



JHONNY GONZALEZ VS. GARY RUSSELL JR., JERMELL CHARLO VS. VANES MARTIROSYAN FINAL PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTES AND PHOTOS

*Saturday, March 28, Live on SHOWTIME® (10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT)
From The Pearl Theater at the Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas*

First Live Fight is at 2:35 p.m. PT; Tickets Still Available!

LAS VEGAS (March 26, 2015) - Two days before their important fights live on SHOWTIME® (10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT), this **Saturday, March 28**, hard-hitting WBC Featherweight World Champion **Jhonny Gonzalez**, 2008 U.S. Olympian and former world title challenger **Gary Russell Jr.**, undefeated super welterweight **Jermell Charlo** and once-beaten super welterweight **Vanes Martirosyan** participated in the final press conference at **The Pearl Theater at the Palms Casino Resort** in Las Vegas.

In the second half of a **SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING®** doubleheader, the hard-hitting Gonzalez (57-8, 48 KOs), of Mexico City, will defend his WBC Featherweight World Title against talented once-beaten **Russell** (25-1, 14 KOs), of Capitol Heights, Md.

The telecast opener will match undefeated rising star **Jermell "Iron Man" Charlo** (25-0, 11 KOs), of Houston, against the battle-tested Martirosyan(35-1-1, 21 KOs), of Glendale, Calif., in a 10-rounder for the WBO Intercontinental 154-pound championship.

Earlier on Saturday, **SHOWTIME Sports®** will present the **Sky Sports** telecast of the IBF Welterweight World Championship between defending champion and hometown favorite **Kell Brook** and No. 1 challenger **Jo Jo Dan** live on **SHOWTIME** at **6:15 p.m. ET/3:15 p.m. PT** from the **Motorpoint Arena** in Sheffield, England. Sky Sports' **Jim Watt** and **Nick Halling** will call the action from ringside.

Tickets for this Saturday's stacked **DiBella Entertainment** fight card are priced at \$200, \$100, \$75, \$50, and \$25, plus applicable fees are on sale. Tickets may be purchased by calling Ticketmaster at (800) 745-3000 or by clicking [HERE](#). Tickets are also available online at www.ticketmaster.com.

Here's what the boxers and the other participants said Thursday at Palms Resort Casino Lounge.

JHONNY GONZALEZ, WBC Featherweight World Champion

"I am well aware of the history of the prestigious WBC featherweight title and the many great Mexican fighters before me who held it. It is an honor and a privilege and actually very exciting for me to be mentioned with those names.

"I definitely know that more people have been watching me since I knocked out Abner Mares. Knowing that more people are paying attention keeps me motivated, keeps me going strong.

"I feel I am getting better with every fight. Every victory only makes me work that much harder.

"I am very excited about fighting Gary Russell. He is a great fighter and this is going to be a great fight. I am totally prepared for anything. Everyone says it is my power against his speed, but anything can happen in a fight.

"The media thinks I'm done. They say Russell is too fast for me. I'm an underdog in this fight. While I don't let any of the talk bother me, it does give me more motivation to prove to the people that I am for real and that I am a good fighter fight in and fight out.

"I enjoy being champion, putting in all the hard work and proving people wrong. I had a great training camp and prepared myself well in Mexico City for this fight. I'm known for knockouts but I never go into a fight looking for knockouts. I am ready to fight 12 hard rounds. If the knockout comes, it comes.

"I want to win and take the belt home to Mexico. You'll see on Saturday what I have in store. You can see my strategy then. I hope to see you all there.

"I want to thank everyone for helping make this fight possible."

GARY RUSSELL JR., 2008 U.S. Olympian and former world title challenger

"I'm ready and in shape. In the ring I'm omnipresent. I'm going to change all those pictures on that belt.

"I feel the same going into this fight as I always do, and I expect the outcome to be the same as always, that I will come out on top.

"I respect Jhonny Gonzalez like I respect all my opponents. He worked hard to win the title. I have studied tape of him. I know he is going to come right after me. Gonzalez is a puncher. But I'm a good puncher too. He's been knocked out before, maybe he'll get knocked out again.

"I can do a lot of things in the ring. Of course, my youth and speed will be keys but I have other attributes, too, like boxing acumen, ring generalship and what I call controlled chaos. I can move and punch and I'm thinking all the time in there.

"Gonzalez and Lomachenko are totally different fighters with completely different styles. Lomachenko may be a bit better overall, but Gonzalez is more of a pure puncher with power. I know Gonzalez has a dangerous left hook. But I'm totally prepared for that and everything else.

"In my fight with Lomachenko I was flat. A lot of things went wrong in camp before that fight. I allowed my conditioning coach at that time to change up all sorts of little things with me, and they wound up working against me.

"For this camp, we went back to basics with the same people I've always had. It was a great camp. You know, if it ain't broke, don't fix it and that's the philosophy all of us have again.

"I never dreamed growing up of being a world champion. My goal was to become a U.S. Olympian and win a gold medal. When I didn't, I felt I let so many people down. It was then I started dreaming of becoming a world champion.

"I get another chance on Saturday. I'm ready for it."

JERMELL CHARLO, Undefeated Super Welterweight Contender

"It's been an awesome camp, we enjoyed it. It's been an awesome six or seven weeks. One thing you can never forget is -- being a Charlo, being a lion -- we stay on our game for weeks. Always training, always in shape.

"We know who is around us in the division, and which fighters to pay attention to. We know how far up we are. Vanes is a great fighter - I grew up with him a little bit. We trained with him back in '08. His father is great. His father knows my father. We made it to a level where we both carried ourselves to the top. Carried ourselves to rank No. 1, No. 2, No. 3 ... and when you're in that position you fight the best.

"Of course, I'm not going out without a fight. I know neither is Vanes. You guys are going to get a fight Saturday night. As simple as this -- I come to roar, I come to take over, I come to show guys that you can't figure us out.

"There's so many different things that have been said ... 'you're basic,' 'you're a boy vs. a man.' Impossible. I wouldn't be here if I was a boy. So, Saturday you all will see. I'm going to work.

"There are several weaknesses that I plan on exploiting. He's got 35 wins but you have to look at who he fought. I would argue some of those guys don't have the resume of the guys I have fought.

"I've fought tougher fighters than Vanes, stronger guys. A lot of people avoid Charlie Ota because it's a rugged fight, but I'll take those fights. You have to get in there and adjust, which is something I do.

"Vanes has a good right hand that you have to watch out for. There are certain punches that we have to throw to neutralize it.

"This can open up bigger doors for fights with top guys at 154 and even some other guys we can make catch-weight fights with. I consider myself and my brother (Jermall) both top five fighters in the division."

VANES MARTIROSYAN, World-Ranked 154-pound Contender

"I've been here before. I love the lights.

"To all the fighters, I wish them the best. We're ready to go. There's not much to say right now. I do all the talking in the ring. I'll let my fists do the talking.

"We're 100 percent ready. I want to thank my trainers Roma, Coach D, my brother, my father. We're ready to go. On Saturday I guarantee a victory by knockout. I promise that.

"It's been a great two month camp, but we're always ready. I'm always doing something athletic even if I don't have a fight.

"Jermell is a good fighter, a good boxer. I would say he's basic and I really do believe that. You can't change a fighter overnight -- that takes time. We'll see what he brings to the table and be ready for anything.

"I've been in situations before where I knew even bigger fights were ahead of me and I got kind of used to the lights. I know what to do now and I'm ready. After this fight there are bigger things to come but to get to those bigger things you have to focus on this task.

"I don't look at myself as the B-side, I think he is. I've been in this situation before and I've fought a lot of big names. Maybe there's hype around him that makes him the A-side but it is all hype. I've been in there with guys who have a lot of experience so I'll be ready."

NACHO BERISTRAN, Gonzalez' Hall Of Fame Trainer

"I expect a very difficult fight against southpaw who is very fast. Gary Russell is a great fighter, I like him.

"Jhonny knows what he has to do. He has to throw punches, maintain constant pressure and cut off the ring. That's the way to help overcome Russell's speed.

"Since beating Mares, Jhonny has definitely become stronger and more confident and more ambitious. It's not about money, however, he just wants to prove to all the people that he is a good champion.

"Jhonny was always dedicated but now he is even more dedicated. We expect a victory by a big margin on points, but if the knockout comes, it comes."

GARY RUSSELL SR., Russell's Trainer/Father

"Gary's speed is going to be the difference. Speed kills.

"After the camp we've had, we expect Gary to come out and do what he knows how to do. They talk a lot about Gonzalez' punching power, but Gary can whack too, along with his overall hand- and foot-speed and overall ability.

"We went back to our old routine in training and I can tell you Gary feels a whole lot better now. He's primed for a big effort on Saturday. We all are."

RON RIZZO, Vice President of DiBella Entertainment

"Seems to be that this fight has been lost a little been in the shuffle recently. I'm not sure why. We have a lot of big things happening within the boxing industry -- just as the University of Kentucky is dominating with their undefeated season, there's a lot of other great matchups that are involved in boxing, and this is one of them.

"This is one I'm really excited about, and all the matchmakers I've been talking to are excited as well.

"I think this is a bout that's really going to stand out. I don't want people to miss it. This is a really good fight. There's also another good fight with Charlo vs. Martirosyan as well.

"I really feel the main event is an unbelievable fight that just got lost in the shuffle of big fights that are happening on network television. For me, all the matchmakers that I'm talking to... it's just one of those perfect kind of style bouts that are very intriguing. Of course Jhonny Gonzalez always makes for exciting bouts. Gary Russell is another guy who wants that title. He's ready to take it this time."

JAIME QUINTANA, Promociones Del Pueblo

"On behalf of Promociones Del Pueblo who represents Jhonny Gonzalez, the World Champion, we would like to let you know that we are happy to be here in Las Vegas defending the title.

"Jhonny Gonzalez has put up pretty good fights before - you all know. You have followed the steps in his career. We appreciate that. Thanks to the media, it's them that makes a great fighter a great champion."

BILLY CONN, Vice President of Entertainment and Special Events for The Pearl Theater at Palms Casino Resort

"On behalf of everyone here at the Palms Casino and our 2,000 employees, we appreciate you taking the time out of your busy day to cover this great event.

"We're excited to work again with SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING and DiBella Entertainment. Our crew at The Pearl has been working feverishly to make this intimate venue for everybody.

"You'll really enjoy seeing fights here. Tickets are still available here at the Pearl Box Office, Ticketmaster, on our website, etc. Tickets start at \$25. We look forward to hosting everybody here."

BOB BENNETT, Executive Director of Nevada State Athletic Commission

"I feel privileged for the Nevada State Athletic Commission to go ahead and regulate this great Championship fight. We want to thank DiBella Entertainment and Goossen Promotions for bringing this fight to the fight capital of the world and to SHOWTIME for broadcasting the fight. Last but not least, and most importantly, I want to thank the fighters. Without the fighters, none of us would be here."

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"**Gonzalez vs. Russell Jr.**", a 12-round world championship bout for Gonzalez's WBC Featherweight World Title, is promoted by **DiBella Entertainment**. In the co-feature, Jermell Charlo takes on Vanes Martirosyan in super welterweight action. The event will take place at The Pearl Theater at Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas and will air on SHOWTIME (10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT). The telecast will also be available in Spanish via secondary audio programming (SAP).

For more information, visit www.sports.sho.com, follow on Twitter at @SHOSports, @jhonnygbox, @mrgaryrusselljr, @TwinCharlo, @LouDiBella and @PearlAtPalms, follow the conversation using #GonzalezRussell, become a fan on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SHOBoxing or visit the SHOWTIME Boxing Blog at <http://theboxingblog.sho.com>.

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