



**WBC FEATHERWEIGHT WORLD CHAMPION GARY RUSSELL JR. TO DEFEND TITLE AGAINST TOP CONTENDER MARK MAGSAYO LIVE ON SHOWTIME\* SATURDAY, JANUARY 22 IN PREMIER BOXING CHAMPIONS EVENT FROM BORGATA IN ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.**

**Super Lightweight Contenders Subriel Matías and Petros Ananyan Rematch in Co-Main Event**

**Hard-Hitting Featherweights Tugstsogt Nyambayar and Vic Pasillas Duel in Telecast Opener Beginning at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT**

**Tickets Are On Sale Now!**

**ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. - December 22, 2021** – WBC Featherweight World Champion **Gary Russell Jr.** will defend his world title and display his blistering hand speed against top contender and WBC mandatory challenger **Mark Magsayo** headlining action live on SHOWTIME Saturday, January 22 in a Premier Boxing Champions event from Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa in Atlantic City, N.J.

The SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING\* tripleheader begins at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT and features a 12-round rematch between super lightweight contenders **Subriel Matías** and **Petros Ananyan** in the co-main event, plus hard-hitting featherweights **Tugstsogt Nyambayar** and **Vic Pasillas** squaring-off in the 10-round telecast opener.

Tickets for the live event, which is promoted by TGB Promotions, are on sale now and can be purchased through [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com).

“Gary Russell Jr. has been a force in the featherweight division for years with his dazzling skills and will again defend his title against a hungry and powerful up-and-coming opponent when he duels Mark Magsayo live on SHOWTIME on Saturday, January 22,” said Tom Brown, President of TGB Promotions. “Magsayo earned this fight with an impressive 10<sup>th</sup>-round knockout of Julio Ceja in August and he will be looking to show that he’s the future of the 126-pound division, by knocking off the long-reigning featherweight king in Russell, who has proven worthy of his top spot with his five successful title defenses. Combined with two all-action undercard showdowns, this shapes up to be an electric night of boxing in Atlantic City.”

The Capitol Heights, Md., native Russell (31-1, 18 KOs) has held his WBC Featherweight Title since 2015 when he stopped multiple division champion Jhonny Gonzalez to emphatically capture the belt. The 33-year-old is part of one of boxing's premier fighting families as he is trained by his father Gary Sr., and stays sharp alongside his younger brothers, unbeaten super lightweight Gary Antuanne and undefeated bantamweight Gary Antonio. Russell owns victories over current featherweight titleholder Kiko Martinez via TKO in 2019 and a unanimous decision over former world champion Joseph Diaz Jr. in 2018. Most recently, Russell outpointed the previously unbeaten Tugstsogt Nyambayar on his way to his fifth title defense in February 2020.

"I'm ready and I've been waiting to display my talents and get back in the ring," said Russell. "My opponent is one of Manny Pacquiao's fighters, who is a legend in the sport and I'm pretty sure has a good eye for talent. I'm sure he signed Magsayo for a reason. I know that I'm facing a guy who's willing to put it all on the line, with everything to gain and nothing to lose."

The Filipino sensation Magsayo (23-0, 16 KOs) fights out of Pasig City, Metro Manila and most recently scored a career-best victory in August knocking out former champion Julio Ceja in the 10<sup>th</sup> round of a fight he trailed on the scorecards. The 26-year-old fights in the U.S. for the sixth time on January 22 as he steps into his first shot at championship gold. Magsayo is trained by Freddie Roach in Southern California and owns 12-round decision victories over Shoto Hayashi and Ramiro Robles, in addition to a sixth-round stoppage of former title challenger Chris Avalos.

"I am very grateful for this opportunity to fight on SHOWTIME for the WBC world title," said Magsayo. "This is the fight that I want and have been working hard to get for years. I am going to come to win and to make the most of this chance. There is a reason Gary is a champion, just like there is a reason I became the mandatory challenger. This is going to be a great fight for me to show the world what Filipinos are made of. I've had a long road to get to this position and I will be fighting in honor of everyone who helped me get here."

Matías (17-1, 17 KOs) will look to avenge his only career loss, which came by narrow decision to Ananyan in 2020, when he enters the ring on January 22. Fighting out of his native Fajardo, Puerto Rico, Matías has rebounded from the defeat to score back-to-back impressive victories on SHOWTIME. He stopped the previously unbeaten Malik Hawkins in October 2020 in the sixth round and forced the previously unbeaten Batyrzhan Jukembayev to quit after eight rounds in their May clash. Matías stopped his first 15 opponents inside of the distance and has still yet to go to a decision in a victory.

"Everyone who knows me knows how much I wanted this rematch," said Matías. "I'm very excited that I'm now getting that opportunity. That defeat slowed me down, but it was necessary for me to get to where I ultimately want to be. If I don't beat Ananyan in this rematch, then I don't deserve to be champion yet."

The 33-year-old, Ananyan (16-2-2, 7 KOs) made his U.S. debut in December 2019, losing a narrow majority decision against Kareem Martin after defeating Arkadi Harutyunyan in April 2019. Born in Abovyan, Armenia and training in Southern California, Ananyan was unbeaten in his first 15 fights after turning pro in 2015. Ananyan followed up his career-best triumph over Matías by defeating Daniel Gonzalez in October via decision to set up this rematch on January 22.

"I want to thank my team for getting me this opportunity to showcase my skills on national television and to prove that my victory over Subriel Matías last year was no fluke," said Ananyan. "Like our first fight, the rematch will be a barnburner. I am back training in the United States, getting great sparring in camp and I feel very confident. Come January 22, I will defeat Matias once again."

Nyambayar (12-2, 9 KOs) won a silver medal representing his native Mongolia in the 2012 Olympics and now lives in Southern California, where he's trained by John Pullman. The 29-year-old ascended the featherweight rankings after his extensive amateur career with victories over then unbeaten Harmonito Dela Torre and former interim champion Oscar Escandon. He earned his first world title shot when he defeated former champion Claudio Marrero in January 2019, before dropping his championship bout against Russell on SHOWTIME. Nyambayar returns to the featherweight division after challenging top 130-pounder Chris Colbert in a July contest he lost by decision.

"This is a great opportunity for me on January 22," said Nyambayar. "I am prepared and excited to get back into the ring. This is going to be a great show from top to bottom, and I'm looking to deliver another great fight for the fans. This is going to be a battle from the first bell and I am confident I will come out victorious."

Pasillas (16-1, 8 KOs), who hails from East Los Angeles, will return to action looking to bounce back from his first career defeat at the hands of Ra'eese Aleem in January on SHOWTIME. Pasillas will move back to featherweight on January 22, where he most recently scored a dominating sixth-round knockout over then-unbeaten Ranfis Encarnacion in September 2020. Pasillas possesses impressive power and was riding a six-fight knockout streak into the bout with Aleem.

"I have redemption on my mind and I'm ready to bounce back with a stellar performance when I step in the ring with Nyambayar," said Pasillas. "My best performances have been at featherweight and I am much stronger at this weight. I'm very happy that my team was able to provide me with this opportunity. Everyone will see the difference in this fight. I'm hungrier and stronger now than ever before."

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