



**JHONNY GONZALEZ PUTS HIS TITLE ON THE LINE AGAINST  
GARY RUSSELL JR. ON SATURDAY, MARCH 28,  
FROM THE PEARL AT PALMS CASINO RESORT IN LAS VEGAS  
ON SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING® DOUBLEHEADER**

*Plus, Undefeated Rising Star Jermell Charlo Takes on Vanes Martirosyan  
in a Super Welterweight Showdown*

*Live on SHOWTIME® at 10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT*

**LAS VEGAS** (March 2, 2015) - A world-class doubleheader, featuring featherweight world champion **Jhonny Gonzalez** (57-8, 48 KOs) defending his 126-pound title against exciting young star **Gary Russell Jr.** (25-1, 14 KOs) in the main event on **SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING**, will take place at The Pearl at Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas, on Saturday, March 28, live on **SHOWTIME** (10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT).

In the co-feature, undefeated rising star **Jermell "Iron Man" Charlo** (25-0, 11 KOs) faces a tough test when he takes on the experienced former U.S. Olympian **Vanes Martirosyan** (35-1-1, 21 KOs) in an important super welterweight showdown.

Tickets for the live event are priced at \$200, \$100, \$75, \$50, and \$25, plus applicable fees are on sale today, Monday, March 2, at 12 p.m. PT. Tickets may be purchased by calling Ticketmaster at (800) 745-3000 or by clicking [HERE](#). Tickets are also available online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

"I'm very excited to be coming back to the United States. Every time I have fought on American soil, it has been career-changing for me," said Gonzalez. "In 2012, [Daniel] Ponce De Leon stopped me in Las Vegas and made me reconsider my whole strategy. I came back to the U.S. in 2013 and I stopped an undefeated champion, Abner Mares. Now I'm back and once again I'm facing a tough opponent. Russell is not an easy test, but I'm confident I'm going to surprise everybody once more. Nobody thought I had a chance in 2013 and I stripped Mares of his title. Food for thought."

"I'm blessed to be back on this stage, fighting once again for a world title," said Russell Jr. "I came up short at my first opportunity for the title and that has me more motivated than ever to get the job done on March 28. I will finally hold up my very own belt."

"I love fighting on SHOWTIME and I'm excited to put on a show for the fans in Las Vegas," said Charlo. "I have a tough opponent, people think I might not be ready, but on March 28, they're going to know that I'm taking over the sport."

"This is a great opportunity for me and I'm just thankful to get the chance to showcase my talents," said Martirosyan. "Charlo is a tough kid, but I've been around this sport longer and I'm going to show him some things he's never seen before. The fans better get ready for an awesome show."

"This edition of SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING is guaranteed to be action-packed," said Lou DiBella, President of DiBella Entertainment, promoter of the event. "The main event presents the classic boxer versus puncher matchup, with the slick, talented former Olympian Russell looking for redemption and the title against reigning, three-time world champion brawler Gonzalez. The co-feature between Charlo and Martirosyan is a highly competitive clash of styles. A big fight is in the future for the winner of this bout."

"March 28 should be a tremendous night of fights to kick off a stacked run of boxing on SHOWTIME and CBS," said Stephen Espinoza, Executive Vice President & General Manager, SHOWTIME Sports. "Both bouts on the SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING telecast have world title implications. The main events matches the one-punch knockout power of world champion Jhonny Gonzalez versus the speed of Gary Russell, who is one of the most skilled boxers in any division. And with Jermell Charlo vs. Vanes Martirosyan, we have a matchup of two top 154-pounder contenders, each on the verge of a world title opportunity."

"Boxing continues to be a major draw for Las Vegas," said Billy Conn, Vice President of Entertainment and Special Events for The Pearl at Palms Casino Resort. "The Pearl is one of the most intimate venues where you can catch those world class athletes in action."

One of the best Mexican fighters of this era, Mexico City's **Gonzalez** has held world championships at 118 and 126 pounds, defeating the likes of Hall-of-Famer Mark "Too Sharp" Johnson and former world champions Fernando Montiel, Irene Pacheco, and Hozumi Hasegawa, along the way. The 33-year-old Gonzalez' last loss came in 2012 to Daniel Ponce De Leon, but he has won his last five fights, including a shocking 2013 first-round knockout over defending beltholder Abner Mares resurrecting his career. He has defended the title twice in Mexico and now he returns to the U.S. in a very tough defense on March 28.

A supremely talented boxer, Capitol Heights, Maryland's **Russell Jr.** is looking to strike world championship gold in his second shot at a belt. The 2008 U.S. Olympian looks to wipe out the memory of his first opportunity, when he fell by 12-round majority decision to Vasyl Lomachenko. He was able to return to his winning ways in December 2014, when he dominated Christopher Martin on his way to a unanimous decision. Now Russell Jr. has his eyes set on Gonzalez' featherweight crown.

Younger-by-one-minute than his identical twin Jermall, **Charlo** is also a highly ranked young fighter looking to get one step closer to a world title shot. A tall fighter for his division, Charlo stepped up in class in 2014 and delivered three wide unanimous decision victories over Gabriel Rosado, Charlie Ota and Mario Lozano. On March 28, he takes on another tough challenge when he meets the experienced Martirosyan.

Born in Armenia, but fighting out of Glendale, Calif., **Martirosyan** represented the U.S. at the 2004 Olympics and has put together a stellar pro career since. He won his first 32 fights before fighting current world champion Erislandy Lara to a draw in 2012. He suffered a narrow defeat by split decision in his first world title shot against Demetrius Andrade but has rebounded with nice wins over Mario Lozano and Willie Nelson.

The event takes place at The Pearl at Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas and will air on SHOWTIME (10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT). In the co-main event, Jermell Charlo takes on Vanes Martirosyan in super welterweight action. The SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING telecast will also be available in Spanish via secondary audio programming (SAP).

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

#### **CONTACTS:**

Kelly Swanson/Lisa Milner, Swanson Communications: (202) 783-5500

Chris DeBlasio, Showtime Networks Inc.: (212) 708-1633

Matt Donovan, Showtime Networks Inc.: (212) 708-1663

Flo Jocou, Showtime Networks Inc.: (212) 708-7319

John Beyrooty/Jared Kaufer, BZA/Showtime: (562) 233-7477/(818) 621-1111

Kevin Rooney Jr., DiBella Entertainment: (212) 947-2577

Alissa Kelly, PR Plus/The Pearl: (702) 696-1999

Alex Acuna, Palms Casino Resort: (702) 942-7777

Credentials: [www.magnamedia.com](http://www.magnamedia.com)