WORCESTER, MA (July 26, 2012) - Most established prizefighters take extended periods off between fights to recharge. Undefeated Dominican sensation **Edwin "La Bomba" Rodriguez** (21-0, 14 KOs), however, practically lives in the gym continuing to train hard as he looks ahead to his first world title shot opportunity, hopefully, in 2013.

Instead of taking a well-deserved vacation after his solid March 17th win by unanimous decision over **Donovan George** for the United States Boxing Association (USBA) super middleweight championship, Rodriguez returned home to Worcester (MA) to be with his family for only a week before returning to work.

Even though he's driven to succeed for his young family, it's strictly business for "La Bomba," at least at this stage of his career, as he continues to makes great sacrifices now in order to invest in the future for his wife, Stephanie, and their five-year-old twins, Serena and Edwin, Jr., who are both special needs children.

Rodriguez is a legitimate world title contender, who is rated as high as No. 3 in the International Boxing Federation (IBF) and No. 4 by the World Boxing Council (WBC). He's also ranked No. 8 by the World Boxing Association (WBA), as well as No. 9 by *The Ring Magazine*.

Former world middleweight champion **Kelly Pavlik** is now set in his sights, but only after Rodriguez gets past his next opponent, unbeaten
Jason Escalera
(13-0-1, 12 KOs), headlining a DiBella Entertainment presented
HBO Boxing After Dar
k show on September 29 from MGM Grand Theater at Foxwoods.

After spending several weeks at the famed Kronk Gym in Detroit, where he served as a chief sparring partner for **Andy Lee** as he prepared for his WBA middleweight title fight against **Julio Caesar Chavez, Jr.**
, Edwin headed Southwest to Houston to train with his mentor,
Ronnie Shields
.

Once viewed as strictly a brawler with a devastating hook to the body, the 27-year-old Rodriguez displayed vastly improved defense, as well as a more effective jabs and increased head movement, in his impressive victory over George at The Theater in Madison Square Garden in the co-feature on a DiBella Entertainment card headlined by **Sergio Martinez** versus **Mathe**

w Macklin

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Although he reverted to his old boxing style from his amateur days, Rodriguez' power punching was slightly diminished, so he's been working with Shields to become a more complete fighter, like a chameleon who constantly adjusts in the ring in order to compete with the elite of the super middleweight division.

The elite of the 168-pound division, however, appears to be tied-up for the immediate future as WBA/WBC champion **Andre Ward** takes on WBA light heavyweight champion **Chad Dawson** in September, while IBF king
Carl Froch
and former champion
Lucian Bute
announced that they'll both have fights this fall before their rematch in March.

"I sparred at Kronk Gym with guys from 160 pounds up to heavyweights like **Eddie Chambers** and
Jonathan Banks
," Rodriguez said. "It was a great experience for me. That place is a real doghouse with, as they say, plenty of fresh meat. I sparred with five different guys my first day. For my last fight with Donovan George, I worked so hard on defense to where I'm very comfortable. Every time I got cracked, I started to give it back, but Ronnie would calm me down between rounds and get me back working my jab. I hit Donovan George with some good shots, but I knew that he was a big puncher. I felt his power and knew what he had done in a fight with my chief sparring partner, (world rated light heavyweight)
Cornelius White
. George has one-punch power. It got a little boring and I wanted to brawl, but I stuck to my game plan.

"Now, I am working on sitting down more on my punches. We're working to get my power back up so I can be more complete as an overall boxer/puncher. I'd fight any of the top super middleweights. There are so many champs and former champs in the super middleweight

division right now. I'll keep working to improve, building my name, and sooner or later I'm going to get my world title shot. I've got a dream team working for me in (promoter) **Lou DiBella**, (manager)
Larry Army
and (trainer) Ronnie Shields. There's no rush, I'm still young. As Ronnie says, it's not about fighting for the world title - it's really about winning the world title and keeping it for a long time."

Rodriguez finds himself in a wave of new contenders on the rise, including **Thomas Oosthuizan** , **Adonis Stevenson**
,
George Groves
and
James DeGale
.

"We believe Edwin can beat anybody in the super middleweight division, right now, because he's such a good multi-dimensional fighter," Army remarked. "He showed defensive improvement in his last fight. He has above average speed, a great chin, and he's working hard with Ronnie to bring back his power. Edwin's undefeated and he won't allow himself to lose. His brawling made him more exciting, but he's developing into a complete package.

"His time will come. The super middleweight world title situation is unclear. Ward is fighting Dawson and nobody's sure if Ward will stay at super middleweight or move up to light heavyweight. Looks like neither Froch nor Bute will be available until next spring at the earliest and (World Boxing Organization champion **Robert**) **Stieglitz** won't leave Germany. The guy we want is Pavlik. I don't believe he wants any part of Edwin. Pavlik had a much more difficult time fighting (**Will**) **Rosinksy** than Edwin did. But, we all know, Edwin can't even think about Pavlik until he takes care of business September 29th with Jason Escalera."

Rodriguez has earned his boxing bones, so to speak, having defeated his last five opponents - George (22-1-1), Rosinsky (14-0), **Chris Traietti** (10-2), **Aaron Pryor, Jr.** (15-2) and **James McGirt**
(22-2-1) - who had an accumulative record of 83-7-2 and an outstanding 90-percent winning percentage when they entered the ring to fight Edwin. No cupcakes for this dynamic Dominican, for sure, as he quickly approaches elite status himself.

The fuse has been set for "La Bomba" and it's ready to explode very soon.