



RODRIGUEZ 'THANKFUL' FOR ESPN FIGHTER AWARD

**'Bam' thrilled to be named Fighter of the Year so far –
but is hungry for more in 2022**

Jesse Rodriguez says he feels 'thankful' to be named as the Fighter of the Year by ESPN in their [midyear awards for 2022](#) – but the WBC World Super-Flyweight champion is not resting on his laurels and continue his sensational year when he defends his title against **Israel Gonzalez** on Saturday September 17 at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada, as co-main event to the trilogy clash between **Saul 'Canelo' Alvarez** and **Gennadiy 'GGG' Golovkin**. The event, presented by Matchroom, Canelo Promotions and GGG Promotions, will broadcast live on DAZN Pay-Per-View in the U.S. and Canada as well as around the world on DAZN (excluding Mexico, Latin America, and Kazakhstan).

TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW VIA AXS.COM

Rodriguez (16-0 11 KOs) has enjoyed a stellar first half of the year, starting by becoming the youngest active World champion in February, stepping in late to meet Carlos Cuadras for the vacant WBC strap in Phoenix and then putting on a stunning display in his first defense, stopping Thai star Srisaket Sor Rungvisai on his San Antonio home turf in June inside eight rounds.

'Bam' extended his promotional pact with Eddie Hearn following the win over Rungvisai, and now defends his title for the second time against Mexican Gonzalez (28-4-1 11 KOs), who challenges for World honors for the fourth time in his career.

Rodriguez has begun camp at home and will relocate to Robert Garcia's California base when his trainer and manager returns from masterminding Anthony Joshua's rematch with Oleksandr Usyk in Saudi Arabia on August 20. The 21 year old is ready to thrill on the biggest of stages on September 17, and believes it could be the next step in securing Fighter of the Year awards across the board.

"I'm so thankful to be named ESPN's fighter of the year," said **Rodriguez**. "My hard work and dedication to the sport is paying off. That is why I'm able to perform the way I have been. There's so much more to come and I can't wait.

"I'll be starting my camp in San Antonio for this next fight. I'll be here for three weeks then finish up in Riverside at Robert Garcia Boxing Academy. Fighting so soon, I feel like I haven't lost a beat. I'm still in rhythm and I'll be more than ready for Las Vegas.

"The way people have been saying I'm front runner for Fighter of the Year is motivation to get the job done. It's a blessing to even be mentioned with some of the greatest boxers in the sport. But come September 17, there will be no question who it belongs to."

Rodriguez's achievement was one of many as [Matchroom fighters and events dominated ESPN's midyear awards](#). Irish superstar **Katie Taylor** was named female fighter of the year following her victory over **Amanda Serrano** in their epic battle at Madison Square Garden in New York in April which landed female fight of the year nod. **Leigh Wood**'s dramatic final round KO win over **Jamie Conlan** in Nottingham in March earned the WBA Featherweight king the KO of the year and the battle was awarded men's fight of the year, while **Dmitry Bivol**'s triumph over **Canelo Alvarez** in Las Vegas in May took the gong for upset of the year.

Rodriguez's clash with Gonzalez is part of a stacked night of action in Las Vegas, as **Diego Pacheco** fights for his first pro belt when he meets **Enrique Collazo** for the WBC USNBC Silver Super-Middleweight title and **Austin 'Ammo' Williams** taking on **Kieron Conway** for the vacant WBA International Middleweight title, all leading into the third installment of the classic modern rivalry between Canelo and Golovkin, with the Mexican king putting his undisputed Super-Middleweight crown on the line against Kazakhstan's reigning WBA and IBF Middleweight ruler in the most anticipated match up of 2022.

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