

Baldomir could test world's best boxer

NEW YORK (AP) - Carlos Baldomir gets his chance at undefeated Floyd Mayweather Jr., generally considered the world's best pound-for-pound boxer, for the WBC welterweight title.

They're scheduled to fight Nov. 4 at Mandalay Casino in Las Vegas.

Baldomir (43-9-6, with 13 knockouts) hasn't lost a fight in nearly 10 years. He upset Zab Judah in a 12-round decision for the WBC title last January and stopped Arturo Gatti in the ninth round on July 22. The 35-year-old Argentine called out Mayweather moments after defeating Gatti.

"Nobody ever thought I would win those two fights, said Baldomir through an interpreter at press conference Wednesday in Manhattan. "I don't talk much, but I do fight a lot. And I'll beat Mayweather, too."

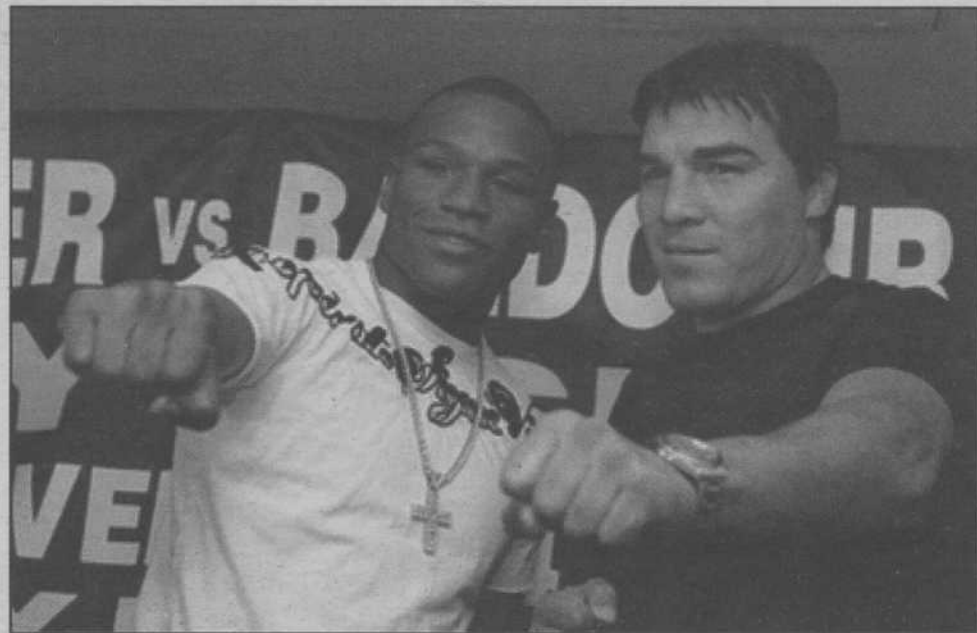
Mayweather (36-0, with 25 KOs) won the IBF welterweight belt in his last fight with a unanimous decision over Zab Judah in April, but relinquished that title.

"This will be the toughest fight of my career," the 28-year-old Mayweather said. "But I have fought at many different weights and won so many title fights, that I am always prepared."

"I'm predicting, right now, that I will go toe-to-toe against Baldomir and box circles around him. The boxing world better get used to me because I'm going to be around a long time."

Promoter Dan Goossen said, "Carlos is a natural-born welterweight...big and strong. Mayweather started out at 130 pounds and had to build himself up (to 147 pounds)."

The fight will be shown on HBO pay-per-view.



Floyd Mayweather, left, and Carlos Baldomir strike a traditional pose during a pre-fight news conference in Los Angeles last week. Mayweather is seeking Baldomir's title belt.

Barkley serious about governor

PHOENIX (AP) - Charles Barkley insists he's serious about running for governor of Alabama, but he has to move back there first.

"I can't run until 2014," he said. "I have to live there for seven years, so I'm looking for a house there as we speak."

He also said he is an independent, not a Democrat as previously reported.

"The Republicans are full of it," Barkley said. "The Democrats are a little less full of it."

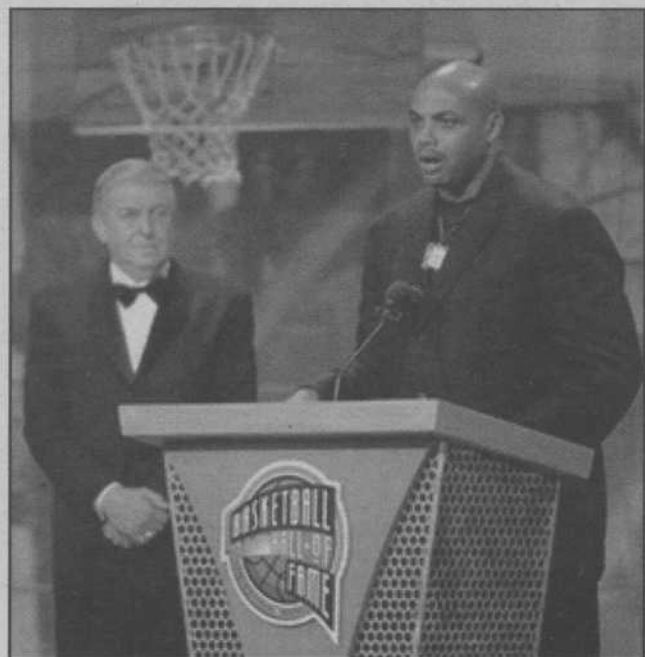
Asked if he had ever been in the governor's office in Montgomery, Barkley said no.

"They don't let many Black people in the governor's mansion in Alabama," he said, "unless they're cleaning."

The quip came in a wide-ranging interview with reporters at US Airways Center, leading up to his induction into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass. Barkley, 43, retired in 2000 after 16 seasons in the NBA. He made the All-Star team 11 times and is one of only four players with 20,000 points, 10,000 rebounds and 4,000 assists.

"I want to speak for people who can't speak for themselves," he said. "America discriminates against poor people. America's divided by economics. If you're born poor, whether you're White, Black or Spanish, you're going to be in a bad neighborhood and you're going to a bad school."

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Former college and NBA basketball player Charles Barkley makes his remarks at a ceremony marking his enshrinment into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame as part of the class of 2006 in Springfield, Mass on Friday.

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