

# Chávez Says Being Decked Gave Him Back His Punch

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Special to The New York Times

LAS VEGAS, Nev., May 7 — One near loss and one official loss — the first of his celebrated career — sent a jolt through the body and mind of Julio César Chávez.

He knew something was wrong. He knew he needed to make adjustments in his training methods if he were to reclaim his World Boxing Council lightweight championship.

So Chávez, who tries to take back that title against Frankie Randall tonight in the Grand Garden of the MGM Hotel, hired Emanuel Stewart, who helped train Evander Holyfield and Thomas Hearns.

"Julio really didn't have a boxing technician," said Stewart, who will be in Chávez's corner during the main bout of "Revenge: The Rematches," a pay-per-view event that begins at 9 P.M. and features four former champions trying to win back their crowns from the same men they had previously lost them to.

"I didn't want to come in and change his style," Stewart said of working with Chávez. "I wanted to come in and show him a few things he could do differently." Stewart was looking to maximize Chávez's power, speed and overall effectiveness.

Chávez, who nearly lost to Pernell Whitaker in a controversial majority draw Sept. 10 and then was stunned by Randall Jan. 29, said Stewart worked wonders.

"He has gotten me to move my head and waist more and convinced

me to start off at a faster pace and put the pressure on fast and keep it on," said Chávez, who has a 89-1-1 record with 77 knockouts. "I feel stronger and quicker."

And hungrier.

After going undefeated through 90 bouts, Chávez claimed he became bored. All he did was win. There were no challenges. He had lost his spirit, his desire. But after losing to Randall and hiring Stewart, Chávez's spark has been rekindled.

"I feel brand new," he said through an interpreter, Gladys Rosa. "I'm not just confident about winning, I'm certain about winning."

Chávez is a 4-1 favorite to reclaim his title against Randall, who defeated Chávez at the MGM Grand three months ago. Randall, who is 49-2-1 with 39 knockouts, had never had a title shot in his 11 professional years until he stepped into the square with Chávez, a 15-1 favorite in that match. Randall was helped in the 11th round, when Chávez was deducted the second of two points for low blows. With Chávez flustered, Randall did what no other fighter had: He sent Chávez sprawling to the canvas with a hammering straight right hand. It was the first knockdown of Chávez's career.

In tonight's other championship bouts, Terry Norris tries to take back his superwelterweight championship from Simon Brown; Julian Jackson attempts to win back his middleweight title from Gerald McClellan, and James Leija tries to avenge his loss to Azumah Nelson for the superfeatherweight championship.