



**TOP 140-POUND CONTENDERS SUBRIEL MATIAS AND
JEREMIAS PONCE MEET FOR VACANT IBF WORLD TITLE
LIVE ON SHOWTIME® SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25
IN PREMIER BOXING CHAMPIONS EVENT**

**Minneapolis-Native Jamal James Returns To Battle
Argentina's Alberto Palmetta in Co-Main Event from The
Armory in Minneapolis**

**Super Lightweight Contender Elvis Rodriguez Takes On
Hard-Hitting Joseph Adorno in Telecast Opener**

Tickets on Sale Now!

MINNEAPOLIS – January 24, 2023 – Top super lightweight contenders will square off as popular knockout artist **Subriel Matias** meets undefeated Argentine **Jeremias Ponce** for the vacant IBF 140-pound World Championship to decide one of the kingpins of the red-hot super lightweight division on Saturday, February 25 live on SHOWTIME from The Armory in Minneapolis headlining a Premier Boxing Champions event.

The SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING® telecast begins at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT and features the return of Minneapolis-native **Jamal “Shango” James** in the 10-round welterweight co-main event as he battles 2016 Argentine Olympian **Alberto Palmetta**. Kicking off the telecast, exciting super lightweight contender **Elvis Rodriguez** duels the hard-hitting **Joseph “Blessed Hands” Adorno** in a 10-round attraction.

Tickets for the event, which is promoted by TGB Promotions and Warriors Boxing, are on sale now and can be purchased at the Armory at <http://ArmoryMN.com/> and through Ticketmaster.

“The 140-pound division is one of the hottest in boxing and a new champion will be crowned at the weight when Subriel Matias and Jeremias Ponce meet in an anticipated clash on Saturday, February 25,” said Tom Brown, President of TGB Promotions. “One of the sport’s most powerful punchers, Matias will have to be at his best to turn away the unbeaten and highly-motivated Ponce. In addition to a second 140-pound clash between Elvis Rodriguez and Joseph Adorno,

The Armory's fan-favorite Jamal James will step back into the ring, as he looks to begin another run to the title against Alberto Palmetta. This is a jam-packed lineup that fans in Minneapolis or watching on SHOWTIME will want to make sure they catch from start to finish."

The 30-year-old Matias (18-1, 18 KOs) has a seek-and-destroy style that is easy on the eyes and hard for his opponents. He has early and late KO power with all 18 of his victories coming via stoppages – his last six in the fifth round or later. The lone loss of his career came against Petros Ananyan via 10-round unanimous decision in 2020 and was later avenged. Matias, of Farjado, Puerto Rico, faced two unbeaten boxers after the loss, defeating Malik Hawkins and Batyrzhan Jukembayev by stoppage. In the rematch he stopped Ananyan by ninth-round TKO, methodically wearing his opponent down and exhausting him before dropping him and ending the action.

"I'm very grateful that there is now a date for this fight so that I can finally realize my dream and become world champion," said Matias. "I've been away from my family for 10 months in Mexico, just preparing and getting ready until the time came to step into the ring. Now that it's in my sight, there's nothing that is going to stand in my way."

Ponce (30-0, 20 KOs) will be making his U.S. boxing debut when he meets Matias in what has all the earmarks of an immovable-force-versus-unstoppable-object-type matchup. The 26-year-old Ponce of Buenos Aires, Argentina hopes to be included in the long lineage of legendary Argentine boxers who preceded him. He put himself in position to fight for the IBF title with a resounding 10th-round TKO victory over Lewis Ritson in June 2021. He has kept himself busy in anticipation of the title match and stopped Michel Marciano via second round KO in November 2021 before most recently earning a TKO victory over Achiko Odikadze in April of last year.

"I promise that I'm coming into this fight prepared to do whatever it takes to reach my dream and become a world champion," said Ponce. "In my mind, this is my fight, and that title is already mine. Anyone who's standing in my way is going to see why I'm undefeated and why I've earned this position that I'm in."

Minneapolis' James (27-2, 12 KOs) will return to the ring for the first time since dropping a 2021 slugfest to then unbeaten Radzhab Butaev, which snapped James' seven-fight winning streak. The 34-year-old returns to fight at The Armory for the fifth time in his career, having won four straight bouts there between April 2018 and July 2019. That run for James included triumphs over fellow contender Abel Ramos and former Champion Antonio DeMarco. James also owns victories over veteran contenders including Javier Molina and Wale Omotoso, with his only other blemish coming against former world champion Yordenis Ugas.

"Training is going well and I'm working hard as usual," said James. "I'm very excited to be getting back in the ring after such a long layoff, especially since it'll be in my hometown. I think Palmetta will do his best, but it won't be enough. I am determined to win and to let it be known that my name should be listed as one of the top five welterweights of this era."

A native of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Palmetta (18-1, 13 KOs) represented his home country at the 2016 Olympics before turning pro in November 2016. The 32-year-old has won his last 12 fights, with 11 coming by stoppage dating back to 2017. In addition to an impressive run that saw him knock out the previously unbeaten Erik Ortiz and veteran contenders Tre'Sean Wiggins and Saul Corral, Palmetta also defeated Yeis Solano by decision in October 2021 and most recently blasted out Thomas Mendez in three rounds last November.

"This is a great opportunity for me and I'm training hard in Las Vegas to take full advantage of everything that's in front of me," said Palmetta. "I've represented my country in the ring for years, including in the Olympics, and I'm going in there on February 25 to make everyone in Argentina proud. I know I'm going into James' hometown, but that's just going to motivate me even harder to have my hand raised."

Rodríguez (13-1-1, 12 KOs) has bounced back from his first career defeat, a majority decision loss to Kenneth Sims Jr., to knock out his last two opponents. His most recent fight came at The Armory, when he dispatched Juan Jose Velasco in the seventh round of their March 2022 clash on SHOWTIME. The 27-year-old burst onto the scene with knockout victories in 10 of his first 11 fights and totaled an impressive five wins in 2020. Originally from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Rodríguez now lives and trains in Los Angeles, Calif.

"I can't wait for February 25," said Rodriguez. "I've been in camp waiting and preparing for an opportunity like this to display my skills. Adorno is a very talented fighter, but he's in my way. Simple as that. I hope to get a title shot this year and in order to do that, I need to make a big statement in this fight."

Adorno (17-1-2, 14 KOs) enters this fight having won three-straight bouts, including a unanimous decision victory over previously unbeaten Hugo Alberto Roldan in September 2022 in the main event of *SHOBOX: The New Generation*[®]. His current winning streak comes after dropping a March 2022 decision against then-undefeated Michel Rivera on SHOWTIME, which followed an April 2021 draw against Jamaine Ortiz. The 23-year-old was born in Union City, N.J., and now resides in Allentown, Pa., and is trained by respected coach Raul "Chino" Rivas. Adorno turned pro in 2016 at the age of 17 after a standout amateur career where he amassed a 178-22 record and beat Shakur Stevenson twice. He has scored knockout victories in nine of his first 10 pro fights.

"I'm training hard and putting in the work to make this my crossover fight," said Adorno. "I'm the real A-side, the higher-ranked fighter and have more experience. My stablemate Kenny Sims dominated Rodriguez and I'm going to do the same. They took the wrong fight. He can have the A-side billing. Look at my credentials. I am the more skilled, more talented and more powerful fighter."

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