

Vargas-Castillejo Fight Predictions

Written by TSS Press

Thursday, 18 August 2005 19:00

The on again/off again career of "Ferocious" Fernando Vargas (26-2, 23 KOs) of Oxnard, California is on again this Saturday on HBO. "El Feroz" meets Javier Castillejo (58-5, 39 KOs) of Madrid, Spain in a junior middleweight bout from the Allstate Arena in Rosemont, Illinois. Expectations regarding the Ferocious One are not what they once were, but his undiminished tough guy-ism keeps his loyal fans lining up for more. Whether Vargas can recapture the glory of his bygone years is anyone's guess, but his bygone years were a lot more glorious than Castillejo's. This is how The Sweet Science writers see this weekend's fight.

It's sad watching Vargas fight now. He's not the same fighter he was earlier in his career. It's pretty clear that Trinidad ruined him as an elite boxer. His reflexes have slowed down; he doesn't react the same when he gets hit, and he isn't aggressive offensively anymore. He hasn't looked impressive since he beat Ross Thompson five years ago. I don't think Castillejo is going to win, but I do think he will go the distance with Vargas. Vargas by unanimous decision in a repeat performance of his win over Raymond Joval.

Mitch Abramson

Vargas seemed to lack fire last time out against Joval. He may need it back if he hopes to beat Castillejo, a tough veteran who will be there every step of the way. You have to wonder how effective a 27-year-old Vargas is anymore. It's been almost three years since his last significant fight, the loss to Oscar De La Hoya, and he has been riddled with injuries ever since. Castillejo, meanwhile, is 7-0 since losing to De La Hoya in 2001 – though the level of opposition isn't of the highest quality. Talent-wise, it's no contest, and Vargas should win a unanimous decision. But, without the intensity of his earlier career victories, you have to wonder if this may be "Ferocious Fernando's" swansong.

Matt Aguilar

Ricardo Mayorga may want Fernando Vargas to beat Javier Castillejo more than Fernando Vargas. Mayorga, who won the WBC super welterweight belt Saturday, said he will be in attendance for Vargas' bout. That said, Vargas will have a little extra pressure in facing Castillejo. The added incentive of giving Mayorga, who would likely think nothing of Vargas using an M-16 in the ring, could be enough for Vargas to put on a display far exceeding his less than impressive point victory over Raymond Joval.

Jesse K. Cox

Though he's only fought once in something like 20 months, Vargas is still young and still one of the top 154-pounders out there. Besides, he's got to be a little hungry. He stops Castillejo in the 10th.

Rick Folstad

Fernando Vargas, unanimous decision. I just can't go with a 37-year-old fighter who lost to a guy named Del Bryant when I was still in high school.

Tim Graham

Vargas-Castillejo Fight Predictions

Written by TSS Press

Thursday, 18 August 2005 19:00

At 37, the former WBC titlist Castillejo is engaging in his last hurrah. In virtually every department Vargas is better than Castillejo was at his peak. It is certainly the case that with a seven fight win streak Castillejo has rebuilt some confidence since being essentially shutout by Oscar De La Hoya. But, each of those wins came against nominal opposition at home in Spain. The central difference in this fight is that Vargas is faster, punches much harder, and even boxes better than Castillejo. Other than that ... Vargas is simply a fighter in a different class than Castillejo, who is no doubt a skilled and able journeyman. Vargas will out-punch and outwork his Spanish opponent throughout and, in the end, overwhelm him. Vargas by KO in 8.

JE Grant

The big question regarding Fernando Vargas revolves around his overall conditioning and ability to hold his defensive discipline over the distance of championship level fights. If he's trained as responsibly as he and strength coach Ferguson say then beating Castillejo should be very doable. Look for Vargas to counter with authority when he can and work the jab attempting to get to Castillejo's body. The Ferocious One knows there's a pay-per-view rematch with De La Hoya waiting for him; if ever he needed a reason to perform at his best, he got one now. Vargas TKO9 Castillejo.

Patrick Kehoe

Castillejo is certainly durable, but he's not exactly a road warrior, never having won a fight in a non-Spanish speaking country. (He's 57-2 in Spain, 1-0 in Mexico, and 0-3 in the rest of the world.) Once again he's a stranger in a strange land, and at 37 nearly a decade older. Even an off-the-juice incarnation of Vargas should have enough to beat him. Fernando probably won't knock him out – nobody does – but we see it as a comfortable decision. Vargas in a 10-round decision.

George Kimball

Castillejo certainly can box a bit and we all know that Vargas may be just a bit chinny, but Vargas looks to be more of a boxer now and less of a slugger that'll go out and purposely take one just to land one. Key here is the Vargas jab, which should find a home all night long. Castillejo hasn't met a jab he didn't like – the taste of, that is – and let's remember that Vargas out-jabbed the jabbing machine Ike Quartey. When he needs to use the jab it can be a great weapon for him and will be tonight in order to set up the right hand. Not overly concerned with Vargas' back problems and subsequent inactivity, Castillejo hasn't fought since June of last year, and Fernando was in the ring just five months back. After outboxing Castillejo for much of the night look for Vargas to start sitting down on his heavy rights and hard left hooks to "one up" De La Hoya by stopping the Spaniard late. (Oscar won a unanimous decision over Castillejo in 2001.)

Joey Knish

Castillejo is no world-beater, but he's a tough solid pro who should last the distance against Vargas in a one-sided but semi-entertaining bout. Vargas by decision.

Bob Mladinich

I don't like backing inactive, ageing fighters like Castillejo, but then again I don't like backing previously banned, badly bludgeoned, inactive, injury prone and potentially past peak fighters

Vargas-Castillejo Fight Predictions

Written by TSS Press

Thursday, 18 August 2005 19:00

like Vargas either. But I like Vargas' name, and the size of his future purses to secure him a narrow points victory regardless of his performance.

David Payne

If you are open for a good laugh, check out 37-year-old old Javier Castillejo's last four opponents: The Spanish 154-pounder stopped Alberto Campos in five rounds more than 14 months ago; Campos is a Uruguayan light-heavyweight who has lost 11 of his last 13 fights. Before him, in April of 2004, was Genaro Rio, a Nicaraguan light-welterweight whose last five opponents before Castillejo were 0-28. For Castillejo, it was like betting on Secretariat after he had been slipped into a claiming race for 8-year-old maidens. Rio departed in the third round. The Omelet fought twice in 2003: Ignacio Solar, a Columbian welterweight, who has lost his last six fights; and Diego Castillo, of the Cali, Columbia Castillos, who has a record that can only be spawned in South America. Castillejo's nickname is El Lince de Parla, which translates out roughly to "the sharp-sighted one of Parla," which is as refreshing as it is obtuse. OK, so you didn't need to know that. Since the emphases on the overly rested Castillejo's training appears to lean more to wind sprints than sparring, I think I will take a flyer and pick Fernando Vargas by decision.

Pat Putnam

I figure for about four, five rounds Vargas can hold it together – even look crisp – before his back acts up and he has to go through the motions till the final bell. Castillejo, though accurate, isn't the same puncher Tito is, so he shouldn't be able to stop Vargas. Castillejo brings to mind Piccirillo, and endless European fighters: worlds of stamina, a bothersome flicking jab, and circling at full-gallop left and right so far away that rope burns are the only concern. It's been a long time since I've seen either man, but I think Castillejo will put enough rounds in the bank to earn a split nod. Between Vargas' back and Castillejo's non-electrifying style, it should be all about if "El Feroz" can pull the trigger. Not at this stage of his career – too much wear-and-tear. He's more menace than substance.

Joe Rein

Is Fernando Vargas a fading fighter or a more mature one? That is the biggest question surrounding his sporadic career since his loss to Oscar De La Hoya in 2002. Regardless, Vargas will have very little trouble with Javier Castillejo and fight fans will not gain any more foresight on El Feroz's future. Vargas by TKO.

Aaron Tallent