WBC No. 1-Ranked Ray Austin Faces Undefeated WBC No. 2-Ranked Odlanier Solis to determine who will face WBC Heavyweight Champion Vitali Klitschko; Tallahassee native and undefeated IBF Light Heavyweight Champion Tavoris Cloud will make second world title defense against Colombian puncher Fulgencio Zuniga

MIAMI -- Undefeated Cuban Olympic heavyweight gold medalist Odlanier “La Sombra” Solis (16-0, 12 KOs) will face the toughest test of his young career on Friday, Dec. 17 at AmericanAirlines Arena in Miami, when he meets World Boxing Council No. 1-ranked Ray “The Rainman” Austin (28-4-4, 18 KOs) with the winner earning the right to next face WBC heavyweight champion Vitali Klitschko.

Undefeated International Boxing Federation light heavyweight champion Tavoris “Thunder” Cloud (21-0, 18 KOs), from Tallahassee, will appear in the co-featured bout, defending his crown against respected Colombian puncher Fulgencio Zuniga (24-4-1, 21 KOs).

Tickets priced at $200, $150, $75, $40 and $25 are on sale now at the AmericanAirlines Arena Box office, all Ticketmaster outlets, online at www.ticketmaster.com or by calling (800) 745-3000. The event is being promoted by Don King Productions. Austin vs. Solis is a co-promotion with Arena Sportspromotion.

This will be the most significant heavyweight fight in South Florida since the 2007 WBC elimination bout promoted by Don King at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino featuring No. 1-ranked Samuel “The Nigerian Nightmare” Peter against No. 2-ranked James “Lights Out” Toney. Peter won a unanimous decision and went on to become WBC heavyweight champion.

This marks Don King Productions’ first return to AmericanAirlines Arena since Felix “Tito” Trinidad vs. Mamadou Thiam in 2000. Don King sees this event as a holiday present for South Floridians.

“Tis the season to be merry and enjoy the company of friends and family, and South Florida boxing fans will have one more reason to rejoice on the week before Christmas with two big heavyweights in Ray Austin and Odlanier Solis fighting to see who will get the chance to face WBC heavyweight champion Vitali Klitschko. That’s about as big as it gets in the heavyweight division right now.”

King added, “And there will be many other important fights on the card including a world championship featuring Florida’s own IBF light heavyweight champion Tavoris Cloud defending his belt against a tough Colombian in Fulgencio Zuniga. This will be a big night of boxing in Miami.”

Solis, born in Havana, enjoyed one of the greatest amateur careers in history before defecting in 2006. At age 18, he defeated his legendary Cuban teammate Felix Savon in 1999 and again the following year. He also defeated two future professional heavyweight champions, Sultan Ibragimov and David Haye, at the 2001 amateur world championships. He won every major world tournament he entered.

Solis based his professional career out of Hamburg, Germany, in 2007 before relocating to Miami last year. Magnificently quick-handed for a fighter that normally weighs between 260 and 270 pounds, he has thus far performed with impunity in the ring. Blessed with a full compliment of boxing skills, Solis is positioned at age 30 to realize similar success as a professional that he enjoyed in the amateur ranks.

One of Solis’ secret weapons is a penchant for precision body shots -- a propensity for which Cubans have long been trained for and for which they are well known.

Austin, from Cleveland, is also a mammoth man at 6 foot 6 inches tall who normally weighs just below 250 pounds. His size and strength alone present challenges for anyone stepping into the ring with him.

When he is in peak physical condition, he can contend with anyone as evidenced by the fact that he fought all of the following notable fighters to a draw: Lance “Mount” Whitaker, Larry Donald and future heavyweight champion Sultan Ibragimov.

Austin earned his first and only world-title shot when he faced IBF heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko on March 10, 2007, where he suffered a second-round technical knockout at the hands of the Ukrainian giant. Now he would like the opportunity to fight Wladimir's brother, Vitali.

In his last outing, Austin scored a fourth-round technical knockout over respected veteran DaVarryl "Touch of Sleep" Williamson in Las Vegas on Oct. 31, 2009, in an elimination bout that moved him to the top of the WBC rankings.

Boxing insiders are highly intrigued by Tavoris Cloud, 28, but not simply by the fact he is a world champion with a perfect record. What excites the experts and fans most is his 86-percent knockout ratio that stems from his aggressive, two-handed power that can end a fight on a moment's notice.

Cloud faced the stiffest test of is career in his last fight on Aug. 7 in St. Louis against Glen "Road Warrior" Johnson, the former IBF light heavyweight champion and 2004 Fighter of the Year.

There was no posing or posturing when these two straight-ahead fighters met in Cloud's first title defense. The younger Cloud gave more than he received during this crowd-pleasing slugfest that saw power shots falling like rain. It was either man's fight to win going into the championship rounds. After 12 rounds, the three judges at ringside favored Cloud by identical scores of 116-112.

Cloud won the vacant IBF title from Clinton Woods at the Seminole Hard Rock on Aug. 28, 2009. Woods, always a consummate boxer, had held the IBF crown from 2004 to 2008. He held his own against Cloud, but it wasn't enough as Cloud won the decision by identical scores of 116-112.

Woods and Johnson are two of only three fighters that have been able to go the distance with the notoriously hard-hitting Cloud.

Cloud's opponent, Fulgencio Zuniga, is a hard-hitting 33-year-old Colombian who has made five previous world championship appearances. In addition, he has faced notable world champions like Daniels Santos, Kelly Pavlik, Lucian Bute and Dennis Inkin. He scored a knockdown over Pavlik when the two met.

Zuniga has proven his power as evidenced by a 72-percent career knockout ratio. His most notable wins came against rugged contender Antwun Echols and against a tough Mexican veteran, Jose Luis Zertuche.

Zuniga has fought in world championship matches at 154 pounds, 160 pounds and 168 pounds. Last year he moved to the 175-pound limit and has notched two wins.

A full undercard will be presented. Those bouts will be announced when the matches have been made.