopping Denis Grachev in the first round in Monte Carlo, France winning the "Monaco Million Dollar Super Four Tournament" - Rodriguez, 28, will be fighting for the first time in California. In his most recent outing, the undefeated Rodriguez known as "La Bomba," handled Grachev from the opening bell. The normally durable Grachev went down twice in the first round and was taking further punishment when referee Stanley Christodoulou stepped in to stop the one-sided bout. Grachev was coming off impressive wins over highly-touted Californian Ismayl Sillakh, and also ended former champion Zsolt Erdei's undefeated run. With the victory, the DiBella-promoted Rodriguez has propelled his name toward the top of the 168-pound division targeting Ward in the process.

"Vince Lombardi once said, 'Life's battles don't always go to the stronger or faster man. But sooner or later, the man who wins is the man who thinks he can.' On November 16th, I know I will win," stated Edwin Rodriguez.

"I commend Andre Ward for accepting a huge challenge after an injury and layoff. On November 16th, he will wish he didn't when he gets La-Bombed by La Bomba," said longtime promoter Lou DiBella.

Some strong words from the #1 world-rated Rodriguez proclaiming the demise of the #2 pound-for-pound fighter in the world.

Ward probably summed it up best, "You have a young fighter in Edwin Rodriguez that feels like it's his time. You have a young veteran in myself that feels like it's still my time, and those ingredients will make for a blockbuster fight on November 16 on HBO."

All other bouts will be announced shortly. Doors open at 3 p.m. with the first undercard fight set at 3:15 p.m.

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The event is promoted by Goossen Tutor Promotions in association with S.O.G. Promotions. The Ward-Rodriguez bout is presented in association with DiBella Entertainment and sponsored by Morongo Casino Resort Spa and the City of Ontario.

"We are proud to be a sponsor to this great boxing event featuring WBA and Ring Magazine Supermiddleweight World Champion Andre Ward," stated Morongo Casino Resort Spa General Manager, David Brents.

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Hop says:

I'm glad! Thought it would've been a shame if a boxer of Andre's level didn't get [U]his[/U] piece of the 2013 pie!

Bernie Campbell says:

Why so much in the distant future! It aint a long road to Tiparray!

brownsugar says:

Rodriguez is a tough customer... He'll provide barometer for us to determine where Ward stands after being sidelined for so long. Personally I'd like to see him fight GGG.....that'd be PPV worthy for sure.

Bernie Campbell says:

The promoters have no guts. It should have been Librado Andraede for a fierce battle, The boxing establishment doesn't have an eyedrop of courage!

Carmine Cas says:

Rodriguez is a good test indeed, we'll see where Ward is at.

If he dominates Edwin, Ward will be back to breathing down Mayweather's neck in the p4p standings