

Taras Shelestyuk Enjoying Working with New Trainer Joel Diaz Ahead of Saturday's Fight

ORANGE, Calif./Philadelphia, Penn. (June 27, 2017) – Undefeated, world ranked welterweight Taras “The Real Deal” Shelestyuk is banking on his new trainer, the highly regarded Joel Diaz, to take his game to the next level.

“I enjoy working with Joel Diaz,” said Shelestyuk, who brought home a bronze finish in the 2012 London Olympics to his native Ukraine. “He’s a great communicator. He knows how to bring out the best in boxers.”

Shelestyuk (15-0, 9 KOs), who on Saturday headlines Thompson Boxing’s “Locked n’ Loaded” 8-round main event from Omega Products in Sacramento, Calif., is currently ranked No. 5 by the WBO.

At 31, Shelestyuk can ill afford a slip up on his way up the official rankings. His opponent, Jesus Alvarez Rodriguez (15-2, 11 KOs), is all too eager to play the spoiler on Saturday night.

“I know I can’t sleep on Rodriguez,” said Shelestyuk, who is promoted by Banner Promotions and Thompson Boxing. “I have to make a statement early in the fight to let him know what I’m about.”

Shelestyuk vs. Rodriguez and the entire 8-bout card will be streamed live on TB Presents: Locked n’ Loaded. Watch the action on ThompsonBoxing.com and Facebook Live beginning at 6:30 p.m. PST / 10:30 p.m. EST.

Tickets for "Locked n' Loaded" are priced at \$40, \$60, & \$100 and are available for purchase online at ThompsonBoxing.com, or by calling 714-935-0900.

Shelestyuk is coming off a unanimous decision win against Jaime Herrera in November. The fight, televised on SHOWTIME, had championship implications with Shelestyuk winning the WBO-NABO welterweight title.

Since teaming up with Diaz several months ago, Shelestyuk, who is a southpaw, has tightened his punching ability and plans to be assertive throughout the 8-round fight.

"I think most people know that I'm more of a boxer than a puncher," said the Los Angeles-based Shelestyuk. "You can still have an aggressive style with a technical game plan and that's what we're working on. How to be aggressive in a methodical fashion."

"This is a big fight for Taras. Should he win on Saturday, we feel he is ready for a major fight. He is hungry and has the incentive to put on a great performance on Saturday night," said Banner Promotions President, Artie Pelullo.

In the co-feature, standout amateur Ruben Villa (5-0, 3 KOs) of Salinas, Calif. looks to stay undefeated against Jonathan Alcantara (7-15-2, 1 KO) in a fight set for 6-rounds.

Villa has all the tools to become the next world champion at featherweight. He cleaned up the amateur ranks with back-to-back National Golden Gloves championships prior to turning professional last year.

He inked a promotional contract with Banner Promotions and Thompson Boxing last July.

TB Presents: Locked n' Loaded broadcast team consists of Beto Duran on play-by-play and Steve Kim provides expert, color commentary.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. local time with the first bout at approximately 6:30 p.m. Omega Products International is located at 8111 Fruitridge Road, Sacramento, CA 95826 and can be reached at 916-635-3335.

“Locked n’ Loaded” is presented by Thompson Boxing Promotions and sponsored by Lucas Oil, in association with Everlast.

For more information, please visit Banner-Promotions.com.

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