

Stakes Are High In Lundy-Beltran Battle

Written by The Sweet Science
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ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (July 9, 2012) – Though he’s closer to the top than he’s ever been in his professional career, **“Hammerin’” Hank Lundy’s** journey is far from over.

Ranked No. 1 in the World Boxing Council (WBC) among lightweights, the Philadelphia native is on the doorstep of fighting for a major world title in 2012, but Lundy (22-1-1, 11 KOs) must first take care of business in front of a national television audience – again – on **Friday, July 27th, 2012** at Resorts Casino Hotel in Atlantic City.

The reigning North American Boxing Federation (NABF) lightweight champion will defend his title for the third time against Mexican veteran **Raymundo Beltran** (25-6, 17 KOs) of Phoenix, Ariz., in the main event of “Title Wave,” presented by Jimmy Burchfield’s Classic Entertainment & Sports live on *ESPN’s Friday Night Fights*, which will air live beginning at 10 p.m. (EST) on ESPN2, ESPN3 and ESPN Deportes.

“Even after I win a world title, my job still won’t be done,” Lundy said. “My work in the boxing game will never be done.”

The 10-round showdown between Lundy and Beltran will be one of two nationally-televised bouts; the other is a 10-round co-feature between hard-hitting super middleweights **Richard Pierson** (11-2, 8 KOs) of nearby Paterson, N.J., and rising star **Farah Ennis** (19-1, 12 KOs) of Philadelphia, who has scored knockouts in six of his last seven wins dating back to February of 2010.

Expect sparks to fly July 27th as the four fighters featured in televised bouts enter the night with 48 combined knockouts, a belated Independence Day treat for ESPN2’s worldwide audience, which has watched Lundy grow from a budding prospect to a championship contender within the past two years.

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“I’ve got a lot of love for ESPN,” said Lundy, who’s appeared on the network six times since 2010 and seven times overall in his professional career. “After this fight they should rename it the ‘Hammerin’ Hank network!”

With a win over Beltran, Lundy could have every network executive knocking on his door. The NABF titlist is still eyeing a shot at WBC lightweight champion **Antonio DeMarco**, but since DeMarco is already scheduled to defend his belt in September against

John Molina

– the only fighter to beat Lundy – Lundy is instead putting his No. 1 ranking on the line against Beltran, sending a stern message to the champions who’ve yet to answer the bell.

“Once again, I’m going to show everybody that I don’t run or duck from anybody,” Lundy said. “The guy I’m fighting is solid. He’s coming to fight and he’s coming to win. He’s got a family to feed just like I have a family to feed.

“The difference between me and these other guys is a lot of other guys say it, but I’m a true throwback because I’ll fight anybody. I’m No. 1 right now, but you could sit on that lead and fall asleep, and then when you get your shot at a world title, you might not be ready. I want to stay busy and keep working.”

Beltran will certainly test Lundy’s endurance – and chin. The 30-year-old Sinaloa, Mexico native has stopped his opponent in each of his last nine wins, a streak that began in 2005 with a first-round knockout against **Jaime Orrantia**.

Even in defeat, Beltran is a handful; in his last two losses – both against previously-unbeaten opponents – Beltran went all 10 rounds, coming within two points on two of the three scorecards in a loss to **Sharife Bogere** in May of 2011 and in January losing by no more than four points on any of the scorecards in a unanimous-decision loss to undefeated **Luis Ramos Jr.**

This could be Beltran’s big break; having toiled in relative anonymity for years, he’s more known in some circles for being one of **Manny Pacquiao**’s sparring partners than he is for his own success inside the ring.

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“I want to make a name myself,” Beltran said. “If I win, everything will change.”

The same goes for Lundy, who once again finds himself mixing it up with a dangerous puncher looking for his own signature win, similar to what he faced in March when he stepped to the plate against **Dannie Williams**, at the time a relatively unknown fighter who sent Lundy to the canvas in the opening round before the champion dominated the remainder of the bout en route to a unanimous-decision win.

“I saw his fight against Bogere,” Lundy said of Beltran. “He comes forward – nonstop pressure, but he’s a little slow. A guy like that, I can definitely handle, but I know he’s going to give it all he’s got. I’m ready for the challenge.”

While he prepares for Beltran, Lundy continues to keep his eye on the rest of the competition in the lightweight division, and the irony of DeMarco facing Molina in September certainly hasn’t gone unnoticed in Lundy’s camp. Lundy faced Molina in July of 2009 and led decisively on all three scorecards before Molina stopped him in the 11th round, capturing Lundy’s North American Boxing Organization (NABO) title.

“They feel as though since John beat me they’ll fight him to get ready for ‘Hammerin’ Hank,” Lundy said, “but like I tell everybody, John was taking a beating in that fight. That’s why he’s scared to fight me. John is old news. They know he’s done.”

“Everybody talks about Molina in a rematch with me. I’d love to avenge that loss, but, at the end of the day, he wouldn’t get back in the ring with me.”

Molina wouldn’t have a choice if he were to pull off the upset against DeMarco in September and Lundy were still the No. 1 contender for the WBC title, which would more than likely set up a rematch for the world title, but, as Lundy said, “[DeMarco] knows John is shot, so that ain’t going to happen.”

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Instead, Lundy is focusing on the task at hand, which is defending his title against another hungry opponent looking to bump him off the path to greatness.

“I know what I’m fighting for,” Lundy said. “I’ve got this fire burning inside me. I’m going to be great. I’m destined to be great. No one is going to put that fire out.”

“I’m ready to win this fight,” Beltran added. “The key is not to fight his fight and do my own thing – make him follow my lead. To me, he’s a future world champion, and once I beat him I know I’ll one day be a world champion, too.”

Tickets for “Title Wave” are on sale now at \$40, \$65, \$75 and \$125 and can be purchased by calling CES at 401.724.2253/2254, online at www.cesboxing.com and www.ticketmaster.com , or at the Resorts Casino Hotel Box Office.