



## WBC MIDDLEWEIGHT WORLD CHAMPION JERMALL CHARLO BATTLES MACIEJ SULECKI IN JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION IN HIS HOMETOWN OF HOUSTON SATURDAY, JUNE 18 LIVE ON SHOWTIME® FROM TOYOTA CENTER

**Top Super Bantamweight Contender Ra'ese Aleem Takes on  
Mike Plania in Co-Main Event of Premier Boxing Champions Event**

**Unbeaten Lightweight Contender Frank Martin Battles Former Title  
Challenger Ricardo Núñez in Telecast Opener at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT**

**Tickets on Sale Now!**

**HOUSTON – May 4, 2022** – Undefeated WBC Middleweight World Champion **Jermall Charlo** will hold a Juneteenth celebration in his hometown for the second-straight year when he steps into the ring to face tough former title challenger **Maciej Sulecki** on Saturday, June 18 live on SHOWTIME from Toyota Center in Houston in an event presented by Premier Boxing Champions.

The SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING® telecast begins at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT and will see undefeated top super bantamweight contender **Ra'ese Aleem** taking on **Mike Plania** in the 10-round co-main event, plus the Derrick James-trained unbeaten lightweight contender **Frank Martin** battles Panama's power-punching **Ricardo Núñez** in the 10-round telecast opener.

Tickets for the live event, which is promoted by Lions Only Promotions and TGB Promotions, are on sale now and can be purchased at [toyotacenter.com](http://toyotacenter.com).

Charlo (32-0, 22 KOs) returns to fight in his hometown of Houston for the fifth time in his career, having most recently earned an entertaining unanimous decision win there over Juan Montiel last June on SHOWTIME. The 31-year-old scored an impressive unanimous decision triumph over top middleweight contender Sergiy Derevyanchenko in their September 2020 showdown and owns a 7-0 record since moving up to middleweight in 2017. A two-division world champion, Charlo also strung together an impressive run at 154-pounds, capturing the IBF title in 2015 and piling up victories over champions Austin Trout, Cornelius Bundrage and Julian Williams, whom he floored three times on his way to a memorable fifth-round knockout.

“I’m excited to get back in the ring in front of my people in Houston and put on a great show fighting on Juneteenth weekend once again,” said Charlo. “I’m ready to handle my business and give everyone what they’re coming out to see. Sulecki is a tough fighter who’s going to come in hungry. But I’m fighting for something bigger and I won’t be stopped from delivering a special performance on June 18.”

A native of Warsaw, Poland, Sulecki (30-2, 11 KOs) trains in Chicago, Ill. with his new co-trainer and longtime Polish contender Andrzej Fonfara. He will look to earn his third straight victory on June 18. The 32-year-old has never been stopped and has won four of his last five fights, including a unanimous decision over Gabriel Rosado that earned him the title shot against Demetrius Andrade that he would eventually lose by decision. Sulecki has fought professionally since 2010 and has also scored notable victories in defeating former titleholder Jack Culcay in 2017 and knocking out then undefeated Hugo Centeno Jr. in 2016.

“I’ve been training for a long time for this fight and I feel strong and ready to get in the ring,” said Sulecki. “Charlo is a great champion and I respect what he can do, but I don’t think he’s any better than the best fighters I’ve faced before. I think I am the stronger fighter mentally and physically. I don’t think he’s a killer. He hasn’t even been able to stop his last two opponents. I’ve fought as the underdog in my opponent’s hometown, so I’m not worried about fighting in Houston at all. We have a huge community of Polish fans in the U.S. and I know they’ll be there supporting me on June 18.”

Owning a top-10 ranking at 122-pounds from multiple sanctioning bodies, Aleem (19-0, 12 KOs) put on the most impressive performance of his career in January 2021 to capture the interim WBA title on SHOWTIME. Aleem dominated in a battle of unbeatens, dropping Victor Pasillas four times before eventually stopping him in round 11. Raised in Michigan and training out of Las Vegas, Nev., Aleem, 31, had stopped his past seven opponents inside the distance before most recently earning a decision victory over Eduardo Baez in November 2021.

“The time is now to take that next step in my career toward a world title shot and I know that a win against a tough opponent like Mike Plania will put me in that position,” said Aleem. “I’ve been waiting patiently for my opportunity to show everyone why I’m the best super bantamweight in the world. I’m grateful to my team for believing in me and my ability to bring excitement on the big stage. I’m never in a boring fight and you will see the best of me come June 18. I’m going to let my hands fly and do the talking.”

The 25-year-old Plania (26-1, 13 KOs) dropped Joshua Greer twice in their June 2020 clash on his way to a career-best decision victory, which he followed up in April 2021 by defeating Emmanuel Mogawa before stopping Ricardo Nunez in November. A native of General Santos City in the Philippines, Plania has put together a 11-fight winning streak since a 2018 decision loss against former champion Juan Carlos Payano. Plania has fought professionally since 2014, with five of his last six outings taking place stateside.

“Ever since I beat Joshua Greer to put myself in the world rankings, I have been looking for an opportunity to fight the best at 122 pounds to secure a world title shot,” said Plania. “June 18 is that time and by beating Ra’eese Aleem, I will show everyone I deserve to fight for the title. I want to thank my whole team for putting me in this position and I can’t wait to get in there and show what I’m capable of.”

The 27-year-old Martin (15-0, 11 KOs) rose up the lightweight rankings in 2021 with a pair of impressive victories before most recently delivering a New Year's Day KO over Romero Duno. In 2021, Martin knocked out the previously unbeaten Jerry Perez in a dominating performance in April, before earning a unanimous decision over Ryan Kielczweski in August. Originally from Indianapolis, Martin now trains in the Dallas-area under the guidance of top trainer James alongside unified welterweight champion Errol Spence Jr.

"I've been training hard in Dallas and I'm just excited and ready to go," said Martin. "Núñez is a boxer-puncher, so I expect him to mix it up with some fast combinations and to try and throw my movement off, but I'll be ready for all of that. Fight fans are going to enjoy an action fight with this one. We've got the speed, power and athleticism to put on an exciting show on June 18."

Representing La Chorrera, Panama, Núñez (23-3, 21 KOs) enters this fight with knockout victories in his last two fights, including most recently stopping Richard Solano in the first round in October 2021. The 28-year-old moved back up to lightweight for those two victories after challenging three-division champion Gervonta Davis in July 2019 for a 130-pound title. Núñez has fought professionally since 2010 and has a brother also named Ricardo who is a veteran pro fighter in the featherweight division.

"I'm very happy to be back in a big fight on June 18," said Núñez. "You're going to see a whole new fighter against Martin. I'm coming to fight and impose my style on my opponent. Martin is a good boxer who's made it to a high level, but he still has to show what he's made of. I'm going to give one hundred percent to stop his rise and be the first person to beat him."

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