

# BRIAN PETERS PROMOTIONS



## **Dunne Secures World Title Date in Dublin**

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The Time has Come...Now the World Awaits as Bernard Dunne goes in search of the ultimate prize at The O2, Dublin on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Hunky Dorys World Title Fight Night.

Dunne takes on World champion, Ricardo "El Maestro" Cordoba for the WBA Super Bantamweight title as world championship boxing returns to Ireland for the first time in 13 years. The Dubliner turns 29 next month and he feels the timing is perfect for a shot at the WBA belt which once adorned the waist of Barry McGuigan over two decades ago.

"This is the fight I've wanted since I first put on a pair of boxing gloves," said Dunne. "It's every boxers dream to be a world champion and I'm no different. This is what I've worked my whole life for and now that the chance is here I want to grab it with both hands."

Promoter Brian Peters had promised his charge a world title fight in 2009 and he's duly delivered with Dunne admitting that having home advantage is a the icing on the cake. "It's a huge coup to get the fight here, there's no doubt about that," said the former European Champ.

"Every boxer wants to fight for a world title but to have it in your hometown is special. It's going to be an incredible experience and I know I'll thrive on that atmosphere. Cordoba's fought all around the world but he won't ever have experienced anything like the atmosphere in the O2, it's going to be very special. It's a fantastic venue and March 21<sup>st</sup> can't come soon enough."

Peters believes that Dunne can claim his destiny by becoming Ireland's next World Champion. "This is a huge event for Ireland, World title fights are often talked about but in reality they don't come along too often," said the promoter. "I think this has all the makings of a historic night for Irish sport. From the first time I saw Bernard as an amateur I believed he was destined to be a World Champion. It's been a long road but where better for that dream to become reality than at the fabulous new O2 in his hometown."

A hat trick of impressive wins over South American opposition in 2008 secured Dunne a number 11 ranking with the WBA and a crack at Cordoba's World title. The tall, Panamanian southpaw has just one defeat in his 37 pro fights and won the title with a landslide points win over Luis Alberto Perez in his native country last September. Dunne has already studied the champ on DVD and admits he was impressed by what he saw.

"He's a class fighter, you don't get to be a World Champion without having that little bit extra than most," said Dunne. "He's still only 24 but he has a lot of experience and he's been competing at the top level for so long now and you have to respect that."

However Dunne shrugged off suggestions that he would be entering the ring as the underdog on March 21<sup>st</sup>. "That's for the bookies to decide, that might take a bit of the pressure off me but at the end of the day it will only be the two of us in the ring and whether you're labelled the favourite or the underdog it doesn't matter as soon as you step between those ropes. It's what you do on in that ring on the night that counts and I know I'm as good as anyone else out there. If I didn't believe that then I'd have no business in there."

Dunne has been training for the fight since before Christmas and says his preparations will intensify now that he has a date to focus on. "I'm flying already, I'm way ahead of where I would normally be this far out before a fight. I've been working very hard with my strength and conditioning coach, Mike McGurn and I'm also working with some new nutritionists and I've noticed a real difference in that area."

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"I'm always looking to add extra little components to the team and I'm already feeling the benefits on the nutritional side. This is the most important fight of my career so I want to make sure that no stone is left unturned in my preparations."

Details on the undercard of the Hunky Dorys World Title Fight Night will be announced next week.

Tickets for the Hunky Dorys World Title Fight Night are priced from €50 and are available now from Ticketmaster (phone 0818 719 300 or visit [ticketmaster.ie](http://ticketmaster.ie)). Tickets are also available from Ticketmaster outlets nationwide.

## **Cordoba turning a blind eye to Dunne**

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World Champion, Ricardo "El Maestrito" Cordoba says he doesn't want to set eyes on Bernard Dunne again until they get in the ring. The Panamanian is currently in Ireland to promote his WBA Super Bantamweight title defence on the Hunky Dorys World Title Fight Night at The O2, Dublin on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>.

However the champ is adamant that he's not disrespecting Dunne, it's just that he doesn't worry too much about any of his opponents prior to fight night.

"I know his name and record and I'm told that he's a good technical boxer and that's all I need to know for now," said the champion who has compiled a record of 34 wins (21 by KO), 1 defeat and 2 draws since turning pro back in 2000. "I don't even watch videos of my opponents. It's not a sign of disrespect, I just prefer to assess them when the bell goes for the first round."

The champion says that this should not be taken as any sign of over confidence on his behalf. "I am treating this as the biggest fight of my career. I only won the World title in September and this is my first defence so there is no way that I am taking this fight lightly. I want to be World Champion for a very long time and prove to the world that I am a great fighter so I can't allow somebody like Bernard Dunne to get in my way."

Cordoba has no worries about fighting away from home despite being the victim of some biased judging on away trips in the past. "I'm a World Champion now so what's the point in staying at home defending my title? A true World Champ defends his title all over the world and that's what I plan to do. I've had some bad decisions before in Thailand and Germany but I'm confident that I will retain my title either by knockout or a clear points win."

An excellent amateur Cordoba was a 5 time Panamanian champion and compiled an impressive record of 133 wins from his 147 outings in the unpaid code. However he turned professional aged just 16 after being over looked for the national team. "There is a lot of politics in amateur boxing and I got tired of that so I decided to turn professional because my dream was to become a world champion."

Cordoba quickly racked up 25 straight wins including a win fellow world champ and compatriot, Celestino Caballero when he was still only 20 year of age.

Recalling their fight for the Panamanian Super Bantamweight title Cordoba said, "I was really only a bantamweight then and still very young. Caballero was 27 and already a world rated super bantamweight but I won easily on all the judges cards and floored him in the 11<sup>th</sup> round.

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"Now that he is also a world champ people are talking about a rematch but I think I'd win even easier next time. I'm a lot more experienced now and I've grown into the weight so I don't think he'd be able to handle my power if it ever happens but it would be a good fight for the Panamanian fans."

Cordoba's first defeat came in controversial circumstances in Thailand when he lost out on a split decision to local fighter Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym for the WBA bantamweight title. The sole non Asian judge awarded Cordoba the fight by 7 points but the other two judges sided with the local fighter leaving Cordoba with a bitter taste in his mouth and the first and only defeat on his record.

The same title was to elude him twice more in 2006 and 2007 when he drew with German based Ukrainian Wladimir Sidorenko in Germany on both occasions. Cordoba shrugged off all three setbacks but his promoter Richard Dobal admits that the politics of boxing has cost his man dearly. "When you travel to places like Thailand and Germany you know that sometimes you have to knock the other guy out to get a draw," said Dobal.

"Other than the judges who scored against Ricardo in all those fights I've yet to find anyone who didn't think he won them clearly so to my mind he's still pretty much an undefeated fighter. However those setbacks made him even more determined to win a world title and now that he's won the title I don't see him giving it up for a long, long, time.

However there is a precedent for an Irishman beating a Panamanian in a WBA World title fight. In 1985 Barry McGuigan captured the famous belt and the hearts of a nation when he dethroned long reigning World featherweight champ, Eusebio Pedroza.

Cordoba though is insisting that history will not repeat itself. "Pedroza was a great fighter and a hero of mine and he has given me advice in the past but Eusebio Pedroza was Eusebio Pedroza, Ricardo Cordoba is Ricardo Cordoba. They are two different fighters in two different eras. This is my time now. Winning the World title was the greatest moment of my life and I want to keep winning so that I can be a hero in Panama just like Pedroza was."

Tickets for the Hunky Dorys World Title Fight Night are priced from €50 and are available now from Ticketmaster (phone 0818 719 300 or visit [ticketmaster.ie](http://ticketmaster.ie)). Tickets are also available from Ticketmaster outlets nationwide.

## **Team Cordoba preparing for fight of their lives**

Although WBA World Super Bantamweight Champion, Ricardo Cordoba says he won't be watching any video of Bernard Dunne ahead of their Hunky Dorys World Title Fight Night the champs backroom team are adamant that they will be doing their homework on the challenger.

The two men clash at The O2, Dublin on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> and Cordoba's promoter Richard Dobal says they have the utmost respect for Dunne.

"I've a lot of respect for Bernard because he's done what very few European fighters do, he went to the U.S. to learn his trade with Freddie Roach who's probably the most successful trainer in the world", said Dobal.

"We know all about his sparring with Manny Pacquiao while he was in Los Angeles and we know that he was more than capable of holding his own with Pacquiao so that tells you everything you need to know about him.

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"We also respect him because he's stepped up to the plate unlike a lot of other fighters. Even over here in Europe guys like Rendall Munroe spoke about wanting the fight but when it was offered to them we never heard back from them.

"That's the good news for Dunne but the bad news is that he's facing the best super bantamweight on the planet on March 21<sup>st</sup>. It's a very strong division but if you look at the other champs, Israel Vazquez is out injured and nobody's sure when he's coming back, Juanma Lopez is untested.

As for Celestino Caballero he's going around saying he's the best super bantamweight in the world when we've already proven that he's not even the best super bantamweight in Panama right now – Ricardo has already beaten him! So when I say Ricardo is the best guy out there, it's not hype it's backed up by the facts."

Dobal says his team are reading very little into the Dubliner's lone defeat – the shocking first round loss to Spanish puncher, Kiko Martinez in August of 2007.

"I've seen that fight but a first round defeat doesn't mean anything as far as I'm concerned. That can happen to anyone and has happened to great fighters like Jack Dempsey, Floyd Patterson and Emile Griffith and they all went on prove that they could fight a bit!

"The late, great boxing historian Hank Kaplan was my mentor and he always said a first round defeat didn't mean anything because anyone could be caught cold. I'm disregarding that defeat, we're looking at Bernard Dunne as if he was an undefeated fighter and Ricardo's preparing for the toughest fight of his life.

In fact we're here in Dublin now for the press conference with almost 2 months to go and he's already in fighting shape. He's a very dedicated kid and a very religious person who sees this as an opportunity to secure his family's future. He's worked very hard and overcome some tremendous obstacles to get this far so he's not about to throw that away anytime soon."

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## Hunky Dorys World Title Fight Night Facts

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- Cordoba's ring moniker is "El Maestro" which translates as Little Teacher. This was given to him as a 10 year old when he already showed signs of prodigious talent and was regularly handing out boxing lessons in the ring to much older opponents!
- This will be the first world title fight to be held in Ireland since Naseem Hamed stopped Manuel Medina at the old Point in August of 1996 to successfully retain his WBO featherweight title.
- The last Irish fighter to contest a World title in Ireland was Wayne McCullough who successfully defended his WBC bantamweight title against Jose Luis Bueno at the old Point in March of 1996. One of McCullough's sparring partners for that fight was a prodigious 15-year-old talent from Dublin by the name of Bernard Dunne.
- The last time an Irishman and a Panamanian clashed in the ring for a world title fight was Barry McGuigan's famous cash with Eusebio Pedroza in London in 1985. McGuigan recorded a famous victory that night to become the WBA world featherweight champion. Dunne's clash with Cordoba will be for the WBA world super bantamweight title.
- There are remarkable similarities between the records of Dunne / Cordoba and McGuigan / Pedroza going into those fights as outlined below:

	<b>Fights</b>	<b>Won</b>	<b>Lost</b>	<b>Drawn</b>
Bernard Dunne	28	27	1	0
Barry McGuigan	27	26	1	0
Ricardo Cordoba	37	34	1	2
Eusebio Pedroza	42	38	3	1