

Showtime Championship Boxing TV report

Showtime Championship Boxing Recap July 11, 2009

BankAtlantic Center-Sunrise, Florida 1. WBC Lightweight (135 pounds) 12-Round Title Elimination Match: Antonio DeMarco (21-1-1, 15 KO's, 134.5 pounds) vs. Anges Adjaho (25-1, 14 KO's, 135 pounds) This match will make the winner the mandatory contender to Edwin Valero's 135-pound belt. DeMarco is designed to win this match. Valero is not medically cleared to box in the United States outside of Texas, but can box in Mexico. DeMarco is a resident of Tijuana, Mexico. If DeMarco wins here it would be an easy call to match DeMarco against Valero in the main event of a Latin Fury pay-per-view from Tijuana. DeMarco's last match was a technical knockout win at 3:00 of round 9 over Almazbek "Kid Diamond" Raiymkulov at The Pond (Honda Center) in Anaheim, California on February 7, 2009. It was a very close and bloody match that ended when Diamond said he could not continue after round 9 due to a broken nose. The doctor had ruled Diamond fit to continue. However, Diamond said he did not want anymore of DeMarco, who had been reckless with his head throughout the match. DeMarco was going to win the match had it gone the distance as he was comfortably ahead on 2 of the official scorecards by the same score of 88-83, but DeMarco was trailing on the third scorecard, 86-85. In that match, DeMarco appeared very green and years away from contending for a title. DeMarco showed a lot of potential, but his punching accuracy against a very hittable target in Diamond was poor. A full recap of that match can be found here: <http://www.number1contender.net/the-latest/2009/7/5/recap-of-antonio-demarco-vs-kid-diamond.html> DeMarco is unranked by The Ring magazine and the number 12 ranked boxer in the world at 135 pounds by boxrec.com. Adjaho's amateur boxing career is a sad story. He was Benin's only qualifier to 2000 Sydney Summer Olympiad. Unfortunately, Benin is so poor that they could not afford to send him to the Olympics. Making the story even more heart-breaking is the fact that Adjaho's father was the coach of the national team. Had Adjaho been able to go to the Olympics, he would have traveled there to be coached by his father, the person who taught him the sport. Adjaho began boxing in the United States in 2006. Adjaho's first 20 professional matches were in Africa. Adjaho was undefeated in Africa, which in reality is not that impressive. Of Adjaho's opponents in Africa, 14 had zero professional wins on their record when they faced Adjaho. Three more of Adjaho's opponents in Africa had only 1 win prior to facing Adjaho. In addition, another of the opponents Adjaho defeated in Africa had only 2 wins on his record prior to facing Adjaho. That accounts for 18 of Adjaho's 20 opponents in Africa. Adjaho's last match was an 8-round unanimous decision over Fernando Angulo on February 14, 2009 at the BankAtlantic Center. Adjaho weighed in for that match at 142.5 pounds, the heaviest recorded weight of his career. Adjaho is unranked by The Ring and ranked by boxrec.com as the number 20 boxer in the world at 140 pounds. At 23-years old, DeMarco is 6 years younger than the 29-year-old Adjaho. Both boxers officially stand 5' 9" tall, but Adjaho appears slightly taller. Adjaho has the reach advantage with a 71.5" wingspan, compared to the 71" wingspan of Adjaho. Neither boxers' unofficial weight approaching match time is available. However, Adjaho should be heavier in the ring. Adjaho came in .5 pounds over the weight limit on his first attempt to make weight in a pair of underwear, but after doing the full monty came in at the weight limit. DeMarco is naturally right-handed, but will box out of the southpaw stance. Adjaho will box out of the orthodox stance. The unified rules of boxing are in effect for this event. All of the judges keeping official score of this match from ringside are from Florida. The referee is Tellis Assemenios, who is not very good. The crowd has begun to vociferously boo this match 45 seconds in, as no punches have been landed or even thrown with the intent of being landed. Adjaho easily wins a boring round 1, 10-9. Adjaho wins round 2, because DeMarco did nothing in the round, 10-9. DeMarco appears to have much more power and speed than Adjaho, but no desire to punch. The crowd has been steadily booing this match, but that lessened late in round 2. That is probably because most fans have decided to treat this as a Great Khali match and are going to the bathroom and hitting the concession stands. The pace of the match picked up in round 3, relatively. It went from being a Great Khali paced match to a Kane paced match. Adjaho easily wins round 3 and it now appears he actually is the superior boxer, 10-9. In the corner after round 3, DeMarco's trainer was imploring his charge to do more. The boxer responded to the instructions with Carlito level enthusiasm. DeMarco was able to land a few good power punches to take round 4, 10-9, but after 4 rounds Adjaho leads on my scorecard, 39-37. Gus Johnson, who is doing play-by-play of this event for Showtime, is in his first year doing boxing play-by-play for Showtime. Through the first half of the year Johnson has had problems with being overly enthusiastic and loud during broadcasts. For this match Johnson is appropriately reserved. That means for this match Johnson's great deep voice has him sounding like the overnight host on a smooth jazz radio station who is trying not to wake up the listeners, and this match has all the entertainment of a Kenny G set. Round 5 is close, but Adjaho wins it with a good last minute, 10-9. Ironically, as the commentators are telling the story of how Adjaho how difficulty making weight a graphic advertising Gina Carano vs. Cris Cyborg appears on the screen for the first time in the broadcast. Those graphics are normally shown between rounds. Johnson then helpfully makes reference to Carano having to step behind a towel to make weight at the final EliteXC show Florida. Al Bernstein, who is doing color commentary of this event, then points out that Cyborg has also had problems making weight. They then plug the August 15 show. There was a graphic for Affliction earlier in the show, but finally Strikeforce was promoted better on a Showtime event than Affliction. With 13 seconds to go in round 6, a hurt Adjaho goes stumbling back so that the ropes are the only thing keeping him standing. However, Adjaho went into the ropes, because of a slip and the action continues without a pause. Then with 8 seconds to go still in round 6, DeMarco puts himself on the canvas with a lunging left hand. The referee correctly rules it a slip and the action is almost immediately resumed. DeMarco hurts Adjaho to win round 6 solidly, 10-9, but after 6 rounds Adjaho still leads on my scorecard, 58-56. The members of press row keeping unofficial score of this match for Showtime all have Adjaho ahead after 6 rounds: 58-56, 58-57, 58-56. Adjaho wins round 7, while going backwards, 10-9. Adjaho had DeMarco hurt in the early part of round 8, but gassed. That allowed DeMarco to hurt Adjaho and win a good round 8, 10-9, but Adjaho still leads on my scorecard, 77-75. Adjaho is very tired and his hands have dropped substantially. This is allowing DeMarco to land

powerful combinations in most rounds that seem bound to score a knockout. Showtime's unofficial press row scoring has Adjaho ahead on all of the scorecards after 8 rounds: 78-74, 78-75, 78-74. All of Showtime's unofficial scorekeepers at press row scored rounds 7 and 8 for Adjaho, 10-9. With 12 seconds to go in round 9, Adjaho is hit with a hard left hand and takes a knee with 10 seconds to go in the round. Adjaho delayed taking the knee and DeMarco trying to press his advantage landed a grazing left hand to the back of Adjaho's head as he went to the mat. Adjaho complained to the referee and then lay down on the mat. The native of Benin wants out of this match. Adjaho turned face down on the mat and appeared to begin to cry. The referee reached the count of 8 and called an end to the match. DeMarco is going to win by knockout, which is the correct call. Once the referee called a stop to the contest, Adjaho stood up like nothing was wrong and asked why the referee stopped the match. This is clearly posturing. Adjaho wanted out, but does not want people to think he wanted the referee to stop the match. On replay it appears the punch Adjaho was selling landed before his knee hit the mat and only landed on the back of his head, because he moved. The punch was thrown legally, Adjaho made the punch land in an illegal area. That is by definition not a foul. Adjaho quit and is now out to make everyone look bad to cover the fact that he quit. That is pathetic and disrespectful to the sport. Adjaho stayed down as he heard the referee count and until he heard the referee say that the match is over in his ear. Then he immediately stood up and to complain and act bewildered the match had been stopped. The official outcome courtesy of the always "Classy" Jimmy Lennon, Jr. is that at: 2:59 of round 9 the winner by way of knockout, Antonio DeMarco. The win moves DeMarco to 22-1-1 with now 16 wins coming by way of knockout. For the record, the judges scored round 9 and had the match a draw: 86-84 (Adjaho), 86-84 (DeMarco), 85-85. Assemenios said after the match that he did not see Adjaho's knee touching when the boxer was hit with the punch he complained about. Therefore, the referee had no choice but to count out Adjaho. The much maligned Assemenios did an excellent job in this situation and a great job in this match. DeMarco said in his post-match interview that his promoter, Gary Shaw, would decide what he does next. Shaw helpfully jumped in at that point and said DeMarco is immediately going after the title. That means DeMarco will face Valero next.

Adjaho told Showtime's Jim Gray in the ring after the match that he was unconscious on the ground and does not remember anything until he was up arguing with the referee. Strangely, Adjaho clearly remembers being hit behind the head and complaining to the referee, but the next 10-seconds are a complete blank. Adjaho said he was winning and wanted to continue. That sounds better than he was really tired and quit. Adjaho said he wants a rematch. In reality, he does not want a rematch and there will never be a rematch. DeMarco was unimpressive in this win. His offense was inconsistent and sloppy. DeMarco defense was poor. He showed difficulty with the power of Adjaho who does not hit hard. DeMarco appears set to be knocked out in round 1 by the very powerful Valero. That will probably happen on a Latin Fury PPV in October. Adjaho was embarrassing in this match. His conditioning was poor. Adjaho showed a limited ability to take a punch. He demonstrated very little punching power. Finally, the terrible way he got out of this match makes him unmarketable. Had Adjaho simply taken a knee and been counted out that would have been one thing. Instead he got himself counted out and then made a spectacle. The only reason Adjaho was on television was because the WBC mandated he face DeMarco. As a Don King promoted boxer, and with King running fewer shows, Adjaho's poor behavior may have made that his first and last televised match. Between matches they did a very hard sell for the Carano vs. Cyborg show that included a great video package. Then as an after thought Nate Campbell wearing a matching black suit jacket and fedora style hat is going to be interviewed about his August 1 match against Timothy Bradley on Showtime. Campbell then proceeded to say nothing interesting in his interview and show why it was included in this segment as an afterthought. That does not detract from the greatness of his hat. Now Showtime is airing a pre-taped interview with Don King talking about Michael Jackson, whom this event is dedicated to. There is more on that in the news and notes section. Gray then tells a story of his interactions with Jackson. This transitions to Bernstein talking about the tragic deaths of Arturo Gatti and Alexis Arguello. Based on the advanced notice there is a video package on Arguello. There is also more on both boxers in the news and notes section. Before the main event is brought out there is going to be a moment of silence and 10-bell salute for Arguello, Gatti and Jackson. It is depressing when there are so many deaths that there has to be a group 10-bell salute.

2. IBF Bantamweight (118 pounds) 12-Round Championship Match: Joseph Agbeko (26-1, 22 KO's, 116.5 pounds) (c) vs. Vic Darchinyan (32-1-1, 26 KO's, 117.5 pounds) Agbeko won this title in a huge upset of Luis Perez on September 29, 2007 at the Arco Arena in Sacramento, California. Agbeko entered the match as Perez' poorly regarded mandatory challenger. The match was carried on Showtime as a way to spotlight Perez in what was supposed to be a spectacular win. Instead Showtime got a star making performance from Agbeko. Agbeko ended up winning the match at 3:00 of round 7 when the doctor ruled Perez was unfit to continue in the corner after round 7. A full recap of that match can be found here:

<http://www.number1contender.net/the-latest/2008/12/14/recap-of-joseph-agbeko-vs-luis-perez.html> Agbeko is making the second defense of his title. Today is a big day in Ghana. President Obama is in Ghana visiting Ghana's President John Atta Mills. This is considered a historic event. Yet, President Mills took time out of his day to call Agbeko. President Mills told the boxer that the entire country would be watching and cheering for him. (The chance of President Obama calling any boxer on a day he is hosting a foreign head of state is about zero.) Agbeko's last match was an entertaining and controversial 12-round majority decision over William Gonzalez on December 11, 2008 at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey. The match was a bloody and exciting brawl from the beginning as the boxers traded power punches and fouls. In round 1, Agbeko was hit with a ferocious low blow and Gonzalez was cut from an unintentional clash of heads. In round 4, Gonzalez was cut this time badly above his left eye from an unintentional clash of heads. Gonzalez threw a combination after the bell sounded to end round 6 that included a low blow which had Agbeko staggering back to his corner. At the start of round 9, Gonzalez had 3 different cuts on his face that had all been opened by head clashes. Shockingly, no points were deducted in this match. In the end, Agbeko won the decision by landing the harder power punches in the first half of the match and having better head movement in the second half of the match. A full recap of the match can be found here: <http://www.number1contender.net/the-latest/2009/7/6/recap-of->

[joseph-agbeko-vs-william-gonzalez.html](#) Agbeko is The Ring's number 6 contender to their vacant championship at 118 pounds. Darchinyan had a strong amateur boxing career that peaked when he represented his native Armenia in the 112-pound division at 2000 Sydney Summer Olympics. The challenger moved to Sydney, Australia after the Olympics and has become very popular there. Darchinyan talks a ton of trash that makes him popular to his fans and the ultimate heel. (Ironically, Darchinyan's trash talking is far more inflammatory than anything Lesnar got heat for at UFC 100.) That is partially the reason this match is being televised live on pay-per-view in Australia over UFC 100. The native Armenian had been considered the only rival of England's David Haye for the title of best trash talker in boxing. The key difference between Haye and Darchinyan is that Darchinyan backs up his words with his fists. Darchinyan has recently bragged about his streak of sending popular Mexican boxers to the hospital. One boxer, Victor Burgos, was in a coma for a few months following a match with Darchinyan on March 3, 2007. Burgos has since recovered and is going to live a relatively normal life, but these comments have made Darchinyan reviled in Southern California where he has been delivering his knockout performances. Tonight Darchinyan has promised to make Joseph King Kong Agbeko look like Tarzan's pet chimp Cheetah. The full recap of Darchinyan-Burgos can be found here: <http://www.number1contender.net/the-latest/2008/8/5/preview-of-vic-darchinyan-vs-dimitri-kirilov.html> Darchinyan's last match was a technical knockout victory at 3:00 of round 11 over Jorge Arce in the main event of the show that featured DeMarco vs. Diamond. Arce is a beloved Mexican boxer. He has appeared on Mexico's version of the reality shows Big Brother and Dancing with the Stars. Arce has adopted a cowboy gimmick, wearing a cowboy hat and sucking on a lollipop to further endear himself to his fans. Against a true babyface, Darchinyan played the part of true pro-wrestling heel. ESPN.com compared Darchinyan to the Iron Sheik before the match. Darchinyan promised to not deliver an early knockout. Instead, Darchinyan said he was going to hurt Arce early in the match. Then Darchinyan said he was going to allow Arce to recover. Finally, late in the match Darchinyan said he would knockout Arce. That way Darchinyan could inflict the maximum damage on Arce. Darchinyan then proceeded to do exactly that. The Olympian cut Arce under the right eye with a hard left hand in round 1. In round 2, some significant swelling began to form under the left eye of Arce. It too was caused by Darchinyan landing hard left hands to the Arce's face. Arce was circling the wrong way into the southpaw's powerful left hand. This led to Arce having the worst start to a match in his professional career. Then as promised, Arce rallied in rounds 3 and 4. Arce found some success landing left hooks. (Darchinyan has traditionally been very susceptible to left hooks. Nonito Donaire won The Ring's Knockout of the Year for 2007 by landing a counter left hook on Darchinyan that he patterned after the hooks thrown by the legendary Alexis Arguello.) However, at the end of round 4 Arce was cut above his left eye and there was significant swelling around both eyes. Darchinyan dominated all of the remaining rounds. Finally, the doctor stopped the match after round 11, because there were cuts and swelling around both of Arce's eyes. It was unsafe for Arce to continue and the correct call. A complete recap of the match can be found here: <http://www.number1contender.net/the-latest/2009/7/7/ Recap-of-vic-darchinyan-vs-jorge-arce.html> Darchinyan is The Ring's number 1 contender to their vacant championship at 115 pounds and ranked by The Ring as the number 8 boxer in the world, pound-for-pound. At 29-years old, Agbeko is 4 years younger than the 33-year-old Darchinyan. Both boxers stand 5' 5.5" tall. Agbeko has the reach advantage with a 65.5" wingspan, compared to the 64.5" wingspan of Darchinyan. There are no unofficial weights for either boxer approaching match time available. However, the IBF requires boxers to weigh-in on the day of the match within 10 pounds of the official weight limit. When the boxers were weighed in this morning, Agbeko weighed 121 pounds, while Darchinyan weighed 127.7 pounds. That means the historically smaller Darchinyan should have a huge weight advantage in the ring. Agbeko will box out of the orthodox stance and Darchinyan will box out of the southpaw stance. All of the judges keeping official score of this match from ringside are from Florida. The referee is Tommy Kimmons. In an interesting contrast before the match begins, Darchinyan says he is dedicating this match to Arguello. Agbeko is entering the ring with a sparkling white glove over his left glove as a tribute to Jackson. Agbeko does an excellent job counter-punching to win round 1, 10-9. With a little over 2:00 to go in round 2, Darchinyan has been cut over his left eye. The cut is in a bad spot on Darchinyan's left eyelid. It could drip blood into his eye and impair his vision for the entire match. Agbeko landed some hard power punches to take a close round 2, 10-9. With 2:36 to go in round 3, Agbeko goes to the canvas, but it is correctly ruled a slip. Agbeko got his feet crossed up with Darchinyan's and that caused him to go down to the mat. This match is not featuring good technical boxing from either competitor. The action is resumed with 2:31 to go in the round. Agbeko wins round 3 in dominating fashion by landing numerous straight right hands, 10-9. With 2:03 to go in round 4, Darchinyan grabs Agbeko behind the head and pushes him to the mat. It is correctly ruled a slip and the action is resumed with 1:57 to go in round 4. However, Darchinyan has already been warned several times for grabbing behind the head and may be in danger of losing a point if he keeps committing that infraction. With 45 seconds to go in round 4, there is some swelling developing under the left eye of Darchinyan. The swelling is from repeated Agbeko right hands. Agbeko lands more straight right hands to win round 4, 10-9, and leads on my scorecard after 4 rounds, 40-36. Darchinyan is already starting to look tired and dropping his hands. With a little less than 1:00 to go in round 5, there is blood coming out of the nose and mouth of Darchinyan. On the bright side, the cut above Darchinyan's left eye has not been bleeding for a few rounds. Agbeko lands hard punches with both hands to win round 5, 10-9. The champion lands more straight right hands to win round 6, 10-9, and leads on my scorecard after 6 rounds, 60-54. In round 6, Darchinyan began to look finished, mentally. Agbeko saw the same thing and made the throat slash gesture at Darchinyan after the bell to end round 6. After 6 rounds, Showtime's unofficial scorekeepers from press row have Agbeko winning the match via majority decision: 57-57, 59-56, 58-56. Several seconds after round 7 should have ended according to Showtime's on-screen clock, a cupping right hook from Darchinyan pulls Agbeko to the ground. The referee is going to rule that a knockdown, which is a bad call. Agbeko went down because Darchinyan finished off the punch by pulling down on the back of the head of an off balance Agbeko's head. The crowd is booing, because they did not think this was a knockdown and Darchinyan did not even seem to think this was a knockdown. Agbeko is rightfully outraged at this call as he receives

the 8-count. After administering the count and ruling the unhurt Agbeko fit to continue, the referee turned to the timekeeper and asked if the round was over. The referee has been around long enough to know what 3 minutes feels like and this is way past 3 minutes. The timekeeper said no and the action is going to resume. The timekeeper rang the bell to end the round after 4 minutes. Even if the knockdown call was correct, Agbeko went down after 3 minutes had passed. The knockdown ruling means Darchinyan wins round 7, 10-8. Agbeko was going to easily win round 7, therefore some judges may only score it for Darchinyan, 10-9. Round 7 is why Florida is not well regarded in boxing circles. With 23 seconds to go in round 8, Agbeko takes a right hook low. Timeout is called with 18 seconds to go in the round for the champion to recover. The action is paused for less than 1 minute before Agbeko is ready to resume boxing. The boxers trade punches well after the bell to end round 8. Agbeko wins round 8, 10-9. Round 9 is Darchinyan's best round of the match and he wins it, 10-9, but after 9 rounds Agbeko leads on my scorecard, 87-83. After 9 rounds the unofficial press row scoring has Agbeko winning by majority decision: 86-85, 86-85, 85-85. With around 1:45 to go in round 10, blood begins to stream from above the right eye of Darchinyan. With that much blood flowing it is doubtful Darchinyan has any vision out of his right eye. The referee is ruling that the cut was caused by an unintentional clash of heads, which would send the match to the scorecards if it had to be stopped prematurely. With 1:29 to go still in round 10, Darchinyan grabs a side headlock and throws Agbeko down to the mat while at the same time landing a punch on the trapped boxer. The referee correctly rules it a slip and restarts the action with 1:17 to go in the round. It appeared Darchinyan was boxing almost completely blind for the latter half of round 10. The swelling around Darchinyan's left eye appears to be significantly limiting his site out of that eye, whether the cut above that eye is bleeding or not. Darchinyan's inability to see allows Agbeko to win round 10, 10-9. The doctor should seriously think about stopping this match in the corner. The doctor examines Darchinyan after round 10 and is going to allow the match to continue. Out of frustration Darchinyan pushes Agbeko backwards to the mat with 2:24 to go in round 11. The referee correctly rules it a slip and admonishes Darchinyan. The action resumes with 2:14 to go in the round. Agbeko wins a sloppy round 11, 10-9. With 59 seconds to go in round 12, Agbeko falls to the canvas as Darchinyan shrugs the champion off in an attempted clinch. The referee correctly rules it a slip and restarts the action with 56 seconds to go in the match. Agbeko landed more straight right hands to win round 12, 10-9, and the match on my scorecard, 117-110. Before the decision is read Agbeko is shown celebrating in the ring, and going to hug his promoter, King. King greets Agbeko by telling him that this was "a crooked referee" and the "worst I have ever seen". Tonight King has been great. King has been promoting boxing for over 40 years and that last statement is impossible. Kimmons is not great, but not nearly the worst referee on this telecast. There is a reason only 1 promoter in history has been immortalized on *The Simpsons*, and it is hyperbole like that (and great hair). The official decision courtesy of the "Classy" Jimmy Lennon, Jr. is that the judges have scored the match: 116-111, 114-113, 114-113, all for the winner by unanimous decision and still IBF Bantamweight Champion of the World, Joseph King Kong Agbeko. The win moves Agbeko to 27-1 with 22 wins coming by way of knockout. Agbeko said nothing of note in his post-match interview. Darchinyan was uncharacteristically humble in his post-match interview. He said that he did not follow the game plan and was not careful of head clashes. He paid for those mistakes in the ring and it allowed the judges to score the match for Agbeko. Darchinyan admitted he lost his composure in the ring and boxed a bad match. However, Darchinyan did finish in character by saying that Agbeko is not better than him, just better today. Agbeko was very good in this. His offense looked sloppy for most of the match. However, that can be largely attributed to Darchinyan's unorthodox style. Agbeko's defense was outstanding in this match. His ability to dodge punches was at a completely different level than in his last match. Following this win, *The Ring* elevated Agbeko 2 spots in their rankings to make him the number 4 contender at 118 pounds. The most obvious next match for Agbeko is to try and get a rematch with Wladimir Sidorenko to avenge his only loss. Sidorenko is ranked directly ahead of Agbeko in *The Ring's* 118 pound rankings. However, Agbeko may have to go to Germany to face Sidorenko where many people felt Agbeko was robbed of the decision in the first match. Darchinyan does not belong at 118 pounds. He is a boxer that relies on his overwhelming power to win matches. At 118 pounds, Darchinyan does not have overwhelming power. Darchinyan was mentally taken out of this match early for a variety of reasons, among them was probably his inability to hurt Agbeko. The Olympian did not throw combinations and as he said completely abandoned his game-plan. Darchinyan has to decide on making a mandatory defense of one of his 115-pound titles in the next few days. He will probably take the mandatory defense and re-evaluate his career after that. Following this loss, Darchinyan was dropped out of *The Ring's* pound-for-pound rankings. (This has allowed Paul Williams, who frankly should have been on the list a long time ago, to enter the rankings at number 10.) The first match on this card was painfully boring at times. The main event was very sloppy. That makes this event an easy skip.

News and Notes: Hall of Fame boxer Alexis Arguello committed suicide on July 1 at 57-years old. Arguello was the mayor of the capital of Nicaragua, Managua, at the time he fatally shot himself in the chest. In 1999 a panel of boxing experts assembled by the Associated Press voted Arguello the greatest 130-pound boxer of the twentieth century. Arguello was so beloved in Nicaragua, that though not a competitor, he carried the Nicaraguan flag at the opening ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics. Arguello's suicide has some similarities to notable pro-wrestling suicides. The Hall of Famer completely retired in 1994 with a record of 82-8 with 65 wins coming by way of knockout. Arguello had boxed more than 500 professional rounds in which he had taken a tremendous amount of damage to the head in a career that began in 1968. In addition, Arguello had abused alcohol and cocaine amongst other substances for decades. This could have caused his brain to degenerate in the way that contributed to the tragic suicide of many famous pro-wrestlers. Unfortunately, there is no Sports Legacy Institute in Nicaragua to analyze the brain of Arguello. In even more tragic news, legendary boxer Arturo Gatti was found murdered in his hotel room in Brazil on Saturday. The 37-year-old Gatti was supposed to be in Brazil celebrating a second honeymoon with his 23-year-old wife, Amanda Rodrigues Gatti, and their 10-month-old son. The couple's child was unharmed and is currently with the sister of Gatti's widow. Gatti's widow is currently in jail on suspicion of murdering the boxer. Reportedly the couple had a loud drunken argument late Friday night. They then returned to their hotel

apartment where Gatti's wife strangled him to death with her purse strap while he was passed out drunk. Police became suspicious of Gatti's widow when she gave contradictory statements on Saturday morning as to how she spent at least 4 hours in the apartment with the corpse of her husband and did not notice anything was wrong. Police are also now beginning to suspect the murder was premeditated. They suspect that Gatti's wife worked to get the boxer heavily intoxicated so he would not be able to defend himself that night. Initial reports indicated there were no knife or gun wounds on Gatti's body, but police are now saying there was a knife wound on the back of Gatti's head. It was caused by a small steak knife that was found near the body, in the area of the bloody purse strap. However, police have not yet said if the wound occurred before or after the boxer was dead. Gatti's widow is seeking to be released from custody claiming innocence. She says the boxer either committed suicide or was killed by a mysterious third person. This story is not holding up to superficial inspection. The manner in which Gatti died rules out suicide. Also, the apartment had electronic locks which shows who comes into and out of the hotel room. The records show no one was in the apartment within hours of when Gatti was killed except her and the infant, and the police are ruling out the infant as a suspect. Gatti's brawling style made him one of the biggest draws in the northeast. He was one-half of The Ring's Fight of the Year 4 times (1997, 1998, 2002, 2003). As much as Bruno Sammartino is associated with Madison Square Garden in New York City, New York, Gatti is associated with Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Gatti holds most of the gate records at Boardwalk Hall including the record for most consecutive sellouts. Gatti's career ended when he lost by technical knockout to Alfonso Gomez in a match he was designed to win on July 14, 2007 at Boardwalk Hall. After years of taking tremendous abuse in the ring, former New Jersey State Athletic Commissioner Larry Hazzard rushed into the ring to stop the beating, trying insure Gatti lived a long and healthy life. That was Gatti's ninth straight match at Boardwalk Hall and the building was on hold for him to main event a PPV there against Julio Cesar Chavez, Jr. on November 11 had he defeated Gomez. A full recap of that match with more about Gatti then can fit in this section can be found here: <http://www.number1contender.net/the-latest/2009/7/12/recap-of-the-late-arturo-gatti-vs-alfonso-gomez.html> ESPN has already paid tribute to Gatti by running a Gatti marathon on ESPN Classic on Sunday. HBO is going to replay the epic Gatti-Micky Ward trilogy on Friday and Saturday. Gatti-Ward I was The Ring Fight of the Year for 2002 and Gatti-Ward III was The Ring Fight of the Year for 2003. In addition, the trilogy will be available on HBO On Demand from July 20 to August 16. They are tragic, but strongly recommended viewing. It is going to be a few more weeks for the Manny Pacquiao-Miguel Cotto match to be finalized. The delay is because Bob Arum, who is promoting the match, is going on a 2 week vacation to Europe. The sides have now agreed that Pacquiao will receive a guaranteed \$12 million for the match and the majority of the PPV revenue. The sides have also agreed for the match will to be held on November 14 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Nevada. It will be at either 144 or 145 pounds. Both sides have said either weight is acceptable. Arum has already started putting together an undercard that should include 130-pound title holder Humberto Soto and 154-pound prospect Vanes Martirosyan. Floyd Mayweather, Jr. is probably returning to boxing, because he misses the sport. However, Mayweather is probably returning to competition against the boxer ranked number 2 in the world, pound-for-pound, Juan Manuel Marquez because he needs a big payday. The Associated Press has come out with a new article itemizing Mayweather's debts. According to the AP, Mayweather owes \$6.17 million to the IRS, \$193,000 in taxes to the state of New Jersey, \$9,400 to 3 homeowners associations, \$3,900 a contractor who programmed some electronics at his house and \$320.10 to his garbage collector. Mayweather's manager, Leonard Ellerbe, disputes the numbers. However, it seems clear that Mayweather needs money. The fact that some of these bills not being paid are clearly a result of poor management should cause Ellerbe to be defensive. Mayweather frequently has enough cash on him to pay everything itemized in that list, but the \$6.17 million IRS bill. In fairness, the Associated Press article is not the most well researched and a prime example of the "Big Lie" theory. It cites Mayweather himself as saying the boxer made \$8 million in 2008. The article then goes on to say how Mayweather reportedly got paid \$20 million for WrestleMania in 2008. An author that writes that a boxer got paid \$20 million dollars for one event in April 2008, but only made \$8 million for the year's math needs to be somewhat questioned. Eddie Chambers defeated Alexander Dimitrenko by majority decision on July 4 in Hamburg, Germany to become a mandatory contender to Wladimir Klitschko. The win establishes Chambers as the best heavyweight contender from the United States. Chambers is now The Ring's number 3 contender at heavyweight to their champion, Klitschko. In stark contrast to the highly touted Cris Arreola, Chambers came into this match in great shape weighing in at 208 pounds. Chambers was officially 223 pounds in March when he dominated Samuel Peter. The American plans to box 1 more time this year before getting his shot. Chambers will then wait for his shot at Klitschko which should happen in March or April of 2010 at the earliest. Chambers has only 1 loss on his record and that is to Klitschko's other mandatory contender, Alexander Povetkin. On ESPN2's Friday Night Fights it was officially announced that Povetkin is relocating from Russia to the United States to begin training full time with Teddy Atlas in the next 10 days. (There are special visas for athletes, actors and other people of special talent to allow for quick moves like this.) Povetkin is The Ring's number 2 contender at heavyweight and the plans are for him to have a tune-up match in the United States in September. Then hopefully face Klitschko in December. By all accounts Povetkin is still very green and may be receiving this title shot too early, but in a weak heavyweight division it is simply his turn. Vitali Klitschko has almost finalized an agreement to defend his heavyweight title on September 12 at a soccer stadium in Germany live on HBO. That night he will face David Haye. There was a similar agreement in place for Haye to face Wladimir Klitschko on June 20, but Haye pulled out with a back injury. It is unclear how Haye is going to be paid for this match. Haye was going to receive all of his money for facing Wladimir from Setanta Sports, which no longer exists. However it seems clear that Vitali is a far worse match-up for Haye than Wladimir, who was expected to score a quick knockout of the Englishman. Showtime is putting together a massive 6-person 168-pound tournament. It is going to be a more than year long round-robin tournament culminating in the June of 2011. The tournament features Mikkel Kessler, Carl Froch, Arthur Abraham, Jermain Taylor, Andre Ward and Andre Dirrell. The boxers have a combined record of 161-4-1 with 117 wins coming by way of knockout. This is not

the single elimination tournament people have become accustomed to with the Olympics and the like. This is more similar to the Japanese pro-wrestling tournaments. It will use a points system, with 2 points for a win, 1 point for a draw and 3 points being awarded for a knockout. There are no ties. Like in Japanese pro-wrestling tournaments, the first tie-breaker is based on head-to-head victories. The second tie-breaker is most knockouts. For example, a boxer who had 4 points via a knockout and a draw would advance over a boxer with 2 decision victories, putting a strong emphasis on finishing an opponent. The third tie-breaker is total number of judges points in favor of each boxer throughout the tournament. That means they will add up the totals of all 9 scorecards and whoever has the most points wins. This means boxers cannot take off rounds if they are hoping to win this tie-breaker. If there is still a tie after all of that, the fourth tie-breaker is a coin toss. (As an aside, heads has a slight statistical advantage with a regular United States quarter.) The tournament will begin on October 10 with Froch defending his 168-pound title against Dirrell in England. That same night, Abraham will face Taylor in Germany. Abraham has already vacated his 160-pound title to participate in this tournament. On November 7, Kessler will come to Oakland, California to face Ward. However, Kessler is first going to make a mandatory defense of his 168-pound belt against Gusmyl Perdomo, which could delay the match with Ward. Round 2 of the tournament will begin with Abraham facing Dirrell on January 30, 2010 somewhere in the United States. The next match should be outstanding, Froch vs. Kessler in March of 2010 in either Denmark or England, with Denmark the favorite as Kessler is due a home date. Then in April or May it will be in the United States, Ward vs. Taylor. Round 3 starts with Ward vs. Dirrell likely from Oakland in July or August of 2010. Around that same time would be from either England or Germany, Froch vs. Abraham. Then in September would be the final match of the prelims be Kessler vs. Taylor. The bracketing suggests a semifinal of Kessler, Froch, Abraham and Ward. The semifinals would be in January of 2011. The seeding would be determined on points with the higher seed getting the match in their hometown. The tie-breakers for seeding uses the above method. If there is a draw in the semi-finals, the tournament will once again revert to the method listed above to decide who advances. There are no sudden victory rounds like on The Ultimate Fighter. The finals will be held in the United States in May or June of 2011. This contest has been so elaborately planned that there are contingency plans for no contests, positive drug tests and boxers failing to make weight. All of the boxers have agreed that once the tournament begins they will no longer make mandatory title defenses if it interferes with the tournament. That means when this tournament is over likely the only belt the winner will hold will be The Ring Championship as all of the participants will probably have to vacate their sanctioned titles. The boxers have decided to settle for being the undisputed champion at 168 pounds, on the top 10 pound-for pound list and the clear heir in the division to Joe Calzaghe. In other news from the 168-pound division. Golden Boy Promotions won the purse bid to televise the rematch between Bute and Librado Andrade for Bute's 168-pound belt. In the first match, Bute was knocked out, but kept the title due to horrific hometown refereeing from Marlon B. Wright. (King needs to watch Wright to see the actual worst referee in boxing.) Golden Boy Promotions has agreed to give Bute's promoter, InterBox, 75% of the guaranteed revenue. However, Golden Boy Promotions is going to hold the match in Mexico and market it there. They expect to still be able to get money to broadcasting the match in Bute's adopted home country of Canada and the United States. In addition, they believe they can generate revenue from broadcasting the match in Bute's native Romania and Andrade's native Mexico. There is no exact location, date or broadcast partners announced for the match, yet. In an untelevised undercard match on this show, Steve Cunningham defeated Wayne Brathwaite via unanimous decision. This sets up a rematch with Tomasz Adamek, who knocked out Bobby Gunn on Saturday, from their great match in December for The Ring Championship at 200 pounds. Cunningham got knocked down 3 times by Adamek in December, but dominated most of the rest of the match to lose a controversial split decision. The winner of Adamek-Cunningham II would likely face Bernard Hopkins sometime in the spring of 2010. Here is an oversight of what should have been in the last HBO Boxing After Dark event summary where Victor Ortiz was knocked out. On March 7, HBO ran a BAD event promoted by Golden Boy Promotions to showcase their top 3 prospects. The opening match saw Golden Boy Promotions' Robert Guerrero receive near universal criticism for saying he could not continue due to a cut he suffered in round 2 of that match. The second match featured Ortiz who lost in a troubling fashion on June 27. The main event featured Golden Boy Promotions' James Kirkland. Kirkland is currently sitting in a Texas prison and looks to be staying there for a very long time. There may not have been another event in history that so jinxed the featured boxers on the show. The boxing community has continued to pay tribute to the legendary Michael Jackson with this event. This event is being promoted by Don King who was a friend of Jackson's and the entire Jackson family. King promoted Jackson's 1984 Victory Tour that featured the final Jackson 5 reunion tour and got Jackson his huge endorsement deal with Pepsi. During the breaks, the screens in the arena are going to show very rare behind the scenes films and home videos of King with Jackson from King's private tape library. The canvas for this event has a picture of Michael Jackson painted in the center and several other words paying tribute to Jackson painted on it. Also, a special recognition needs to go to several SmackDown! Superstars for their classy and understated tributes to Jackson. As always, R. Truth wore his single white glove. JTG wore a single bedazzled white glove on his left-hand to the ring and threw it to the crowd before he wrestled. Finally, Maria wore a white glove with the fingers cut out on her left-hand for the entire time she was in front of the crowd. Of course in true WWE fashion all 3 were made to look bad in some way at the next taping. The next recap will be of the August 1 Showtime Championship Boxing event featuring Timothy Bradley defending his 140-pound title against Nate Campbell and Junior Witter versus Devon Alexander for a vacant 140-pound belt.

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