

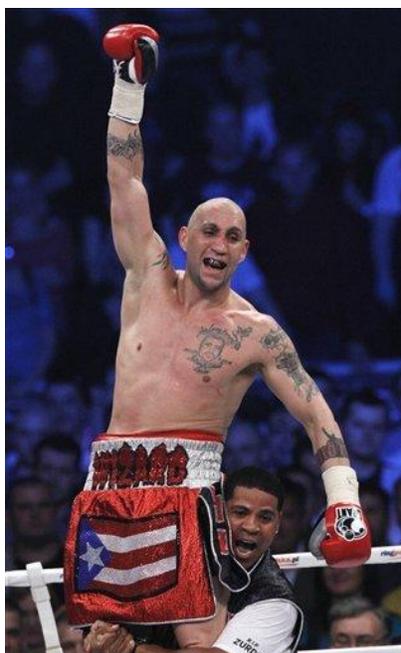
Francisco Palacios Is Fighting To Fulfill A Promise To Anthony



Francisco Palacios is not just another fighter. When you look at who he is, and find out how he became a solid contender for a cruiserweight title, you will see he is far from ordinary. Palacios is extraordinary inside and outside of the boxing ring. His quest to become a world champion, fueled by a promise he made to his late brother Anthony, is a promise he intends to fulfill.

Palacios in his own words is “a loving father to his kids (2nd daughter due May 31), he is humble, relaxed, avoids trouble, Christian, takes care of himself, doesn’t drink or smoke, mom is his best friend, he is a personal trainer, and will do everything necessary to have a good life. He is a hard worker.” Inside the ring, he describes himself as “a natural southpaw, who was converted to an orthodox style, flashy, boxer puncher, who can stand in there and bang with you or box your hair out, and (he) is ready to fight and beat anybody in the world right now!”

Francisco Palacios has a very impressive professional record. At 21-2 (13 KO’s), he has fought for the WBC Cruiserweight title two times losing by controversial split decision to “Diablo” Krzysztof Wlodarczyk in 2011 and a unanimous decision loss to Wlodarczyk in 2012. Both fights were in Wlodarczyk’s home country of Poland, and the decisions in both fights may or may not have been influenced by home cooking. Palacios feels he won the first fight and probably over trained for the second fight, but he is quick to say Wlodarczyk prepared for their second fight and gives him credit for fighting a good fight. While title fights should be the pinnacle of a boxer’s career, Palacios seems to be most proud of his 2007 TKO win over Louis Azille. At 11-0, Palacios took the Azille fight on just five days notice and was quickly made a 10-1 underdog. Palacios overcame the odds and destroyed Azille. The victory caught the eye of legendary promoter Don King, who would sign Palacios to a promotional contract.



Palacios would impressively record eight more wins setting up his showdown with Wlodarczyk. Palacios has no excuses for the losses, but he was tired of long periods of inactivity. Under Don King, he went from fighting three and four times a year to just one and two fights per year. Palacios will proudly tell you, “the more active I am the sharper and better fighter I become.” Eventually, inactivity separated King and Palacios. Unlike so many other former King fighters, Palacios has nothing but good to say about Don King: “Don King is a legend. Look what he has done for boxing and how much money he made. I have nothing but respect for him. I just couldn’t handle not fighting.” Francisco Palacios has not been back in the ring since his last title fight loss to Wlodarczyk in September 2012.

STILL HUNGRY

Days before his birthday in 2004, Palacios faced the biggest tragedy of his life. The brother he looked up to and was the motivational figure in Francisco’s life as well as boxing, died. To this day, not able to explain what happened, Palacios can only put into words what his Brother Anthony meant to him. Anthony was in his corner from the beginning, but was no longer going to be there for him. At the funeral, Francisco Palacios made one promise to his late brother: “He would become a world champion and help take care of his brother’s five kids.”

While the promise is paused, Palacios is training again and working with new management. He feels he is at about ninety percent, but is improving daily. In his own words, “I need one tune up, and then I can be thrown to the wolves. I am employed, so I am not doing this for money. I already proved I can beat the best in the division. I beat “Diablo” the first time; otherwise, they would not have had a rematch. I can beat any of the top guys Hernandez, Huck, Lebedev. “Diablo” is the best of them and I beat him! I’m not stopping until I make good on the promise I made to my brother!”

By Chris Williams

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