



**Cuban Boxing Stars Take Center Stage On Saturday, March 2  
As Former World Champion Erislandy Lara Challenges  
Unbeaten Brian Castaño For His WBA Super Welterweight  
World Title While Top Heavyweight Contender Luis "King  
Kong" Ortiz Battles Christian Hammer In Co-Feature**

**Live on SHOWTIME® from Barclays Center in Brooklyn  
& Presented by Premier Boxing Champions**

**Plus! Hard-Hitting Super Featherweight Ricardo Núñez Clashes with  
Former World Title Challenger Edner Cherry in  
SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING® Opening Bout**

**Tickets on Sale!!**

**BROOKLYN** (January 17, 2019) - Former 154-pound world champion **Erislandy Lara** seeks to return to the championship ranks when the Cuban star challenges undefeated contender **Brian Castaño** for his WBA Super Welterweight World Championship on Saturday, March 2 live on SHOWTIME and presented by Premier Boxing Champions from Barclays Center in Brooklyn, the home of **BROOKLYN BOXING™**.

SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING coverage of the PBC event begins at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT and features another Cuban star in top heavyweight contender **Luis Ortiz** as he clashes with **Christian Hammer** in a 10-round co-featured bout. In the opening bout of the tripleheader, hard-hitting **Ricardo Núñez** takes on rugged veteran **Edner Cherry** in a 12-round super featherweight opener.

Tickets for the event, which is promoted by TGB Promotions in association with DiBella Entertainment, are on sale and can be purchased at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com), [barclayscenter.com](http://barclayscenter.com), or by calling 800-745-3000. Tickets can also be purchased at the American Express Box Office at Barclays Center beginning Saturday, January 19. Group discounts are available by calling 844-BKLYN-GP.

The super welterweight division remains one of the hottest divisions in boxing with unified champion Jarrett Hurd, newly crown champion Tony Harrison, former world champion Jermell Charlo, former title challenger Julian Williams and Lara all circling each other for supremacy in the weight class.

"This night of exciting action is headlined by two Cuban stars who will surely put on a display of the immense skill and determination that Cuban boxers are known for," said Tom Brown, President of TGB Promotions. "Erislandy Lara has long been one of the best, if not number one, in the 154-pound division and he will look to get right back into that class by taking the WBA title from a hard-hitting and undefeated Argentine in Brian Castaño. Luis Ortiz has another opportunity to show why he's one of the most-feared punchers in the heavyweight division and prove that he deserves a rematch for the title with Deontay Wilder. Christian Hammer has fought against the best at heavyweight and he isn't coming here to lie down for Ortiz. When you add the Ricardo Núñez vs. Edner Cherry fight that is sure to bring action, it adds up to another can't-miss night at Barclays Center and live on SHOWTIME."

"Erislandy Lara is one of the most talented junior middleweights in the world, and while Brian Castaño is not yet a household name, he was a world renowned amateur and is undefeated as a pro," said Lou DiBella, President of DiBella Entertainment. "This is a must-win fight for Lara and Castaño's chance to establish himself as one of boxing's rising stars. Luis Ortiz is a dangerous man. His 'King Kong' nickname is appropriate, as no one wants to fight the beast. You saw why in his spectacular challenge against Deontay Wilder. Tested world class contender Christian Hammer will attempt to derail 'King Kong' in his quest to secure another world title shot."

"Over the last few years SHOWTIME has spotlighted the progression of the super welterweight and heavyweight divisions as they have emerged as two of the hottest and deepest in the sport," said Stephen Espinoza, President of Sports and Event Programming, SHOWTIME. "On March 2, we will further that with a pair of the most dangerous and perhaps most avoided fighters in boxing in Erislandy Lara and Luis Ortiz. Both are in significant and difficult matchups. Brian Castaño is young, undefeated and although already the champion, looking to make a mark on the division with a signature win over Lara. Add in an all-action 130-pound bout and we have a dynamite three-fight card."

"I'm thrilled to welcome both Erislandy Lara and Luis Ortiz back to Barclays Center for what will be an exciting night for fight fans in Brooklyn," said Brett Yormark, CEO of BSE Global. "Both fighters have put up compelling performances in our ring, and will face tough competitors on March 2. I am also looking forward to BROOKLYN BOXING returning to SHOWTIME for the first time in 2019 for an evening of world class matchups."

Lara (25-3-2, 14 KOs) was the longest reigning 154-pound champion until he lost a split decision to Jarrett Hurd on April 7 in a unification bout on SHOWTIME. Now the 39-year-old Lara, who was born in Guantanamo, Cuba and lives in Houston, looks to grab a title and once again stake his claim as one of the division's best. He has one of the strongest resumes in the division, having fought Hurd and former 154-pound champions Canelo Alvarez and Austin Trout.

"I'm very excited to be back headlining SHOWTIME in another major fight," said Lara. "Brian Castaño is a young undefeated champion with a strong amateur pedigree. I look forward to being in the ring with him and putting on a great fight for the fans. I can't wait to being crowned world champion again. Everyone tune in March 2nd, you don't want to miss the whole card, it's going to be sensational."

The 29-year-old Castaño (15-0, 11 KOs) has worked his way up the ladder in one of the toughest divisions in boxing with raw power and toughness. Castaño, who is from Buenos Aires, fits well into the mold of the Argentine sluggers before him - such as former champions Carlos Monzon, Sergio Martinez and Marcos Maidana. He will battle Lara after wins against Michel Soro in 2017, where he captured the interim 154-pound, and Cedric Vitu in 2018, where he captured the belt he will defend on March 2.

"I'm thrilled to be facing Lara as he was a great champion and still one of the best fighters out there," said Castaño. "Obviously this is the most important fight of my career and I know it will be difficult because of his experience. I have my own experience however, and I'm willing to prove that I belong with the best in the division. I know he will get onto his bike and move around the ring, but I have the strength to knock him off."

'King Kong' returns to New York on March 2 as Ortiz (30-1, 26 KOs), a southpaw power puncher, enters the ring with two solid knockout victories under his belt since losing to WBC heavyweight champion Deontay Wilder at Barclays Center last March. The 39-year-old Ortiz, who is from Camaguey, Cuba and now lives in Miami, Florida, is still considered one of the top five heavyweights in the division. He most recently scored a knockout victory over Travis Kauffman on December 1.

"'King Kong' is coming back to Brooklyn!" said Ortiz. "I'm very excited to be back on SHOWTIME in a huge event at Barclays Center. Christian Hammer is a very good fighter and I will be prepared for the best he has to offer. Come March 2, I'm hammering my way past him and setting up a clash with the winner of Wilder-Fury II or Anthony Joshua. I can't wait till Brooklyn."

Hammer (24-5, 14 KOs) has dueled some of the top heavyweights in the sport, including Tyson Fury and Alexander Povetkin. The 31-year-old Hammer, who was born in Galati, Romania and lives in Hamburg, Germany, has put together two victories since he lost a unanimous decision to Povetkin in 2017. In his last fight he scored a KO victory over then-unbeaten Michael Wallisch on December 15.

"I've been in training since right after Christmas for this big opportunity," said Hammer. "I won my last fight by knockout, but I'm preparing for 12 hard rounds against Ortiz. A fight like this in New York is very special to me. This is the reason I became a boxer. The fans can look forward to a real heavyweight thriller on March 2."

The hard-hitting Panamanian Núñez (20-2, 18 KOs) will be fighting for the first time in the United States on March 2. The 25-year-old is on a nine-fight winning streak in which he has scored eight knockout victories. He most recently delivered a first-round knockout of previously unbeaten Elvis Torres in June.

Cherry (37-7-2, 19 KOs) has put together a three-fight win streak since losing to Jose Pedraza in a featherweight title match in 2015. The 36-year-old Cherry, who was born in Nassau, Bahamas and now lives in Wauchula, Florida, has defeated Dennis Galarza, Omar Douglas and Haskell Rhodes heading into March and has faced top fighters including Tim Bradley and Paulie Malignaggi throughout his career.

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