



## **DERRICK JAMES, BOB SANTOS, SUGARHILL STEWARD AND BUDDY MCGIRT QUOTES PREVIEWING DAVID BENAVIDEZ VS. CALEB PLANT**

**Top Trainers and Boxing Minds Discuss Benavidez vs. Plant  
SHOWTIME PPV® Clash Taking Place Saturday, March 25  
from MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas Headlining a  
Premier Boxing Champions Event**

**LAS VEGAS – March 16, 2023** – Top trainers and boxing minds, **Derrick James, Bob Santos, SugarHill Steward** and **Buddy McGirt**, put their collective wisdom together to preview and breakdown the upcoming showdown between super middleweight rivals **David “The Mexican Monster” Benavidez** and **Caleb Plant, a 50-50 matchup**, during a virtual media roundtable on Thursday as some of boxing’s best strategists expect an intriguing clash of styles and personalities in the long-awaited showdown.

Benavidez vs. Plant headlines a SHOWTIME PPV event beginning at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT on Saturday, March 25 from the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas in an event presented by Premier Boxing Champions.

Tickets for the live event, which is promoted by TGB Promotions and Sampson Boxing, are on sale now and can be purchased [HERE](#) through AXS.com.

Here is what the trainers had to say Thursday:

### **DERRICK JAMES, Trainer of Errol Spence Jr., Jermell Charlo and Frank Martin**

“This is an interesting fight. I like both of those guys and I’ve known them for a while. It comes down to who can take it. Who can implement what they do best? Both have fast hands and are athletic. It’s going to come down to fortitude.

“Both guys share the weakness of depth. Because they’ve never had to dig themselves out of trouble. That’s what we don’t know about, because we haven’t really seen them have to do that. It may not be their weakness, but looking at it from the outside, we don’t really know.

“When I’ve had a fighter who has bad blood with an opponent like Benavidez and Plant, I had to make one strategy for fighting and one for boxing. Whatever he felt, I had to coach him from that perspective during the fight.

“A lot of times if I see something brewing in the opposite corner where the father might be getting emotional, I might say something really loud so that he can hear me. Something the opposite of what I really want, just to ruffle them up. That can make the father and son question each other. It’s very hard to be on the same page.

“If I was fighting David Benavidez, I would do my best to not let him be himself. I would do whatever I could to offset him. The best way is probably with movement. Because whenever he stands in front of you, it’s a bad day. You better practice holding and clinching, because if you don’t, it’s going to be a long night.

“If I’m training Benavidez, I’d tell him he has to pressure Caleb. But you have to watch out, because Caleb sets traps. You have to back him down at a distance and hope that he’ll succumb to the pressure. Caleb is a great counter puncher and has great defense. You have to stay two steps ahead of him.”

**BOB SANTOS, Trainer of Mario Barrios, Alberto Puello, Hector Luis Garcia and Carlos Adames**

“I know both guys very well. The bad blood is real. I’ve been cordial with both guys and I’ve been in the middle of it sometimes. We’ve all known these two have been on a head-on collision course.

“I think it’s going to be brutal at times in there. But if Benavidez gets too intense, he could get into some trouble. We’ll see how it plays out.

“People are going to be surprised with Benavidez, because he’s chose to fight the way he has, so that he can make a name for himself. But he’s really a savant. He’s a lot smarter in the ring than people think. I think he can do more things than Caleb Plant can in the end, but the only thing I’m worried about is how much he’s talked about going for the knockout. If he stays within himself, I like him to break Plant down.

“I think both of their stocks are going to rise in this fight. Eventually, Benavidez will force Plant to fight. He’s going to go through the fire and I’m interested to see how he reacts.

“The father-son, trainer-fighter dynamic in training camp is a good thing, because they know how to push their kid. The problems come from guiding the corner. When I was with Robert and Ruben Guerrero, we were fighting Danny Garcia and we were up in the rounds, but after Robert got hit with a good shot, I thought his dad got emotional and stopped caring about winning the rounds. Caleb can turn things up in a way that could potentially make the Benavidez corner panic.

“I would tell Caleb to keep turning Benavidez. He’s gotta use his angles. I’d be MMA all night clinching and holding with him, because you can’t let him get comfortable.

“For Benavidez, it’s all about controlled aggression. He really can’t stand Caleb. He wants to hurt the guy. If I’m the trainer I’m stressing that you have to be methodical. Work behind the jab and control the distance.”

**SUGARHILL STEWARD, Trainer of Tyson Fury, Anthony Dirrell and Vladimir Shishkin**

“This is one of the biggest fights in boxing right now. This is one of those fights that really interests me. You have two former world champions, two young fighters that are at the top of their game. As we all know, there’s some bad blood. There’s more than just a fight on the line. It’s something personal.

“Both of these fighters are at the top. They both have fast hands and they both have the ability to knock each other out. It just makes it such an exciting fight at 168 pounds. They’ve both been asking for the best, and here you go, we’ve got two of the best right here.

“With Anthony Dirrell, we had two different game plans for Benavidez and Plant. With Benavidez, it was to box him and to be strong. With Caleb, it wasn’t to box him it was to pressure him more because he’s a good boxer himself and he has beautiful movement. I didn’t want Anthony to box him. Anthony didn’t want to box him either. It was two different plans but with these two guys together, it’s an electrifying fight because they both can do both things – box and pressure. It’s whoever sticks to their game plan.

“There’s going to be a lot of emotions in this one. I think both of them are going to be emotional because they are going to bring it out of each other. It’s about whoever can control themselves. Honestly, it should get a little bit wild in there. They are going to let those emotions out.

“My advice for Caleb would be to box. Use your superior movement and angles. Don’t look for a knockout punch because things happen in boxing when you’re not looking for something. You can catch him off guard. Caleb does that very well, as he did with Anthony Dirrell.

“My advice for Benavidez would be to know how to cut the ring off. David cuts the ring off well but that’s the most important thing. Try to make Caleb move the way David wants to move him, and then it’s about timing. David is fast, he’s big, he can jab, but I believe he has to cut off the ring to slow the pace down.”

**BUDDY MCGIRT, Trainer of Zhanibek Alimkhanuly and former trainer of Arturo Gatti and Antonio Tarver**

“I think this is going to be a great fight and something that boxing needs. You have two of the best in the division and I personally think that this should open the door for more great fights to happen in boxing. This is opening the door and letting people know that real fighters still fight each other.

“You have to be able to control the bad blood. You can’t go in there with one thing in mind, just trying to knock him out. You can walk into something you might not want to. You have to take it and use it to your advantage and use it in a way that’s going to make the fight easier. If you go in there trying to gun him out, you’ll wind up getting gunned out.

“Father and son combinations are all different. It’s all about how if things aren’t going according to their plan, how can David and Jose Sr. get on the same page in that one minute in between rounds?

“If I was training Caleb, one of the things I would be telling him is that you can’t give him the same look every round. When Benavidez starts throwing his combinations, you have to punch back to break his rhythm. You can’t just let him get into a rhythm because then it’s going to be a long night. There’s an old saying, ‘You can’t punch and block punches at the same time.’ If Benavidez is throwing punches, throw one right down the pike to try to break his rhythm and give him different looks.”

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### **ABOUT BENAVIDEZ VS. PLANT**

Benavidez vs. Plant will see undefeated former two-time WBC Super Middleweight Champion David “The Mexican Monster” Benavidez and former IBF Super Middleweight Champion Caleb Plant meet in a high-stakes, 12-round showdown for Benavidez’s Interim WBC Super Middleweight Title live on SHOWTIME PPV on Saturday, March 25 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas in an event presented by Premier Boxing Champions.

In the co-main event, unbeaten rising stars Jesús “Mono” Ramos and Joey Spencer will go toe-to-toe in a 10-round super welterweight scuffle, as each fighter looks to make their claim as the future of the 154-pound division. The action will also see rising lightweights Chris “Primetime” Colbert and Jose “Rayo” Valenzuela meet in a 10-round duel, while unbeaten welterweight contender Cody Crowley faces the hard-hitting Abel Ramos in the telecast opener at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT.

For more information visit [www.SHO.com/sports](http://www.SHO.com/sports), [www.PremierBoxingChampions.com](http://www.PremierBoxingChampions.com), follow #BenavidezPlant, follow on Twitter @ShowtimeBoxing, @PremierBoxing and @TGBPromotions, on Instagram @ShowtimeBoxing, @PremierBoxing and @TGBPromotions or become a fan on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/ShowtimeBoxing](http://www.Facebook.com/ShowtimeBoxing).

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