



**UNBEATEN SUPER BANTAMWEIGHT WORLD CHAMPIONS
BRANDON FIGUEROA AND STEPHEN FULTON JR.
MEET IN TITLE UNIFICATION SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18
ON SHOWTIME**

**Undefeated Top Contender Ra'eese Aleem Battles Mexico's Eduardo Baez
in Co-Featured Bout of Premier Boxing Champions Event**

**Unbeaten Bantamweight Contender Gary Antonio Russell Duels
Alejandro Barrios To Open Televised Action Live at
9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT from Park MGM in Las Vegas**

Tickets on Sale Now!

LAS VEGAS (September 2, 2021) – Undefeated 122-pound world champions will go toe-to-toe as WBC champion **Brandon "Heartbreaker" Figueroa** and WBO champion **Stephen "Cool Boy Steph" Fulton Jr.** meet in the SHOWTIME main event Saturday, September 18 in a Premier Boxing Champions event from Park Theater at Park MGM in Las Vegas.

SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING will begin at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT and will include undefeated super bantamweight contender **Ra'eese Aleem** battling Mexico's **Eduardo Baez** in the 10-round co-main event. Opening the telecast, unbeaten rising bantamweight contender **Gary Antonio Russell** takes on Mexico's **Alejandro Barrios** in a 10-round showdown.

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

"This night of high-stakes action is headlined by two undefeated young stars in one of the most anticipated fights of the year." said Tom Brown, President of TGB Promotions. "The winner of this fight will not only hold the mantle as the division's best but will have a case as one of the top pound-for-pound rising stars in the sport. With Ra'eese Aleem and Gary Antonio Russell also on the card, the future of the sport takes centerstage on September 18."

The three-fight boxing event will open SHOWTIME's combat sports doubleheader on September 18. Immediately following the main event from Las Vegas, BELLATOR MMA will air live from San Jose, Calif., with a three-fight event headlined by light heavyweight contenders Phil Davis and Yoel Romero.

Figueroa vs. Fulton has loomed as a potential showdown for several years prior to the two unbeaten fighters joining the world championship ranks with career-best performances in 2021. Fulton struck first, dominating then-unbeaten Angelo Leo to capture the WBO title in January, while Figueroa made his own statement in stopping two-division champion Luis Nery to capture the WBC strap in May.

The 24-year-old Figueroa (22-0-1, 17 KOs) used his youth and relentless pressure to become the first person to defeat Nery in their championship clash on SHOWTIME. Figueroa's body attack was the difference, as he was able to stand up against Nery's offense and eventually overwhelm him to earn the knockout. A native of Weslaco, Texas, Figueroa added to his family's legacy in capturing the world title, joining his brother Omar Figueroa who previously held the lightweight world championship. Figueroa took down a slew of veteran contenders on his way to championship status, knocking out Moises Flores, Oscar Escandon and Damien Vazquez on his ascent.

"We train hard for every fight and make sure we go 110% come fight night," said Figueroa. "I expect Fulton to be flashy and slick with his movements, and perhaps he'll want to mix it up a little as well, so we're ready for anything. People know I always come to fight and with this being my second back-to-back fight against another undefeated world champion it makes this an exciting fight on paper and it should be even more exciting to see it live on September 18."

Born and raised in West Philadelphia, Pa., Fulton (19-0, 8 KOs) faced impressive competition while rising up the 122-pound rankings to earn the opportunity that eventually saw him become world champion on SHOWTIME by besting Leo. In his last 13 professional fights, the 27-year-old has beaten eight previously undefeated fighters, including Leo, Josh Greer, Arnold Khegai, Adam Lopez and Luis Saul Rosario. Trained in his hometown by coach Wahid Rahim, Fulton has displayed sublime boxing skills that have allowed him to dominate opponents of varying styles and control fights from start to finish.

"We will have a new king of the division on a historic day," said Fulton. "Training camp has been great, rough and dirty. I know where I need to be for this fight and I'm right there not running away from it. History will be made September 18 on Mexican Independence Day weekend in Las Vegas. Let's celebrate with a bang!"

Owning a top-10 ranking at 122-pounds from multiple sanctioning bodies, Aleem (18-0, 12 KOs) put on the most impressive performance of his career in January 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, has stopped his past seven opponents inside the distance.

“It’s great to be back fighting on SHOWTIME,” said Aleem. “I’ve been waiting patiently, working hard in the gym, and now it’s go time. Eduardo Baez is a good fighter who is trying to make a name for himself, but he’s standing in my way of becoming world champion, and I’m going to take him out. I’m on a mission to prove I’m the king of the super bantamweight division, and the journey continues on September 18.”

The 26-year-old Baez (19-1-2, 6 KOs) will look to earn a career-best victory and build on back-to-back triumphs over previously unbeaten fighters when he takes on Aleem on September 18. Originally from Baja California, Mexico, Baez now fights out of Calexico, California as he nears his second stateside outing. Baez most recently won a decision over Abimael Ortiz in March, after his U.S. debut saw him defeat Narek Abgaryan in his U.S. debut in December 2020.

“I can’t wait for this opportunity against Ra’eese Aleem,” said Baez. “Success is the most precious treasure, the more you are willing to pay, the more valuable the prize will be. I will win this fight and we will all scream ‘viva Mexico!’”

The middle brother between WBC Featherweight Champion Gary Jr. and 2016 U.S. Olympian Gary Antuanne, Antonio Russell (18-0, 12 KOs) announced his arrival amongst the bantamweight division contenders with a technical decision over former world champion Juan Carlos Payano in December 2020 on SHOWTIME. The 28-year-old from Capitol Heights, Md. turned pro in 2015 after an impressive amateur career. After four wins in 2019, Russell kicked off 2020 defeating Jesus Martinez in February. Russell returns to action after his August 14 fight against former champion Emmanuel Rodriguez ended in a no-decision in round one due to a clash of heads.

“I’m excited to be back after I trained so hard for my last fight before it ended early,” said Russell. “Now, I’m just taking that same fight energy that I had for Emmanuel Rodriguez and bringing it on September 18 for my new opponent.”

The 25-year-old Barrios (24-2-5, 13 KOs) has not been beaten since 2014, a streak spanning 20 fights. Representing his native Tijuana, Mexico, Barrios has won his last eight contests since a 2018 draw against Jerwin Ancajas in a 115-pound title bout. After defeating Erick Hernandez and Willibaldo Garcia in 2020, Barrios knocked out Juan Gabriel Medina to begin his 2021. In addition to the draw against Ancajas, Barrios has fought then unbeaten Jose Martinez-Mercado to a draw twice while also earning the same result against then undefeated Antonio Nieves.

“I want to thank my whole team and everyone else who made this fight possible,” said Barrios. “It has been a long road for me. I’ve been looking for another title fight or a rematch with Ancajas, ever since our draw. We decided to move up to 118-pounds and I’ve just remained focused and worked hard for the next opportunity. Now I get to share the ring with a great and talented fighter in Gary Antonio Russell. On September 18, I will leave everything in that ring, put on a great fight for all boxing fans and leave victorious.”

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