

Ayala Pumped To Fight Camacho Jr.

Written by The Sweet Science
Wednesday, 08 February 2012 21:28

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (Feb. 8, 2012) – Elvin Ayala felt the excitement the moment he found out he'd be fighting **Hector Camacho Jr.** next month on national television.

"I started getting goose bumps," he said.

Just don't expect him to be star-struck once the bell rings. Ayala (25-4-1, 11 KOs) is all business as he prepares for the first defense of his World Boxing Council U.S. National Boxing Council (WBC USNBC) middleweight title in the co-feature of "All In," presented by Jimmy Burchfield's Classic Entertainment & Sports on **Friday, March 30th, 2012** at Foxwoods Resort Casino's MGM Grand Theater. Ayala's 10-round showdown against Camacho Jr. (53-4-1, 28 KOs) will be televised on ESPN2's "Friday Night Fights."

"He's coming in to fight hard," Ayala said, "but I plan on leaving with the belt."

The 10-round main event of "All In" features **Philadelphia's "Hammerin'" Hank Lundy** (21-1-1, 11 KOs) – ranked No. 4 in the WBC – defending his North American Boxing Federation (NABF) lightweight title against No. 11-ranked **"Dangerous" Dannie Williams** (21-1, 17 KOs), the NABF's No. 1 contender.

"The cards that Jimmy and his group put together are always a knockout with the fans that come to enjoy a fantastic night of boxing," said **Bill Satti**, Foxwoods' Director of Public Affairs. "We're proud to welcome his fantastic team and ESPN back to Foxwoods for 'Friday Night Fights' on March 30th. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we always like to reflect on organizations such as CES that have helped make us the resort we are today."

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Ayala – the New Haven, Conn., native now nicknamed “The Lycan,” which is short for lycanthrope, the Greek word for “werewolf” – has won four consecutive bouts since the beginning of 2011 and is now ranked No. 16 among middleweights in the WBC. Camacho Jr., a San Juan, Puerto Rico native who is the son of former four-time world champion **Hector “Macho” Camacho Sr.**

, will be fighting for just the second time in 16 months when he faces Ayala in March, but he recently added a new element to his training camp; the 33-year-old southpaw is currently leaving his home in New York City and traveling to Puerto Rico to train with his father for the first time in his career.

“You’re going to see a different Camacho – full of energy and life,” Camacho Jr. said. “I’m coming here to win the fight and look good. Not just to win, but to win impressively. I’m fighting a live fighter, so I’ve got to fight with smarts and use my experience and intelligence to win, and make it an easy fight.

“By no means is [facing] Elvin Ayala an easy fight, but there are mistakes from the short clip I’ve seen of him. Get ready for a fight; we’re going to have fun. Like the show is called, it’s ‘All In’ – it’s now or nothing ... for both of us.”

With Camacho Jr. turning 34 in September and Ayala recently celebrating his 31st birthday, both fighters are facing the reality that this could be their final run at competing for a world title.

Four years ago, Ayala – then just 27 – came within 28 seconds of going the distance with unbeaten International Boxing Federation world middleweight champion **Arthur Abraham** before getting knocked out in the 12th

and final round.

Camacho Jr. has never fought for a world title, but he’s a former WBC Caribbean Boxing Federation light middleweight and United States Boxing Organization (USBO) welterweight champion. He also spent a brief period ranked among the Top 10 welterweights in the world after beating Hartford’s **Israel “Pito” Cardona** for the then-vacant WBC CABOFE title in 1990.

Capturing the WBC USNBC belt is a step in the right direction for both fighters. Ayala has risen

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to No. 16 in the rankings since he won the title with a win over **Derrick Findley** in July. Past winners of the USNBC title in different weight classes include former two-time world champion **Paul “The Punisher” Williams** and current World Boxing Association (WBA) super world light welterweight and IBF light welterweight champion **Lamont Peterson**, who upset Amir Khan by split decision for both titles in December.

The key for both fighters is living up to expectations, particularly Camacho Jr., who is often compared to his father, a consummate showman remembered as one of boxing’s most colorful fighters during his 30-year career.

“My father was one of the best fighters to ever lace up the gloves, so I’ve got some tough shoes to fill,” Camacho Jr. said. “People like him only come along once every 20 years, but I’m here, and it’s my time. I’m coming to win.”

Ayala has fought in recent years with the pressure of providing for his family and following in the footsteps of “**Bad**” **Chad Dawson**, the New Haven light heavyweight who captured the first of his two world titles in 2007 and is looking to reclaim the belt in April in a rematch against **Bernard Hopkins**. Born in Philadelphia, but raised in New Haven, Ayala has arguably become the Elm City’s most popular fighter, a distinction he’s learned to accept.

“At first, it was hard, but I feel good about it now,” Ayala said. “Now it’s like they’re giving this to me, and they’re expecting me to do something with it, so I’m going to do something with it now.”

“This is serious. Throughout my life, where I come from, the poverty is hard. Where I lived with my brothers and I, the food that we ate – the food we didn’t eat – the life we didn’t have, it was crazy, and now I’m here in this moment standing in front of you thinking, ‘Wow, this is really happening!’

“All this love, all this energy, I’m going to put it toward something that I feel within myself.”

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Toward the end of last year, Ayala – reflecting on his most recent accomplishments – promised to “unleash” in 2012. The new nickname is the first step.

“I’ve always been a wolf-like character,” he said. “Even my family crest has two wolves on it.”

The beast is back, and Camacho Jr. must do his best to avoid facing the wrath on March 30th.

“These are the kind of fights you don’t think twice about,” Camacho Jr. said. “The opportunity is right in front of us.”

Tickets for “All In” are \$40.00, \$65.00, and \$125.00 (VIP ringside) and can be purchased by calling CES at 401.724.2253/2254, or the Foxwoods box office at [800.200.2882](tel:8002002882) , online at www.cesboxing.com

or

www.foxwoods.com

. Doors open 6 p.m. with the first bout scheduled for 7.

For more information on the undercard, stay tuned to www.cesboxing.com .