

RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV vs. JOHN MOLINA JR., DEMETRIUS ANDRADE vs. WILLIE NELSON MEDIA CONFERENCE CALL HIGHLIGHTS

NEW YORK (June 2, 2016) – Ruslan “The Siberian Rocky” Provodnikov and John “The Gladiator” Molina Jr., along with Demetrius “Boo Boo” Andrade and Willie “The Great” Nelson, hosted an International Media Conference Call on Tuesday in advance of their highly anticipated battles as part of a SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING® tripleheader live on SHOWTIME® (9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT) from the Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona, N.Y.

Also taking part was Arthur Pelullo, President of Banner Promotions, and SHOWTIME Sports Executive Vice President and General Manager Stephen Espinoza.

Provodnikov (25-4, 18 KOs), a former WBO Junior Welterweight World Champion, and former world title challenger Molina (28-6, 23 KOs), of West Covina, Calif., will face each other in the 12-round main event. In the co-feature, undefeated former 154-pound world champion and 2008 U.S. Olympian Demetrius Andrade (22-0, 15 KOs), of Providence, R.I., will face Willie Nelson (25-2-1, 15 KOs) of Cleveland, Ohio, in a 12-round WBC Super Welterweight Title Eliminator.

Opening the SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING tripleheader is a battle for the vacant WBC Lightweight World Championship between No. 1 ranked Dejan Zlatikanin (17-0, 10 KOs), of the Southeastern European country of Montenegro, against WBC No. 5 ranked contender Franklin Mamani (21-2-1, 12 KOs) of La Paz, Bolivia.

Also on June 11, former world title challengers, Willie Monroe

Jr, (19-2-0, 6 KOs), and John Thompson, (17-2-0, 6 KOs,) will meet in a 10-round middleweight bout in the main event on SHOWTIME EXTREME® (7 p.m. ET/PT). In the SHOWTIME BOXING on SHO EXTREME® opener, heavyweight Andrey Fedosov (28-3, 23 KOs) takes on Mario Heredia (11-1, 9 KOs, 1-2 in WSB) in a 10-round heavyweight bout.

Tickets for the live event, which is promoted by Banner Promotions, Inc., are priced at \$85, \$60, \$45 and \$35 and are on sale now. Tickets can be purchased in person at the Turning Stone Box Office, by calling 877.833.SHOW, or online at Ticketmaster (www.ticketmaster.com).

Below is what the boxers said Tuesday on the conference call:

RUSLAN "THE SIBERIAN ROCKY" PROVODNIKOV

"I will try to not disappoint anyone and try to bring my best on June 11. I don't like to make any predictions. Boxing is very unpredictable; anything can happen on June 11. We've got a little bit to wait until fight night and for me it's just important to win the fight.

"I am very thankful for everyone who has made this fight happen. I am pleased with the opponent that I have because John Molina is a tough fighter. It's going to be a tough fight and I am looking for it to be a battle. So everybody be ready because on June 11 it will be a great fight."

JOHN "THE GLADIATOR" MOLINA JR.

(On how he feels fighting someone who is going to force the fight like himself)

"For me, in a perfect world, I would have a guy right there to exchange with me but Ruslan and his team have been around the game a long time. They know that I'm a puncher. I anticipate Ruslan to do what he does best, which is sit there and fight but I also anticipate him also utilizing his boxing ability given his amateur pedigree and his experience in the pro game. We're prepared for any Ruslan whether he tries to get up and

box or whether he sits there and bangs. We know he's a strong fighter. We know he's a strong puncher and we're prepared for that. Ruslan is going to be Ruslan and he's going to sit down and fight with me."

(On how he mentally prepares for fights)

"I have no other way. You look at my fights and the outcome, we have that fighter spirit in us. If we're being cordial, it's because we're professional. It's what we do for a living. If we take it outside of the ring that's very ignorant and not very mature. Believe me, I understand and know, and Ruslan understands and knows, that come June 11 all of the kindness goes out the window. After the fight we could be best of friends. But during the fight, I always use the example that he's trying to take something away from my family. So, it's very serious business inside that ring. Outside the ring, I don't want to waste energy or negative feelings toward anybody. This is what I do for a living. I have a competitive spirit, I don't even like to lose in checkers.

"I have had a very successful career in boxing and I'm looking forward to making an even better one come June 11. Every fight is serious, and remember, I've been playing this game since I was 24 years old and I only had 22 amateur fights so essentially my amateur career was in the pro game. Whether the fights I've had are a loss or a win, I've always gained experience and I have become a better fighter because of it. I'm just getting warmed up and the fight on June 11 is going to catapult me in the right direction."

DEMETRIUS "BOO BOO" ANDRADE

"The champ is in. The champ is in. I feel good. I'm grateful. I want to thank SHOWTIME for giving me the opportunity to showcase my skill and talent on this June 11 card, especially with the Hall of Fame going on. It is a big main event between Provodnikov and John Molina; two guys that are going to back up and give some good entertainment. In my eyes, Willie Nelson and Demetrius Andrade is the number one 154 fight that you

don't want to miss leading up to fighting for a title shot for the WBC against a Charlo brother (Jermell)."

(On how it felt to be inactive for so long)

"I've been staying busy, staying focused knowing that there's a bigger picture at the end of the day. All great legends and all Hall of Fame fighters have their story lines. My time is coming around. The tables are turning and people are going to have to step up and fight each other in one way or another. Sometimes, where you are in life is more conducive than your bank account. So, I'm not upset, or mad or frustrated with a thing that is going on and how everything played out.

"At this point, there is a lesson in everything that you go through in life and I learned my lesson through that point in time. Me trying to be frustrated and take it out on people, no, I took it out in the ring."

(Thoughts on Willie Nelson)

"I've seen him in the amateur program. I've seen him fight tough guys that are top guys today. I know he's bringing that experience. He's fought previous fighters that I've fought. I know I'm going up against a giant but I consider myself a giant as well and it's going to be a great matchup, a great fight for the 154 (division). I feel that it is one of the best fights in the 154 division that has ever been made.

"Not looking past Willie Nelson but me, my character, my hard work and my ethics, I'm looking to be the best and fight the best out there. I want to put out there and say congratulations to the Charlo twins on making history for being twin brothers to win (titles). But I'm going to make history by taking both of those titles and beating both of them.

(On what it was like to be stripped of a title)

"A belt doesn't identify me. That doesn't change anything about me, my fight style, who I am or anything like that.

Nowadays you don't have to have a title to be king of the ring but this is an opportunity for me to get back in the likes of fighting with the WBC. Fighting on the SHOWTIME June 11 card is going to be good movement for me. As far as boxing, the days are coming back where the champ is fighting the best."

WILLIE "THE GREAT" NELSON

"This is Willie Nelson, one of the top contenders for the 154-pound division. I'm excited for this fight. I think that both of us feel like this fight right here is going to be the shot that both of us have been looking for. I feel like this is my time right now. With me and Boo Boo's past history, unfortunately we have to come to this fight. We're pretty cool as friends but it's our time so we have to get in there and show the world what we're made of."

(On the reasoning behind the lengthy layoff)

"One of the reasons was because of the death of Steve Smith but also because it is hard getting fights. Nobody wants to fight a 6-foot, 4-inch junior middleweight that's actually coming to fight and that has decent pop. Besides that, look at my career. My career has been nothing but fights and layoffs. I've been pro since I was 19 years old and I only have 27 pro fights. That's just been my career: fights and layoffs I guess."

"Regardless of who I fight and where I'm fighting, I'm going to give it my all, always. It doesn't matter what place, what promoter, network or venue. I just perform to the best of my ability and look forward to doing what I do."

STEPHEN ESPINOZA, Executive Vice President and General Manager, SHOWTIME Sports

(On taking a fighter like Ruslan and what it is about him that attracted SHOWTIME)

"One thing that has characterized Ruslan throughout his career is that he is a fan favorite and that is consistent regardless of what the scorecards are at the end of the fight. As a

network executive what we're looking for is entertaining programming, and fights that people want to see, fights that people talk about, and that is consistently what Ruslan has delivered throughout his career. He is one of those types of fighters who, like John [Molina Jr.] as well, that even if they have a handful of losses on their record, it really doesn't matter because they are as entertaining and enjoyable to watch as anyone in the sport.

"We try to have a variety of fights; some with really skilled guys, some guys who are really big punchers, a variety of weight classes, a variety of different types of fighters. This is one where it's not about titles, not about anything but two guys who fight really hard and who give it their all. [It's about two guys] meeting in the ring to figure out who's the better boxer on that night.

"This is one way to add a different type of variety to the sport. Once we had the fight at the top of the card we tried to be consistent for the whole card down. If you look at guys like Demetrius and Willie, Dejan and even down to Willie Monroe Jr. and John Thompson, I think that characterizes this as what should be and all-action night."

(On Demetrius and Willie)

"I give all the credit to Demetrius and Willie for this fight. For Willie on stepping up to this challenge. We have one of the most avoided guys in the division in Demetrius, who's taking such a tough fight after a relatively long layoff and period of inactivity. It just shows what kind of guys these are and how they are anxious to step up to the next level of their careers."

ARTHUR PELULLO, President of Banner Promotions

"One thing led to another where we felt that there were more opportunities on SHOWTIME with all of the different fighters...There's more of an opportunity for Ruslan Provodnikov to show his skills and we were able to go down this road.

“John Molina is the toughest fight right now. This is the fight he has to get by but there is a real opportunity, whether he wins or loses. Both guys have a real opportunity on SHOWTIME because of the pool of talent there.”

Turning Stone Resort Casino is no stranger to hosting high caliber nationally televised boxing events. Last year, Turning Stone hosted the epic battle between Provodnikov and Matthysee, selected over arenas in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Miami. When Provodnikov returns to Turning Stone on June 11th, it will mark Turning Stone’s 18th nationally-televised boxing event, cementing the resort as a mecca for knockout fights. Located in Upstate New York, Turning Stone is an award-winning destination resort, offering world-class amenities including four hotels, 21 restaurants and dining options, two luxurious spas, five beautiful golf courses, and several bars, cocktail lounges and nightlife venues.

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