WHITTAKER LOOKS FORWARD

TO PROVING HIMSELF IN

SEPT. 21 FIGHT WITH ROSADO

Georgetown, Cayman Islands—Junior middleweight **Charles Whittaker** hopes everyone underestimates his chances of beating
Gabriel Rosado
when the two collide Friday evening, Sept. 21, at the Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem.

The winner of the scheduled 12-round contest will become the No. 1 contender and official mandatory challenger for IBF world champion **Cornelius K9 Bundrage**.

The Whittaker-Rosado bout is one of three to be televised Sept. 21 by the NBC Sports Network Fight Night series. The others: **Gabriel Campillo**, of Madrid, Spain, vs. **Sergey Kovalev,** of Ch elyabinsk, Russia, 10 rounds, light-heavyweights;
Ronald Cruz
, of Bethlehem, PA, vs.
Antwone Smith
, of Miami, FL, 12 rounds, for Cruz' WBC Continental Americas Welterweight Title.

Whittaker, 38, of the Cayman Islands, has boxed under the radar during most of his 19-year career. His 38-12-2 record includes 23 knockouts, but he rarely has been in high-profile matches.

"This fight means the world to me," Whittaker said. "I have paid my dues and ready to be number one in the world. After this fight I will challenge for the IBF 154 world title."

Whittaker gained the No. 2 slot in the IBF ratings due to a pair of 12-round victories in his two most recent fights--over **Keenan Collins**, of Reading, PA, 14 months ago in the Cayman Islands for the vacant USBA junior middleweight title, and over **Giorbis Barthelemy**, of Cuba, last November, in Miami, FL.

Whittaker has beaten former world-title challenger **Billy Lyell** and he has lost to some of the best-- **Troy Rowland**, **Mikkel Kessler**, **Shannon Taylor** and **Hercules Kyvelos**.

“There are some people who told me I would never make it as a professional boxer and I have proved them wrong,” Whittaker said. “When I step into the ring on September 21 it will be no different. I know Rosado will be game but I have the experience and I am hungry to win.”

Proof of Whittaker’s popularity in the Cayman Islands is the fact that Premier **McKeeva Bush** plans to attend the Sept. 21 fight in Bethlehem.

It has been a long and winding road to the top spot for Whittaker, who got into trouble as a youth in the Cayman Islands. Born in Georgetown, he later moved to West Bay and was placed in a Jamaican reform school.

He returned home to attend Cayman Island High School. After graduation, his cousin **John Evans** took Whittaker to the local boxing gym where **Dalmain Ebanks** became his first coach and mentor.

After a brief amateur career, Whittaker turned pro in 1993 and won a four-round decision over **Larry Jarrett**, of Lafayette, TN.

With few opportunities in the Cayman Islands, Whittaker headed for Florida and spent time in Hollywood at Angelo Dundee's gym under the guidance of **Joe Quinlan** and **Dell Cava**, then moved to Pensacola and worked with **Roy Jones**. Back in Hollywood, he finally hooked up with **Norman Wilson**, who has been his trainer for the last 10 years.

A native Philadelphian, Wilson is a former US Marine and Dade County Public School teacher with over 40 years boxing experience. He has worked with **Oliver McCall**, **Tony Tucker** and **Randall Bailey**.

Whittaker and family members formed Knockout Productions, Ltd., a group which promotes Whittaker's fights in the Cayman Islands with Whittaker in the main event. Longtime friend **Raul Alvarez**, of Winter Haven, FL, is matchmaker and advisor.

Rosado, 26, of Philadelphia, PA, earned the No. 3 slot in the IBF ratings this year with knockout victories over **Jesus Soto-Karass**, of Mexico, and over **Sechew Powell**, of Brooklyn, NY. The win over Powell topped the June 1 card in front of a standing-room-only crowd at the 2,000-seat Event Center at the Sands.

A pro since 2006, Rosado has a 20-5 record, 12 K0s. He has won his last six fights and also has defeated ex-IBF champ **Kassim Ouma**, of Uganda, and contender **Saul Roman**, of Mexico.