



KEITH THURMAN VS. MARIO BARRIOS & LEO SANTA CRUZ VS. KEENAN CARBAJAL VIRTUAL PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTES

Thurman vs. Barrios and Santa Cruz vs. Carbajal Showdowns Top FOX Sports PBC Pay-Per-View Saturday, February 5 From Michelob ULTRA Arena at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS (December 29, 2021) – Former unified welterweight world champion **Keith “One Time” Thurman** and former super lightweight world champion **Mario “El Azteca” Barrios**, plus four-division world champion **Leo “El Terremoto” Santa Cruz** and **Keenan “Bedo” Carbajal**, previewed their showdowns on a virtual press conference Wednesday before they compete on FOX Sports PBC Pay-Per-View Saturday, February 5 from Michelob ULTRA Arena at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas.

The pay-per-view begins at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT and features Thurman and Barrios clashing in the 12-round welterweight main event, while Santa Cruz and Carbajal duel in the 10-round super featherweight co-main event.

Tickets for the live event, which is promoted by TGB Promotions, are on sale now and are available at axs.com.

Here is what the fighters had to say Wednesday:

KEITH THURMAN

“I’m happy to be here. It’s a blessing and I’m looking forward to this return. It’s been a long time coming. I’m not injured anymore and I feel great. I’m excited to perform for the fans in Las Vegas once again.

“It’s not ideal to have a layoff like I had, but you just have to roll with things in life. I’ve spent a lot of time meditating and prioritizing different things. Now the date is set and I can’t wait to get back in action. I truly love this sport.

“I was given a few options for opponents, and once I heard Barrios had interest in it, I knew that he was coming off an exciting fight and that I wanted to make it happen. Once Barrios was on the menu, I was ready to take him.

“There’s always pressure to be great. That pressure makes diamonds. Fighters like me and like Barrios, we want to shine. We take that pressure and everything coming our way. That’s the path of the warrior. There’s so much beauty in it. Our hearts pump better when we take those challenges head on.

“There’s no test better than a Keith Thurman test. You don’t step to Keith Thurman if you don’t want to make a name for yourself at 147. We have two fighters coming off of losses, which means we both have to prove ourselves. The time is now. Talk about the past if you want, but February 5, new stories will be created.

“In 2019, I fought Manny Pacquiao because that was the most exciting thing I could do then. Once I’m comfortable in this return, I’m coming for greatness. We know we’ve fallen from the ladder and we’re looking up. That’s okay, because we’re going to take it one step at a time to get back to where we were, in the top spot of the welterweight division.

“The fire has been burning inside me my whole life. It doesn’t matter what we’re competing in. When you’re in this sport, you’re in it to win. You have to be. That competitiveness is natural for me. No matter how long I’m off, I’m thinking about boxing.

“I’m here to prove that I’m not the kind of fighter that you can write off. The cream is going to rise to the top. I might have fallen, but you best believe I’m going to rise again. This year is about doing what I have to do to be at the pinnacle of the division.”

MARIO BARRIOS

“I’ve been staying in the gym and I’m excited to make my return. I wanted to come back even sooner, but now the date is set and I’m excited.

“Once this fight was brought up to me, I was ready to go. Not many fighters are able to headline a pay-per-view for a second straight fight and I’m grateful for the opportunity. I’m just looking to take full advantage of it.

“Fighting in Las Vegas is super exciting. The way everything has unfolded in my career is very humbling. It just goes to show how much work I’ve put in at only 26-years-old. This is huge for me. I’m up against a great fighter and I can’t wait to showcase my talent and my skills at 147 pounds.

“Moving up to welterweight was a long time coming for myself. I have a big frame and it was getting hard to make 140. We were thinking about 147 before the Gervonta Davis fight was even made. I didn’t want my first welterweight fight to be

against an easy opponent. I wanted to fight an established welterweight who's been in the ring with the best. Keith is a great fighter and I know this has the potential to be one of the best fights of the year.

"I'm in this sport to fight the best and that's all I want to do. I'm in my prime right now. There was no hesitation moving up in weight or with taking the Thurman fight. I could have made 140 if I had to, but we decided that it was best to fight at a more natural weight.

"I still believe Thurman is one of the best in the division and that's why this fight was exciting to me. If I go in there and handle my business, I automatically solidify myself in this division. I'm chasing greatness.

"If anything, I'm going to have more agility and stamina at this weight. Not having to drain myself is going to help me. I'm excited to showcase my talent and skills at a more comfortable weight."

LEO SANTA CRUZ

"I'm very excited to be back in this fight. This is the longest I've been away from the ring, so I've been anxious to return. My last fight didn't go my way, but I'm looking forward to getting back to the top.

"Keenan is a strong fighter who doesn't run. We're coming to entertain the fans and that's what we'll do. I'm very motivated that Keenan is going to come to fight. I don't want to be chasing a fighter all night long. I want to go back and forth and that's what Carbajal will bring to the table.

"I wanted to see how I felt in this training camp before making a decision about what weight I fight at in the future. Now I've dropped the weight easily, so as long as everything goes well on February 5, I'll be back at 126 in my next fight.

"I love fighting in Las Vegas, it's like my second hometown. I have a lot of fans there. Plus, to be on a card this big with two great fighters in the main event is amazing, because I know they're going to give a great fight. What's in my head is giving an even better fight than the main event. This is a stacked card and I'm looking forward to being the fight of the night. It's a big task.

"It was a bit hard for me after the knockout loss. But once I got back home and got encouragement from my fans, I felt better. I just got overexcited in the fight and Gervonta landed a good punch. I always want to entertain the fans. I had to pay for it this time, but I always will try to give fans a great fight.

"I think it's better that I'm fighting a taller opponent. With a taller fighter, I know they have the reach, but I like to go toe-to-toe. I'm going to adjust in the ring. I'm confident and I know what I have to do in order to give a great performance."

KEENAN CARBAJAL

“My last fight in November was an amazing experience fighting in front of my hometown crowd at the Phoenix Suns arena. I’m excited to be back in action against Leo Santa Cruz on February 5.

“This is a great matchup. I’m looking to make this a classic fight. This is going to be a fight that people talk about for years to come. I really believe this is going to be a classic.

“I definitely can knock Leo out. I’m not just looking for it though. If it comes, it comes. I’m prepared to go to war. I know Leo’s style and he knows mine. There are going to be heavy punches exchanged. I’m coming to hurt him.

“I’m definitely overlooked in this fight. I understand the game and that I’m the underdog. But I believe I earned this spot and that’s all that matters. It doesn’t matter what the odds are, it just matters what happens on February 5.

“I’ve gained a lot of experience in my career. My mind and my body are one now. I’m able to do exactly what my team wants me to do in the ring. I feel like I’m at my peak right now.”

TOM BROWN, President of TGB Promotions

“This is a tremendous card and I’m really looking forward to it. Thurman and Barrios are looking to rebound from their first career losses and they know they have to do whatever it takes to win this fight. Both guys are extremely motivated for February 5. This is definitely going to be an all-out war.

“Keith is focused on all the 147-pound champions, but he knows he has to get by Mario Barrios first. When Barrios got the call, he said yes immediately. Now he’s got the chance to prove himself against a former unified 147-pound champion.

“Leo Santa Cruz is also sure to be highly motivated in his ring return and I expect that he is going to come with more intensity than ever against a tough and talented opponent in Keenan Carbajal.”

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ABOUT THURMAN VS. BARRIOS

Thurman vs. Barrios will see former unified welterweight world champion Keith “One Time” Thurman return to the ring to take on former super lightweight world champion Mario “El Azteca” Barrios in a 12-round welterweight showdown that headlines a jam-packed FOX Sports PBC Pay-Per-View lineup on Saturday, February 5 from Michelob ULTRA Arena at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas.

In the co-feature, four-division world champion Leo “El Terremoto” Santa Cruz will battle Keenan “Bedo” Carbajal in a 10-round super featherweight match, while battle-tested all-action welterweights Abel Ramos and Josesito “Riverside Rocky” Lopez clash in a 10-round attraction. The pay-per-view telecast begins at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT with former two-division champion Luis “Pantera” Nery battling unbeaten Carlos Castro in a 10-round super bantamweight duel.

Viewers can live stream the PBC shows on the FOX Sports and FOX NOW apps or at FOXSports.com. In addition, all programs are available on FOX Sports on SiriusXM channel 83 on satellite radios and on the SiriusXM app.

For more information: visit www.premierboxingchampions.com, <http://www.foxsports.com/presspass/homepage> and www.foxdeportes.com, follow on Twitter @PremierBoxing, @PBConFOX, @FOXSports, @FOXDeportes, @TGBPromotions and @Swanson_Comm or become a fan on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/PremierBoxingChampions, www.facebook.com/foxsports & www.facebook.com/foxdeportes.

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