



Carl Frampton, Leo Santa Cruz, Dejan Zlatikanin & Mikey Garcia Los Angeles Press Conferences Quotes & Photos

Plus! Quotes & Photos from the Frampton vs. Santa Cruz
Belfast Press Conference



(Photo Credit: Esther Lin/SHOWTIME)

**Featherweight World Championship Rematch Headlines
SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING Doubleheader
Saturday, January 28 from the MGM Grand Garden Arena
in Las Vegas**

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LOS ANGELES (December 1, 2016) - Featherweight world champion **Carl Frampton** and former three-division world champion **Leo Santa Cruz** went face-to-face in Los Angeles Thursday along with lightweight world champion **Dejan Zlatikanin** and undefeated former two-division world champion **Mikey Garcia** in advance of their respective showdowns Saturday, January 28 in a Premier Boxing Champions event at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas and live on SHOWTIME.

The SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING doubleheader begins at 10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT with Zlatikanin vs. Garcia. For Frampton and Santa Cruz, Thursday's event was the second press conference promoting their highly anticipated rematch as the featherweights spoke to media in Belfast, Northern Ireland on Tuesday at the Europa Hotel.

Tickets for the live event, which is promoted by Ringstar Sports in association with Cyclone Promotions and TGB Promotions, are priced at \$504, \$404, \$304, \$204, \$104 and \$54, and are on sale now. Tickets are available at www.AXS.com.

After the Belfast press conference, the fighters and their teams flew to the U.S. to meet with the media at an open to the public event at the outdoor plaza at the Los Angeles Central Public Library.

Here is what the participants had to say at the two events:

CARL FRAMPTON

From Los Angeles:

"This rematch with Leo Santa Cruz is going to be an amazing one. The first one was considered a 'Fight of the Year' and I don't think this can be any different. We're going to kick-off 2017 with a bang.

"Leo is an amazing fighter and I want to thank him for giving me the chance to fight for his title in July. I was more than happy to give him the rematch straight away. These are the types of fights I want to be involved in.

"I thought I won the first fight. I don't think it was controversial at all. I think I won the fight by three or four rounds. They were definitely close, competitive rounds, but I think I was doing more to win rounds and get the nod. This one is going to be more of the same.

"Las Vegas is obviously a bit closer to home for Leo and I'm sure he'll bring a lot of fans. But I'm bringing at least 4,000 from the UK. Right now I'm the most well-supported fighter in the UK. It's a great privilege for me.

"When I fight people, I feel like I improve the second time. I have a good boxing brain and I can adapt to different situations. The only person I've fought twice as a pro was Kiko Martinez and the second time I fought him I won comfortably. Because I learned from the first fight. I know everything about Leo. He fights the same way every single time.

"I think our styles just gel really well together. You can expect a great night with a really huge undercard from start to finish.

"I know his training may not have been as focused last time as it could have been because of his father. I expect a better Leo Santa Cruz. But in terms of how he fights, I think he'll fight the same way. It's a good way to fight and it's gotten him far. He usually wears people down, but I have serious punching power and that again could be the difference.

"If you want people to remember you in 20 or 30 years' time, you need to fight guys like Leo Santa Cruz. We've already been working very hard in the gym and we're going to do whatever it takes to make sure I remain the champion and bring the title back home to Ireland."

From Belfast:

"It's always good to be here in Belfast and see the people. It's good for them to see great fighters like Leo Santa Cruz in their hometown.

"This is going to be a dream come true. It won't all sink in until I'm out there and ready to perform. Las Vegas is the mecca of boxing. It's where all the big names go. I'm expecting a big support base from all over the UK and Ireland on January 28.

"I feel like no matter who I fight, I always get better the second time. I have a good boxing brain and I can adapt to my opponent's style and use it to my advantage. If you've seen me in sparring, if I have a dodgy performance, you know I will get better the second time.

"I know how Leo fights, and he knows how I fight. But I can adapt and make changes. I can be a bit more clever than I was last time. I got dragged into the fight more than I wanted to.

"Headlining in New York against a great fighter like Leo Santa Cruz was a dream come true. Now I have the opportunity to go to Las Vegas, where Leo has fought a few times. It'll be his first time in the main event there as well and I'm just excited to get out there and feel the buzz of fight week.

"I think this fight could be even better. I gave him his first loss and I'm sure he's going to come looking for his revenge. But I'm training very hard. I'm in good shape for this point in camp.

"There's no doubt that Leo went through a difficult time with his father's illness. I also know that Leo trained very hard anyway. He threw about a thousand punches last fight and was throwing all the way to the end. You can't throw much more than that so I don't think he's going to improve his work rate.

"I believe he'll come up with a different game plan but I genuinely believe that I'll be able to deal with anything he brings to the ring. It's not going to be an easy fight, but I'll do whatever it takes to win and I believe I will.

"Leo Santa Cruz is a tough fighter with a solid chin. But I believe that if I hit any featherweight, or super featherweight, with a clean shot, that I can knock them out. If I'm a little bit cleaner, then I could knock him out. But I'll be prepared to go a hard 12 rounds.

"I believe if I use my brain a little bit more in this one, and don't get dragged into his fight, that I can win it more convincingly. But there will be times in this fight where I'll just have to bite down and fight for my life.

"I'm prepared for anything. I'm ready to keep this title in Belfast and then I'm going to return here for a show in Belfast in the summer."

LEO SANTA CRUZ

From Los Angeles:

"Carl Frampton is a great fighter. He has the respect of the fans because he has proven that he's a great champion. I know it's going to be another very close and exciting fight.

"We both train really hard for our families and for the fans. We want to give you all a great show. I know that this rematch is going to be very tough.

"I learned from the first fight that every little mistake really matters. One or two could really cost you. I trained hard but without my dad he wasn't pressuring me like I'm used to. Those things come back to haunt you. It hurt, but it taught me that I have to leave it all in the ring and work every day for what I want.

"We're going to be mentally and physically ready. I'm getting more motivation from having him there. We'll be making some little changes and we're going to do a lot better.

"I'm motivated to get my belt back. I was a champion and now I'm a former champion. That makes me unhappy. We're going to train hard and do our best to become a champion again.

"We're going to go to the gym and train hard to make this fight even better than the first one."

From Belfast:

"This is a very nice city and when I knew there would be a rematch, I wanted to come to Belfast. This is the first time I've been to Europe.

"It was a very hard fight and right after it was over, the first thing that came to my head was a rematch.

"Las Vegas is a lot closer to my hometown and I feel very comfortable fighting there. Carl Frampton has a lot of fans though, and they're going to fly over to Vegas. I think it will be a pretty even crowd and I don't see it as an advantage for anyone.

"It was a pretty close fight the first time. When you're in the ring you're only worried about fighting. It could have gone either way. I thought being the champion, that it should have gone my way. But I won't take anything away from Frampton. We're looking to the future and beating him in the rematch.

"The fans here have made me feel very welcome since the first fight. I feel comfortable here. I'm excited to be here in Belfast with these great fans.

"I was disappointed but it was a very close fight the first time. He had the bigger crowd and the Irish people would scream for everything he did. It was a really good close fight though. I really think it could have gone either way.

"Carl Frampton is a great fighter and I knew it would be a tough fight. I didn't get to train for that fight like I was supposed to. My father was going through cancer treatment so I wasn't 100 percent in the training. I was thinking about my dad's health and he was only really there for the last three weeks of camp. We're going to have a great game plan and it's going to be another tough fight, but we're looking to get the victory.

"If you watched the first fight you know that it was a great fight. The second one is going to be even better. I took my first defeat. He's a great fighter, but I want to win this rematch. If I win the rematch, I'm fine bringing the third fight of the trilogy to Belfast."

DEJAN ZLATICANIN

"Everyone thinks that Garcia is a pound-for-pound star but I want to tell everyone that I'm going to win this fight.

"Everything in preparations has been going great. I'll be 100% ready on January 28. This is the fight of my life. I have to be ready and we're right on track.

"I always respected fighters like Julio Cesar Chavez Sr. or a fighter like Mike Tyson because whoever they were supposed to fight they fought. I'm the same way, an old school fighter who's willing to fight anybody.

"I came up the hard way, and sometimes I thought I might never get this opportunity. I've been in some really tough fights where people gave me no chance to win, but now I'm a world champion.

"To be the first world champion from Montenegro is historic. I think it's made me a national hero in the country and I'm honored. The people in my country love me and I love them back.

"When I beat Mikey Garcia that will make me an even bigger star. I think Mikey is a good puncher, and he has good timing, but I can hit him easily and I'm planning to knock him out."

"Mikey will have a big opponent in front of him. He needs to run around the ring because I'm going to come for him. You will see me defend my title and you will enjoy it."

MIKEY GARCIA

"I'm thankful to everyone who came out. I was down for over two years, but it seems like no one has forgotten about me. We're looking for big things. I want to pick up right where I left off.

"I'm really happy to have been given this opportunity to claim a world title in a third division. This is going to be an amazing fight. He's a hungry world champion. He's very dangerous. These are the kind of fights that I want. This is what I need to prove myself.

"This is only the beginning. This is going to be a huge year for me. I want to win multiple titles and maybe conquer multiple divisions this year.

"I haven't fought in Vegas since 2012 but I expect the fans to be out there supporting. This is a big stage and a night of great fights. This is a great opportunity to become a world champion in another weight class.

"I've known Leo Santa Cruz since the amateur days. We get to share the stage again on July 30 and I'm looking forward to another good shot. I can't ask for anything more.

"My brother and my dad watch more film than I do. I only like to watch a couple rounds of my opponent. So I've seen what Dejan has. During the fight I'll listen to my corner and make adjustments. He's a young, undefeated champion for a reason. I want him to be at his best because that will bring out my A-game.

"My body feels really good right now. I think this is going to be a great division for me. I don't think the weight will affect me in any way.

"This is going to be a great show. I'm going to give everything that the fans want to see. I'm sure my opponent will do the same. I want to take on the biggest challenges and I'm ready to make those fights happen. I want to give the fans the fights they want. The best of my career is yet to come."

BARRY MCGUIGAN, Frampton's Manager, Former World Champion & Hall of Famer

From Los Angeles:

"It's great to be here in Los Angeles for such a great occasion. Dejan, Mikey, Leo and Carl are all incredible fighters and it really is going to be a magnificent show.

"These are two amazing fighters. If they fought every day of the week, and twice on Sunday, every single fight would be close. I just think that Carl has the edge in innate boxing intelligence. He is more versatile and a naturally bigger guy than Leo. We have to get him into the best shape of his life.

"Carl is going to have to turn it up on fight night and we know that Leo will turn it up as well. He'll put the pressure on him. I believe it will be at least as good of a fight as last time.

"We're going to have a fabulous night on January 28 and I have to say it again, we will be winning."

From Belfast:

"You boxing fans here in Belfast are the best supporters in the world, we have no doubt about it, and we're going to go to Las Vegas to make sure we win again and win more convincingly."

RICHARD SCHAEFER, Chairman & CEO of Ringstar Sports

From Los Angeles:

"When you mix these two together, you know it has to be another 'Fight of the Year' candidate. These two guys could fight 10 times and every time it would be a 'Fight of the Year', and probably a very close decision. These are our modern day gladiators.

"These are exciting matchups where you really don't know who's going to win. This is what the fans like to see. These are closely matched fights, for the fans. That is exactly what you will see on January 28.

"Dejan vs. Mikey is the most significant matchup in the lightweight division. There is no question about it. It's an extremely dangerous fight. It's playing with fire for Mikey. I can pretty much assure you that this fight will end in a knockout. This is easily a main event on its own.

"I believe that Mikey Garcia is one of the best pound-for-pound fighters in the world. But to get there and to stay there, you have to face fighters like Dejan. This just shows what Mikey is made of.

From Belfast:

"I was fortunate to promote many of Ricky Hatton and Floyd Mayweather's fights, but whenever I am here, I can feel the passion that you fans here bring to the sport. You elevate these fighters to do better. At Barclays Center we saw you there cheering on your guy.

"Tickets are available as low as fifty dollars. I don't think that's a bad idea in January, to go from cold Ireland to warm Las Vegas. There are many reasons to go out there, but this fight is the biggest reason to go.

"It's a rematch of the 'Fight of the Year' and I'm very proud to be able to promote this fight together along with Barry McGuigan. I thank all of the fans here again for the passion you bring to the sport of boxing."

SHANE MCGUIGAN, Frampton's Trainer

From Los Angeles:

"These are two really good fighters. As Richard said, this would be a great fight 10 times out of 10. Leo had a lot of distractions in training camp with his father's health and I think he will be a better fight the second time.

"That was Carl Frampton's first time fighting at 126-pounds, so he had a lot of new experiences leading up to the last fight. They both learned in the first fight and I think they will both be able to give a little bit

more the second time. The fans will be the ones to enjoy the action.

"Training camp has been going great.

From Belfast:

"I don't know who was lucky enough to see the first fight between these two, but it was really a great one. Carl got dragged into Leo's fight at times, but with that came excitement.

"I think this fight we're going to win a lot more convincingly, cement the win and then move on. I'm extremely excited about it.

"To see how far Carl has come is phenomenal. I hope people will buy a ticket and come out to support. He needs that support and I hope to see you all out there."

ALEX VAYSFELD, Zlaticanin's Manager

"It was a very hard uphill road for Dejan to get where he was going. He had to fight a lot of different places and fight people that he wasn't supposed to beat, in other people's minds. But he won.

"Dejan knows how to be an underdog and he knows how to calm a favorite. I guarantee you that Dejan knows every aspect of Garcia's game. When he steps into that ring, you will all see something amazing.

"Mikey is going to bring his best, Dejan is going to bring his best and of the fans are going to be in for an amazing fight."

ROBERT GARCIA, Mikey's Brother & Trainer

"I consider Leo Santa Cruz a great fighter and a friend. Carl Frampton is another great fighter and it's fantastic to be part of a card with such a big main event.

"This was a very easy fight to make. Mikey said yes right away. He wanted to fight for a title and he got it. Mikey isn't going to hold back. He wants to keep moving up and challenging big names. He wants to be remembered as one of the best fighters in the world. Mikey wants to give the fans the best fights out there.

"I don't have any second thoughts about this fight because I believe in Mikey. We're preparing to become the lightweight champion of the world.

"Mikey is training hard. He's going to be ready on January 28 and prepared to give everybody a great fight."

STEPHEN ESPINOZA, Executive VP & General Manager, SHOWTIME Sports

"SHOWTIME has without question delivered the strongest lineup of any network in boxing. We are looking for the best fighters fighting the best. Top tier fighters against top tier fighters. This is what we have here today.

"Our main event has Carl Frampton, who for my money is the 2016 'Fighter of the Year.' He defeated two undefeated world champions to unify 122-pounds and pick up a title at 126-pounds. There is no fighter who has done what he has in 2016.

"Leo Santa Cruz is a three-division world champion. He's always entertaining. His Abner Mares was the 'Fight of the Year' in 2015 and his fight this year with Carl was my '2016 Fight of the Year.' I think his fight on January 28 will be another one.

"The co-main event is really worthy of being a main event of its own. For those of you who don't know Dejan Zlaticanin, he's a fighter that nobody wants to fight. He's one of the most avoided fighters in the lightweight division. He's a power puncher who's very aggressive. No one except Mikey Garcia. He's looking for a world title in a third division and he's no doubt a top 10 pound-for-pound fighter in the world. These guys were so anxious to fight that we put it on the card on January 28 and the fans get a real treat.

"We have four top tier fighters. This is the best in the sport, coming together on one card. As Richard suggested, the combined record of these fighters is 112 wins and 1 loss. These are four of the most skilled fighters in the sport. It's a special night. You shouldn't miss it."

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