

# **TOP PROSPECT RUBEN VILLA TO FACE CUBAN KO ARTIST ALEXEI COLLADO ON SHOBOX: THE NEW GENERATION FRIDAY, JANUARY 31 LIVE ON SHOWTIME® FROM SHREVEPORT, LA.**

NEW YORK – January 10, 2020 – Undefeated featherweight prospect Ruben Villa will make his fourth ShoBox: The New Generation appearance in just over a year as the former two-time Junior Olympic National Champion takes on hard-hitting Alexei Collado in a 10-round main event of a three-fight telecast on Friday, January 31 live on SHOWTIME (10 p.m. ET/PT) from Hirsch Memorial Coliseum in Shreveport, La.

Undefeated Ukrainian and 2012 Olympic Bronze medalist Taras Shelestyuk (17-0, 10 KOs) meets Mexico's Alejandro Davila (19-1-2, 7 KOs) in a 10-round welterweight matchup in the co-featured bout. The televised opener features an eight-round lightweight bout pitting Southern California native Jerry Pérez (12-0, 9 KOs) against ShoBox veteran Zhora Hamazaryan (9-1-1, 6 KOs) from Armenia.

The event is promoted by Banner Promotions, Thompson Boxing and Bishop Promotions LLC. Tickets can be purchased at [www.Bishoppromotions.com](http://www.Bishoppromotions.com) and prices are \$20-\$100.

"On January 31 we have three prospects at different points in their careers with Ruben Villa developing into a must-see prospect with high expectations," said Gordon Hall, Executive Producer of ShoBox: The New Generation. "Taras Shelestuyk is still undefeated and working on rebuilding a once-promising career in a must-win fight and Jerry Pérez is young and

relatively unknown, but in a big step-up fight looking to be noticed. Each of these three are in meaningful fights that should be action-packed.”

The 22-year-old Salinas, Calif., native Villa (17-0, 5 KOs) was also the 2014 and 2016 National Golden Gloves Champion and is currently ranked No. 5 at 126 pounds by the WBO and No. 13 by the WBC. Villa was a 2016 U.S. Olympic Team alternate, and had an impressive amateur record of 166-17 with wins against Devin Haney, Shakur Stevenson, and Gary Antonio Russell.

The southpaw Villa has looked impressive in each of his three previous ShoBox appearances, including his debut last January when he outclassed then-unbeaten Ruben Cervera. In May, Villa stepped up to 10-round status for the first time and won a unanimous decision against Luis Alberto Lopez and in September, Villa scored a second-round knockdown against Enrique Vivas en route to a comfortable shutout unanimous decision.

“I know my opponent has a good record at 26-2 and he has heavy hands, but he is wild,” Villa said. “I feel that I am close to a title eliminator, but the middle or at the very latest at the end of 2020. ShoBox has helped me with my recognition and showcasing my talent. I am just thankful to be headlining once again on ShoBox. I know I’m close to making that next step up to contender so I have to look impressive on January 31.”

In Collado (26-2, 23 KOs), Villa will face a tough, 31-year-old Cuban currently living and training in Miami. Collado is on a seven-bout winning streak with six KOs and was active in 2019 winning four times, including his last victory via first-round KO against Facundo Eduardo Ased four days before Christmas. Collado won the 2006 Junior World Title in the flyweight division.

“I participated on a ShoBox event in the past and I couldn’t close the show,” said Collado, who made his ShoBox debut in

April of 2014 in a 10-round lightweight unanimous decision loss to Rod Salka. "This time the story will be different and I am more than ready for Ruben Villa. Ruben is a young talented boxer but he will not be able to do with me what he was able to do to other guys. I'm far more experienced, much stronger and way smarter than all the guys put together that he has faced so far. This is an opportunity that I will not take for granted, Villa better be ready to get shocked."

Management issues have kept the 34-year-old Shelestyuk mostly inactive and he has fought just once in two and a half years. Currently living and training in Southern California, Shelestyuk has trained with Freddie Roach and his stable of fighters at the famed Wild Card Gym in Hollywood. Shelestyuk's last fight came in March, a unanimous decision against Martin Angel Martinez in Southern California. His best win came in 2015 on ShoBox over once-beaten Aslanbek Kozaev.

"Training camp is going great and a lot of the hard work is already done, but we have three more weeks to rock it and finish strong," said Shelestyuk, who has previously fought twice on ShoBox, recording unanimous decisions in November of 2015 and 2016. "We always have a great atmosphere with the team during the training camp. It's exciting to be back on SHOWTIME. The fans like my style and I'm ready to give them a show. My opponent is tough and a big guy, He has more fights than me in the professional ring, and it will be clash of different styles."

Davila has campaigned almost exclusively in Mexico since turning professional in 2014. He was undefeated over his first 20 bouts, including two draws, before suffering his first loss in his last fight in November against once-beaten Mikael Zewski in Canada. Davila notched his last victory via unanimous decision over Luciano Chaparro Araujo in July in Mexico.

"I know Taras has a tremendous amateur and professional career

but I also got what it takes to beat anybody at this level," Davila said. "I am coming to win this fight and hand Taras his first defeat. I will do my best to win this fight."

The 26-year-old Pérez had 45 amateur fights with some international experience and currently trains with four-division world champion Leo Santa Cruz, whom he met through a family friend in 2016. Perez made his pro debut on the Santa Cruz-Carl Frampton undercard at MGM Grand in Las Vegas as Perez recorded a knockout against Javier Cepeda in January 2017. In his young career, Perez has also fought at Staples Center in Los Angeles on the Mikey Garcia-Robert Easter undercard scoring a second-round KO against Aaron Jamel Hollis. Perez started boxing at age 9 learning his craft at the High Desert Boxing Club in Victorville, Calif., in San Bernardino County.

"We have been knocking on doors for a while and finally that door has opened up to us," Perez said. "It's now time to show I belong in the ring with a guy like Zhora whom I respect but have the certainty I can beat. I'm coming to make a statement in my TV debut and show that I'm a force at lightweight."

The 23-year-old Hamazaryan resides in Los Angeles and has fought on ShoBox twice, both memorable and exciting bouts against lightweight prospect Thomas Mattice. Hamazaryan lost the first matchup by split decision in July of 2018 after out-landing and out-powering Mattice in a fight many observers thought Hamazaryan clearly won. Hamazaryan earned a draw against Mattice in an immediate rematch two months later.

"I have had a tremendous camp and am excited to get back on ShoBox," Hamazaryan said. "I feel I am still undefeated and the fans now know what I bring and that is a fighter who fights hard for the whole fight. I do not know much about my opponent except his record. I just fight my fight and I will bring home the victory."

Barry Tompkins will call the action from ringside with boxing historian Steve Farhood and former world champion Raul Marquez serving as expert analysts. The executive producer is Gordon Hall with Richard Gaughan producing and Rick Phillips directing.

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#### About ShoBox: The New Generation

Since its inception in July 2001, the critically acclaimed SHOWTIME boxing series, ShoBox: The New Generation has featured young talent matched tough. The ShoBox philosophy is to televise exciting, crowd-pleasing and competitive matches while providing a proving ground for willing prospects determined to fight for a world title. Some of the growing list of the 81 fighters who have appeared on ShoBox and advanced to garner world titles includes: Errol Spence Jr., Andre Ward, Deontay Wilder, Erislandy Lara, Shawn Porter, Gary Russell Jr., Lamont Peterson, Guillermo Rigondeaux, Nonito Donaire, Devon Alexander, Carl Froch, Robert Guerrero, Timothy Bradley, Jessie Vargas, Juan Manuel Lopez, Chad Dawson, Paulie Malignaggi, Ricky Hatton, Kelly Pavlik, Paul Williams and more.

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