

Edwin Rodriguez-Don George Conference Call Transcript

Written by The Sweet Science
Wednesday, 01 February 2012 10:15

EDWIN "LA BOMBA" RODRIGUZ AND

DONOVAN "DA BOMB" GEORGE

MEDIA CONFERENCE CALL HIGHLIGHTS

BOMBS AWAY SATURDAY, MAR. 17, LIVE ON HBO AT 10 p.m. ET/ 7 p.m. PT

AT THE THEATER AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

NEW YORK, NY (February 1, 2012) - Earlier today DiBella Entertainment hosted a media teleconference to announce "*Bombs Away*", the much anticipated March 17th (St. Patrick's Day) co-feature fight between top-rated Super Middleweight contenders Edwin "La Bomba" Rodriguez and Donovan "Da Bomb" George being shown live on HBO. The card, headlined by Middleweight Champion, Sergio "Maravilla" Martinez (48-2-2, 27KO's) defending his crown against Matthew "Mack the Knife" Macklin (28-3, 19KO's), is entitled, "THE Real Middleweight Championship - G

et Your Irish Up"

and will take place at The Theater at Madison Square Garden. HBO will begin live coverage at 10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT.

Tickets are priced at \$505, \$355, \$205, \$125 and \$65 and are on sale now. Tickets can be purchased through the Madison Square Garden Box Office or through Ticketmaster, at ticketmaster.com

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, or call
[\(800\) 745-3000](tel:(800)745-3000)
. Call DiBella Entertainment at
[\(212\) 947-2577](tel:(212)947-2577)
, or visit
www.dbe1.com
and
[@loudibella](https://twitter.com/loudibella)
on Twitter for more information.

The fight between Rodriguez (20-0, 14KO's) (IBF #5, WBC #5, WBA #9) and George (22-1-1, 19KO's) (IBF #4) has insiders salivating. Rodriguez and George are both heavy-handed, action-packed fighters, who only know one direction and that is to come straight forward. With this being both fighters' first appearance on HBO they will undoubtedly be putting everything on the line in what promises to be an absolute barnburner.

The call began with the usual "thank you's" and both fight camps stating how excited they were for the opportunity, before tensions rose when Larry Army, manager/advisor of Rodriguez took offense to statements made by the manager of George, Mike Michael. Below is a complete transcript from the call:

KEVIN ROONEY JR.: Thanks for joining us today. Unfortunately, Lou DiBella is a little bit under the weather. He's not going to be on the call today, but we will have Ron Rizzo from our office participating in the call. Leon Margules, the co-promoter of Donovan George, with 8-Count Productions, unfortunately also cannot be on the call, but we will have Mike Michaels, of Cestus Management, the longtime manager and advisor of Donovan, say a few words before introducing Donovan's trainer and father, Pete George. Then we'll turn it over to Donovan. After Donovan's portion of the call, we'll get into Edwin's, Edwin's manager and advisor, Larry Army will say a few words before introducing Edwin's trainer, Ronnie Shields. Then we'll turn it over to Edwin. Following Edwin's portion of the call, we will open the call up for questions.

The card is entitled, "The Real Middleweight Championship: Get Your Irish Up," and will feature the real middleweight champion, and consensus top-three pound-for-pound fighter in the world, Sergio "Maravilla" Martinez taking on Matthew "Mack the Knife" Macklin. The card will take place on St. Patrick's Day at the Theater at Madison Square Garden and is promoted by DiBella Entertainment, and will be shown live on HBO, beginning at 10PM ET/7PM PT, along with this fight we are announcing today. Tickets are priced at \$505, \$355, \$205, \$125, and \$65. Tickets can be purchased through the Madison Square Garden box office, or through Ticketmaster, or

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by calling [\(800\) 745-3000](tel:8007453000) . Without further ado, I would like to turn the call over to Ron Rizzo, Vice President of Operations for DiBella Entertainment.

RON RIZZO: Hi everybody, thank you for joining us. We have a very exciting event happening March 17, St. Patrick's Day, featuring Sergio Martinez and Matthew Macklin. The co-feature for the televised portion of the show has been named and it's going to be Edwin "La Bomba" Rodriguez and Donovan "Da Bomb" George. I'm excited about this as these two fighters have been talking about this fight since they both were on a show back on April 30, 2010, where they fought in separate but both televised bouts, with George facing Osumanu Adama and Rodriguez fighting Kevin Engel. They have been talking about fighting each other since then, they both have "bomb" as part of their nickname, which means they can both punch, and that's not actually a lie. I'm looking forward to it. We'll go back to Kevin to introduce the other participants, but thank you everybody for tuning in today.

KEVIN ROONEY JR.: Talking with the media and looking over the social websites, the general consensus is that everyone is excited about this fight. It's going to be bombs away. Both of these guys don't know how to be in a boring fight. It's great for television and it's great for boxing. I want to introduce Mike Michaels, of Cestus Management, longtime manager and advisor of Donovan George.

MIKE MICHAELS: We've been with Donovan for quite a while now and we consider Donovan George and the whole family as part of our family, and we're doing this as a family situation. Donovan has come very far in a very power packed career and we feel that this is his time. It's a great scenario to be fighting at Madison Square Garden, with the pound-for-pound best fighter in the world, as far as I consider, in the main event. Fighting at the Mecca of boxing where legends have been built is just another dream for all of us. We know that Donovan is going to win the fight. There is no doubt, no question. There will be no reasonable doubt of any kind. Donovan is going to show up in tiptop shape. He's going to fight the fight of his life, he's going to take care of business and move on to win a world title after that. This in no way means that we are underestimating Edwin Rodriguez because we consider him a very good fighter. We are going to train as hard as we possibly can to prepare for a very good fighter. We're also a very good fighter and we believe we're a better fighter so we will win this fight no matter what. We're going to take Edwin to places he's never been before and the fighter that will be victorious will be Donovan "Da Bomb" George. There's only one bomb, and that's Don "Da Bomb" George. "La Bomba" I understand you have that name, but by the end of this fight, there will only be one bomb.

KEVIN ROONEY JR.: Thank you Mike, the always very colorful Mike Michaels. I'm sure we'll

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have a nice rebuttal from the Rodriguez camp once we get to their turn. I would like to have Pete George, the trainer and father of Donovan, say a few words.

PETE GEORGE: Mike pretty much said it all and I couldn't agree more with him. I have the utmost respect for Edwin Rodriguez. I think he's a great fighter and he's got a great trainer, but like Mike said we're going to bring it. We've been waiting for this day forever. I've learned not to underestimate my son and I believe he's going to be ready. This is what he's been dreaming about to be on this big stage. We're ready to go and we hope it's an exciting fight and I'm sure it will be. Both of these guys come to fight and they're both big punchers. I can't see any way that this is not going to be a great fight. I'd also like to thank Lou DiBella, promoting the fight, and our other promoters Leon Margules and Dominic Pesoli, and of course I want to thank Mike Michael because he's the best. He's been with us through thick and thin, he's like family to us.

KEVIN ROONEY JR.: Now for the fighter himself, with a 22-1-1 (19 KOs) record, the current USBA super middleweight champion and #4 ranked super middleweight in the IBF world ratings, Donovan "Da Bomb" George.

DONOVAN GEORGE: I am very grateful for this opportunity to be on such a big stage and it's going to be such a great atmosphere. To be at the Mecca of boxing is a dream come true. I was supposed to fight there five or six years ago, and my opponent failed his EKG or one of the heart tests, so it's kind of like I had a rain check to be back there. As far as Rodriguez, I've seen a lot of tape on him. I've seen him coming up. He's a great fighter, he comes to fight. He's a big super middleweight. I know he's going to be in tiptop shape and I think it's going to be an excellent war. Obviously, I think I am going to come out on top. I don't care if I win by split decision, majority decision, knockout, whatever, I just want to win. I am going to lay it all out on the line for this fight. This is my big opportunity. I think you only get one in life and this is it for me. I'm sure we both want the same thing. We're both trying to be world champions, to become an HBO fighter and make millions of dollars and take care of our families. At the end of the day, may the best man win. I just hope we have a great fight, nobody gets seriously hurt and we can continue with our careers.

KEVIN ROONEY JR.: I would now like to introduce Larry Army, the manager and advisor of Edwin Rodriguez.

LARRY ARMY: I want to thank Lou DiBella and DiBella Entertainment for providing this opportunity for Edwin Rodriguez and the rest of us at Team Rodriguez. I'd also like to thank

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Madison Square Garden and the leadership at HBO, including Ken Hershman. This is one of the first fights he's put on this year and I think that he's done a tremendous job matching two very credible opponents that are both equally dangerous. It's not just satisfying fighting on the biggest stage in boxing, on the biggest network in boxing, that's the appetizer. The entree is the victory that we hope to get that night. I'm not going to sit here and disrespect Donovan George as you guys have disrespected Edwin, and say that we're going to beat him because he is a credible opponent and when you step into the ring, anything can happen and typically does. But I will tell you this, we will be ready, we will be prepared, and we will give 100 percent effort that night. Edwin hasn't lost, Donovan has. Edwin hasn't tasted defeat yet, and I don't think March 17 is the day that he's going to start feeling what it's like to be a loser. Edwin knows how to win. He's always won and he will continue to win. We do think this is a great fight for us stylistically, very similar to the Will Rosinsky fight that we just had. In a lot of ways, they both have power, they are both limited. Edwin's had a very good four years, he hasn't had any big layoffs. I noticed on Donovan's record that he's had some big layoffs in terms of the way he's been brought up. I think that, in terms of opponents, we've fought better opponents over the last year and half, guys like Aaron Pryor Jr. and James McGirt Jr., Will Rosinsky, who won a national amateur championship. Edwin's pedigree, I think, is going to be too strong for Donovan on that night. Quite frankly, when it comes to the trainer, we have the advantage in that camp as well with Ronnie Shields, who's trained guys like Mike Tyson, Evander Holyfield and Pernell Whitaker. I feel like we've assembled the perfect team for this fight and I feel that this is the perfect opponent. We wouldn't have taken the fight if we didn't think we could win it. We did take the fight. We've actually been asking for this fight since Chicago, Illinois, when we fought on the same card as Donovan and we watched him get dropped by Osumanu Adama. We watched Edwin win his fight against Kevin Engel with a single punch to the body. We're excited about this fight. We hope that this is the launching pad for the rest of his career. We feel that this is the perfect stage and the perfect opponent to do just that, to turn Edwin Rodriguez into a household name and the next star of boxing.

MIKE MICHAEL: Kevin, let me just interject there. We didn't disrespect Edwin. We believe our fighter is going to win. What did you want us to say, that he's going to lose?

LARRY ARMY: I want you to think that he's going to win, but if you're that confident why don't we put up our purse against your purse and we'll do a winner-take-all.

MIKE MICHAEL: We believe in our fighter, okay, and great fighters lose.

LARRY ARMY: Yeah, they do, and these are two guys that are very evenly matched in a lot of different ways. I respect the fact that you think that your guy is going to win, but to come on the

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line and say that Donovan's going to get a victory and he's going to beat Edwin and that there's only going to be one bomb at the end of the night, to me, is disrespectful.

MIKE MICHAEL: No, it's not disrespectful...

LARRY ARMY: That's the beauty of America, we can disagree.

RON RIZZO: Alright guys, let's move on this portion of the call with Ronnie Shields coming up next and then we can have group commentary when the press gets to ask their questions.

RONNIE SHIELDS: Donovan George is a very skilled fighter. We take no one lightly so we're here training, but I think after the fight, we ought to put the managers in and let them go at it and make them put up their purse against each other. We're looking forward to this fight. This is what we do. I think that both guys will be competitive. The best man is going to win on March 17 and I think that's all that matters. The other team is very confident, we're very confident. This is the game. This is the way it's supposed to be. They're supposed to feel like their guy is better just like we feel Edwin is better. I'm here in Houston to get Edwin into the best condition possible and to put together the best possible game plan. If you live in New York, please come out and see this because this is going to be better than the main event.

KEVIN ROONEY JR.: A fighter we're very excited to work with at DiBella Entertainment, we feel he is one of the bright young stars in all of boxing, he's 20-0 (14 KOs), he was the 2005 US National Champion and the 2006 National Golden Gloves Champion, and he's currently ranked #5 by the WBC and IBF, and #8 by the WBA, and he is the current USNBC super middleweight champion, Edwin "La Bomba" Rodriguez.

EDWIN RODRIGUEZ: I want to thank my whole team, DBE, and Lou DiBella, for giving me such a big opportunity on HBO at Madison Square Garden. This is a dream come true for any boxer and I'm training extremely hard for Donovan George. He's a very good fighter. He's one of those fighters that doesn't know how to take a step back so I am not taking lightly at all. So I'm bringing 100 percent, my best game, in. With regard to the bet between the managers, giving all to the winner, I'm sure it's going to be me, but I like that bet. After this fight, I look forward to bigger things. I just want to thank everybody for this big opportunity.

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KEVIN ROONEY JR.: At this time, we would like to open it up to questions.

DAX CONN (TALKIN' BOXING): Don, you're only two fights removed from your loss to Francisco Sierra. Since then, both your bouts have a combined amount of time of nine rounds. You've never been beyond eight rounds in your entire professional career. Edwin is a pressure fighter. He has a solid chin and has gone 10 rounds several times. Considering all that I just mentioned, has your camp done anything different for this fight than you normally have in the past in your preparations considering the time off and the amount of time that you've had in between your bouts so you can prepare yourself for what will more than likely be a distance of 10 rounds in your bout against Edwin.

DONOVAN GEORGE: I'm not sure that I'm doing anything differently. I'm going to train harder than I've ever trained before because of the high possibility that this fight is going to go more than eight rounds. The reason I haven't been in the ring in a long time is entirely my fault. I was a numbskull and I just didn't work out. But I've been in the gym, I've been training, I've been sparring. I've cut weight, I've been on weight, I just didn't get the opportunity to go out there and fight. As far as this fight coming up, I couldn't be more excited. I'm so motivated to train hard and my father is going to get me ready. We're going to bring in the strength coach to give me the extra edge as much as possible. I know it's going to be a grueling fight and I know it's going to come down to conditioning and basically who can take the better punch. I have that one loss on my record and it wasn't just a loss. I got beat up bad, it was a horrific beating and everyone saw it. It was on national television and it was embarrassing, but I bounced back and beat a pretty good fighter. I just want to go out there and prove myself and fight fights like this on the biggest stage in the world. It's just a great opportunity to show the world what I'm made of and I know it's going to be a great fight.

DAX CONN (TALKIN' BOXING): Edwin, this question is for you. Donovan has some serious power, as we all know. Nineteen of his 21 wins come by stoppage. You, yourself though, have a fairly impressive KO ratio, 14 of your 20 wins come by stoppage, but you've also shown some pure boxing ability when you need to and you have a higher level of competition on your resume. Donovan, I believe, does possess more power. Are you ready for a toe-to-toe war that Donovan brings or do you think that if Donovan does bring his pressure that you'll be able to outbox him? Or do you really believe that this will come down to, as Donovan mentioned, who has the better chin?

EDWIN RODRIGUEZ: We know who has the better chin. I've never been down before, but I let

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my trainer Ronnie Shields come up with a game plan and I just follow his game plan. He better come up with a game plan on how to beat Donovan George and I'm just going to execute it on March 17.

JEFFREY FREEDMAN (KO DIGEST): Edwin, after the Rosinsky fight, you said you wanted to fight somebody in the top 10 and somebody who could get you to that championship level. I was wondering is Don George somebody like that or is this more of a Rosinsky-type fight as you move toward your ultimate goal?

EDWIN RODRIGUEZ: Donovan George is ranked #4 by the IBF, so he is one of those guys ranked in the top 10. It's definitely a step up and I'm just preparing for it and getting ready.

JEFFREY FREEDMAN (KO DIGEST): Edwin, talk a little bit about what it means to be fighting at Madison Square Garden on HBO for the first time. Is that as big a dream as winning a world title, or perhaps even bigger?

EDWIN RODRIGUEZ: Being on HBO is a huge opportunity. Being at Madison Square Garden, which is about four hours from where I live, so I'm going to have a lot of fans there. It's a great opportunity, so it's almost just as good as winning a world title.

JEFFREY FREEDMAN (KO DIGEST): For boxing fans who don't really know that much about you, can you tell us about your style in the ring, and who you are as a person outside of the ring?

DONOVAN GEORGE: In the ring, I like to come forward and fight. If you've ever seen any of my fights, I've never been in a bad fight. I take shots and I give shots. I'm always willing to take one to give one. This is going to be an action-packed fight. I am going to try to tighten up my boxing ability, but as the fight gets going and it gets into the later rounds, everybody goes back to the fighter that they were when they first started fighting and the original fundamentals they were taught. My father taught me to use the jab, so that's what I thought I'd do.

Outside of the ring, I'm a humongous sports fan. I watch sports all day and, to be honest, I

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probably play poker four or five times a week for 12 hours at a time.

JEFFREY FREEDMAN (KO DIGEST): What did you learn from the loss to Francisco Sierra? You described it as a horrific loss earlier. It had that somewhat controversial ending. What do you take from an experience like that?

DONOVAN GEORGE: I was losing the fight. I was getting beat up bad. Yeah, he hit me after the bell, but I'm not going to complain about that. I went into that fight overconfident and I wasn't mentally ready for that fight. I was hurt, I should never have gone in there. I thought, in my mind, 'oh I'm just going to go in there and blow this bum out,' but it didn't turn out like that, and I took a terrific, humbling beating. I'll never take anyone lightly like that again. Everything happens for a reason. Because of that fight, I got that Cornelius White fight. They brought me in there to get killed against Cornelius White and, obviously, that didn't happen. On the big scheme of things, everything happens for a reason.

JEFFREY FREEDMAN (KO DIGEST): In your amateur career, or at any point in the past, have you ever sparred with Edwin Rodriguez? Have you two even met?

DONOVAN GEORGE: No, I had a very limited amateur career. I've probably only been to a few national tournaments, and I'm not even sure if I've ever seen him there. The only time that I saw him was in Chicago when he fought Kevin Engel. To Mr. Army, I don't think I got dropped in that Adama fight like you said I did, but maybe I got hit too hard. But as far as the amateurs, Edwin has more accomplishments than I have, and god bless. But this is the pros and I'm going to come to fight and I'm willing to lay it all out on the line for this fight.

JEFFREY FREEDMAN (KO DIGEST): How did this fight between Rodriguez and George come about and why did Andy Lee pull out?

KEVIN ROONEY JR.: We had been looking for an opponent for Andy and, unfortunately, we weren't able to lock in a suitable opponent for Andy that fit for HBO and fit for Lee's camp. We obviously didn't want to lose the slot, as we still had the show. So then we came up with this fight between Edwin and Donovan, and everyone loved it. It's unfortunate that we don't have Andy on the card, but we think that we have a great fight with this Edwin-Donovan fight.

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BOB MUTTER (CHICAGO TRIBUNE): You are half Greek, half Irish?

DONOVAN GEORGE: Yes sir.

BOB MUTTER (CHICAGO TRIBUNE): Your mom is Irish?

DONOVAN GEORGE: My mom is 100 percent Irish, and my dad is 100 percent Greek. Both were born in the US.

BOB MUTTER (CHICAGO TRIBUNE): Where are you training Donovan?

DONOVAN GEORGE: I train between gyms. I train at Chicago Fight Club with Sam Colona. My father and I go down there and we go to Windy City Fight Club, which is closer to my house. I'll be going out to New York the week of the fight.

BILL HILLMAN (FIGHTNEWS.COM): Since Edwin is ranked #5 and Donovan #4 by the IBF, will this fight be an IBF title eliminator?

LARRY ARMY: We wanted it to be, but it just didn't work out. I think part of the problem was Adonis Stevenson and Jesus Gonzalez. There was a non-mandatory, voluntary before we made this fight. We would have loved it. Donovan George's team would have loved it, I'm sure. They had a title eliminator with Librado Andrade, but it just wasn't in the cards unfortunately.

MIKE MICHAEL: As you're aware, we were supposed to be doing the title eliminator with Librado Andrade, but that didn't work out. As you just heard, we would have loved for this to be for the #1 spot and #2 spot, but that didn't work out. But maybe we can work out doing a defense of George's USBA title. We'll talk with Lou DiBella and Leon Margules and we'll see what we can work out.

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LARRY ARMY: And there's Edwin's WBC USNBC title as well.

MIKE MICHAEL: Let's throw all of our belts into the pot and let's talk to our promoters.

LARRY ARMY: I agree.

BILL HILLMAN (FIGHTNEWS.COM): Edwin and Ronnie, what did you guys pick up from that win over Will Rosinsky and what are you guys planning on changing for this bout?

RONNIE SHIELDS: These are two different fighters. Will Rosinsky was a good boxer as well as a pressure fighter and Donovan is a 'come for the head' kind of guy, so that right there puts you in a different kind of light. I'm studying tape of Donovan right now and putting together our plan. The thing about Rosinsky was that he was a naturally bigger guy and we had to go up in weight to fight him. He was a strong fighter. Donovan is more Edwin's weight. These guys are 168 pounders.

EDWIN RODRIGUEZ: Like Ronnie said, they're both different fighters. Rosinsky a shorter fighter so he was harder to hit, but this is a whole different fight. We're going to stick to this game plan and it has nothing to do with Will Rosinsky.

BILL HILLMAN (FIGHTNEWS.COM): For Donovan and Pete, Edwin hits pretty hard to the body. What are you guys doing to prepare for Edwin's body attack?

PETE GEORGE: Hundreds of rounds on the medicine ball will help us get ready for that one, preparing him so he can take those shots. Edwin is a good body puncher, and Donovan will be ready to take those shots. There's things that we see that we're going to try to exploit that Edwin might be doing wrong. I know Edwin is going to be prepared and we're going to be prepared. But there's things that we see that we're working on.

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KEVIN ROONEY JR.: Thank you everyone for participating in today's call.

The Edwin "La Bomba" Rodriguez (20-0, 14KO's) vs. Don "Da Bomb" George (22-1-1, 19KO's) 10-round super middleweight showdown, being billed as "Bombs Away" will be the co-feature bout of the evening to Sergio "Maravilla" Martinez (48-2-2, 27KO's) defending his Middleweight crown against top-rated Irish middleweight contender, Matthew "Mack The Knife" Macklin (28-3, 19KO's). The card which will be aired live on HBO's "World Championship Boxing is entitled, "THE REAL Middleweight Championship - Get Your Irish Up", is promoted by DiBella Entertainment and will be shown live on HBO beginning 10PM ET/7PM PT.

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