

**Featherweight World Champion Gary Russell Jr. Battles  
Top Challenger Oscar Escandon Saturday, March 11  
From MGM National Harbor in Maryland**

**Plus! Undefeated Super Welterweight World Champion Jermell Charlo  
Defends Against Top Contender Charles Hatley**

**Tickets Now on Sale!**

**NATIONAL HARBOR, MD.** (February 16, 2017) - WBC Featherweight World Champion **Gary Russell Jr.** will make the second defense of his title when he faces top challenger **Oscar Escandon** Saturday, March 11 in the main event of boxing's first visit to the recently opened MGM National Harbor in Maryland. Russell Jr. (27-1, 16 KOs) and the WBC Interim Featherweight Champion Escandon (25-2, 17 KOs) will meet in one of boxing's most talented divisions that continues to deliver exciting action fight after fight.

Additionally, WBC Super Welterweight World Champion **Jermell Charlo** will defend his world title against No. 1-rated challenger **Charles Hatley**. Charlo (28-0, 13 KOs), whose twin brother Jermall holds the IBF Junior Middleweight Title, will face his mandatory challenger Hatley (26-1-1, 18 KOs) after winning the vacant world title with a sensational eighth-round knockout of John Jackson in May 2016.

"I'm a gladiator getting ready for a tough battle," said Russell Jr. "This is going to be a huge night for my family. We have a lot of firsts happening on March 11, including the first fight at MGM National Harbor. This will also be the first time as pros that I get to fight on the same card as both of my little brothers, (unbeaten bantamweight) Gary Antonio and (2016 U.S. Olympian) Gary Antuanne, plus my brother Gary Allan will work all of our corners. We're excited to get in the ring and show the fans what we're capable of doing in the ring."

"I had to wait a year for this opportunity to face Gary Russell Jr. and I'm going to take full advantage of it," said Escandon. "It's going to be a great fight and I know the fans are going to get their money's worth. He has been delaying this for a long time but now that it is here I am ready to knock him out."

"I'm once again ready to get in the ring and continue to build my legacy," said Charlo. "I've been training hard, I'm focused and I'm even hungrier now that I have my belt. Charles Hatley has never been in the ring with someone like me and I'm going to do what's necessary to get that win. My brother had an outstanding performance against Julian Williams and I want to compete with that. It's motivated me and I'm ready to get out there and show off my power and skills."

"I've been training for a long time for this fight and I can't wait to get in the ring," said Hatley. "I never stopped training since my last fight and I'm going to be ready to win that world title on March 11. Jermell is a good fighter, but he's got a big mouth. I know we're both training hard and going for the win, but I'm going to come out victorious."

Tickets for the live event, promoted by TGB Promotions, are priced at \$200, \$150, \$100 and \$50, and are now on sale. To purchase tickets go to [www.mgmnationalharbor.com](http://www.mgmnationalharbor.com). The main event is co-promoted by Sampson Boxing.

"We are thrilled to be promoting the first fight at the new MGM National Harbor," said Tom Brown, President of TGB Promotions. "Bringing such a competitive matchup as Gary Russell Jr. vs. Oscar Escandon to kick off their boxing events is not only a great night for us and our other partners, but the fans in the Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia region."

"This is a monumental moment for us as we welcome our friends at TGB Promotions, as well as sports fans throughout the DMV region, to our first championship boxing event at The Theater at MGM National Harbor," said Richard Sturm, President of Entertainment and Sports for MGM Resorts International. "We are excited about the opportunity to showcase our new resort and world-class entertainment venue to boxing fans worldwide."

A speedy and supremely talented boxer, Russell Jr., was impressive in his fourth-round stoppage of the battle-tested Jhonny Gonzalez that earned him the title in March 2015. The 2008 U.S. Olympian had scored important victories over Vyacheslav Gusev, Juan Ruiz and Miguel Tamayo before losing a majority decision to Vasyl Lomachenko for the WBO 126-pound title in June 2014. The southpaw, of Capitol Heights, Md., most recently scored a dominant second-round TKO victory over Patrick Hyland in his first title defense in April 2016.

Fighting out of Ibague, Colombia, Escandon turned pro in 2008 and was undefeated in his first 22 professional bouts. Escandon won an interim world title at super bantamweight in 2014 when he defeated Tyson Cave in his U.S. debut. He earned his shot at Russell Jr. last March when he survived an early knockdown to score a knockout victory over Robinson Castellanos in the seventh round of their showdown in Washington, D.C.

Younger by one minute than his brother Jermall, the Charlos became the first pair of twins to hold world championships in the same weight class when Jermell won his belt on May 21, 2016. The 26-year-old from Houston trains in Dallas and is unbeaten since turning pro in December 2007. Charlo took on a steady slew of contenders on his way to a world title including victories over Vanes Martirosyan, Gabriel Rosado and Joachim Alcine.

The first-time title challenger Hatley enters this fight on a nine-bout win streak after traveling to Australia to beat former two-time world champion Anthony Mundine by 11th round stoppage in 2015. The Dallas-native turned pro in 2008 after an impressive amateur career that saw him defeat Keith Thurman on his way to a U.S. National Amateur Championship. The 31-year-old won his first 14 fights and went his first 18 bouts without a defeat.

For more information follow on Twitter @MrGaryRussellJr, @TwinCharlo, @TGBPromotions, @MGMNatlHarbor and @Swanson\_Comm or become a fan on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/SHOBoxing](http://www.Facebook.com/SHOBoxing) and [www.Facebook.com/MGMNationalHarbor](http://www.Facebook.com/MGMNationalHarbor). The event is sponsored by Corona, La Cerveza Mas Fina.

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