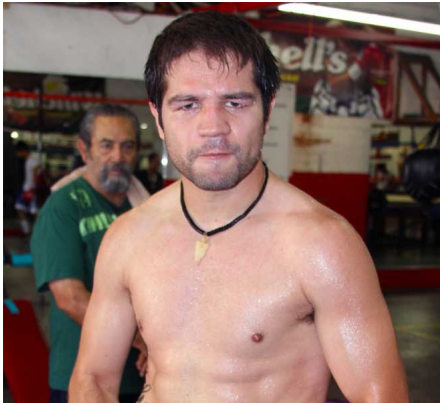


Alfonso "Jaws" Gomez Warns Ed Paredes That He's Got Sharp Teeth In Deep Waters

Written by Michael Woods
Saturday, 05 July 2014 08:24



He isn't really sure if he's being invited to the gig at the Hard Rock to lose, but if that is so, then **Alfonso Gomez** is not going to take it to heart.

That was the case when they signed him to fight **Jessie Brinkley** in 2005, **Arturo Gatti** in 2007, **Miguel** in

Cotto

2008,

Jesus Soto Karass

in 2009,

Jose

Luis Castillo

in 2010,

Canelo Alvarez

in 2011 and

Shawn Porter

in 2012. I don't mean they signed Gomez, a Mexican born California resident many know from his appearance and solid showing on season one (2005, with

Sly Stallone

,
Sugar Ray Leonard

,
Tommy Gallagher

) of "The Contender" scripted reality show, to show up to lay down. It's just that the dealmakers, the power brokers, the suits, the guys that make the money off the toil of the laborers who absorb the punishment, they thought their guy was the better man than Gomez, now 33, and they knew he'd make their guy work, but their guy would likely win.

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Sometimes, it went down like that...Ah, but sometimes it didn't.

Brinkley took a loss, and so did Gatti, in his last effort as a pro. Cotto proved too physical for Gomez, who fights on July 9 in Vegas, but vets Soto Karass and Castillo were maybe surprised by the underdog's mettle. Canelo knocked down Gomez (now 23-6-2) in round one and earned TKO6 over the man, while Porter had to go the distance, the full ten, to get the nod from the judges in July of 2012, in Cali. That was no runaway victory for the man who now holds the IBF welterweight crown, which he wrested from **Devon Alexander** last December, and defended in brutally efficient and violent fashion against

Paulie Malignaggi

April 19 in Brooklyn.

Porters' recent run underscores one of those interesting things about our fair sport. A win, or a loss, can be re-evaluated, seen in a different light, a year, or even two years after. Porter steamrolled Paulie and beat Alexander, no bum, at his own game..but Gomez was right there with him. The fighter, who faced Massachusetts-born **Ed Paredes**, now living in Florida, in Vegas, in a bout to run on Fox Sports 1, told me that Porters' streak has bolstered his own confidence a bit. "This fight is a great opportunity, and a win will put me back in the mix," Gomez said, following some sparring at the world famous Wild Card Gym. The scrap will be contested at the junior middleweight class. He'd love another crack at a world crown, after coming up short in world title clashes vs. Cotto and Canelo.

This will be Gomez' first bout in two years, and he said the time off was helpful if for no other reason to let his injuries heal up.

So, I wondered, is he in that defined but not stated underdog role?

"I was the underdog in my second fight, against Ishe Smith...and in my last fight, against Shawn Porter. Against Castillo, in "The Contender," and I came out on top. I don't know if I'm the opponent here. Paredes has a good record but with my record, I'm way more experienced, under those bright lights way more times. This is the first time he'll be in deep waters. I'm a shark, I'm used to it."

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The best names on Paredes' scalp list are **Antonio Pitalua** (2010) and **Vivian Harris** (2012), so Gomez isn't wrong. "He hits pretty hard," Gomez continued. "He tries for the KO every time. But he's never fought a fighter like me, been in with the big boys, in deep water."

I asked Gomez where his head was after the back to back losses, to Canelo and Porter. Was he demoralized, thinking about hanging 'em up?

"The Porter fight was a very good fight, and there were one or two rounds different. Porter had the **Watsons** in his corner, and **Al Haymon** with him. So his recent wins made me feel good. And I'm better now, no injuries, the elbow, the back. And, I understand the way the game is played. So, Porter had a tough time with me." So, he can now look back on that Porter fight with a different set up eyes. That's helpful, when those demons of doubt, which can creep into the best of minds, start to slither in....

Gomez said he doesn't exactly feel old, at 33, but admitted, yes, when he turned 30, it was an, 'Oh damn' moment. He said, rightly, that your average pound for pound list contains tons of guys over 30. "I'm happy with the way I feel," he said.

His home, he said, is good. Wife Dulce, to whom he's been hitched for seven years, daughter Luna (4) and son Leon (2) have a house with dad in Downey, CA, between LA and Orange County, and the missus would be happy to hear Gomez tell me, "I love being a family man." Part of that family dynamic involves dad Alfonso Sr., head trainer and cornerman for Junior. "He'll be there right to the end," the son told me. "We butted heads some in my teenage years, but I grew out of it. Working together gives us, I feel, a bigger bond than most fathers and sons have." And you think it's hard when dad sees you eating a harsh combo? "I think it's kind of unspoken, we've been in it so long. It's part of our lives. He's proud of me, and I'm proud of him, for enduring all my BS when I was younger!"

Gomez was kind enough to indulge me a most personal line of questioning. PEDs, some say, are prevalent in fight sports. I'm assuming that maybe a temptation to use could grow as you get older, and start to fight these young guns. Yes or no? "Nobody has offered it to me, I don't need it," he said. "I train hard and I'm there to fight."

"So, I didn't lose to bums," he says in summation. "I've lost to the best. And the losses were

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close.”

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Radam G says:

AG is the fighter that just won't quit. I wish him the best. Holla!

oubobcat says:

This actually is a pretty competitive fight on paper and should be a pretty good one in the ring.

Paredes has been on quite a long winning streak since a loss in 2009 to Carlos Molina. But he hasn't really fought anyone either with his best win coming against Joey Hernandez during this current win streak.

Gomez has not fought since losing to Shawn Porter a couple years ago. He gave Porter a pretty good scrap back then and before that gave Canelo some tough moments as well.

This is a true crossroads fight where the winner takes a huge step forward and will probably put themselves in position for a bigger opportunity at 147/154. The loser takes a major step backwards in their career.

These are the type of fights that television networks like ESPN and Fox Sports (where this is being televised) should be making more of. Its make able under the budgets they have and its competitive. This is not a showcase fight but a fight that either man can win and that both consider a must win at this point in their careers. It not only makes for good drama but for a good fight.