

Interview with WBC Super Middleweight Champion Markus Beyer

Written by Luca De Franco
Monday, 03 April 2006 19:00

Markus Beyer is one of the most dominant fighters of the last seven years. He won the WBC world super middleweight title three times and defended it against the top-ranked contenders. When Beyer lost or just had a tough battle, he didn't complain; he reacted like a real champion by going back to the gym, training very hard and winning the rematch. His wars with Denny Green and Cristian Sanavia are a perfect example of Beyer's attitude. On August 16, 2003 in Nuremburg (Germany) Green surprised everybody knocking Beyer down in the first and second rounds. Also in the second stanza, Green was deducted a point for headbutting Beyer. Later in the brawl a cut appeared on Beyer's face; Green worsened it with an intentional headbutt and was disqualified. The rematch was a different story. On March 12, 2005 in Zwickau (Germany), Beyer got two scorecards in his favor (114-113 and 115-112) while the third judge ruled it a draw (114-114). If Beyer didn't go down in the last round, he would have won by unanimous decision.

The battles against Cristian Sanavia were even more dramatic. Beyer lost the WBC title to the Italian on June 5, 2004 in Chemnitz (Germany). Two judges scored for Sanavia (116-113 and 116-115) and one had it for Beyer (115-114). So much for partisan verdicts. In the rematch, Markus decided to leave the judges out of the decision process. On October 9, 2004 in Erfurt (Germany), Beyer KOed Sanavia in the sixth round. The punch was so spectacular that Sanavia called it the shot of a lifetime. The other loss of Beyer's career came at the hands of Glenn Catley on May 6, 2000. Catley had a record of 25-3 and a collection of titles.

Among middleweights, he had been British and WBC international champion. As a super middleweight, he had won the WBO/IBF intercontinental belts and scored a major win over Eric Lucas (TKO 12). Against Beyer, the English hitter was losing on points and relied on his power to get another 12th round TKO. After that loss, Beyer made his way up the WBC rankings and became world champion for the second time. On April 5, 2003 he defeated Eric Lucas on points. You can understand why Markus Beyer is an idol for the German boxing fans who nicknamed him "Boom Boom" and already bought all tickets available for his next match even if it appears just a routine defense.

Markus Beyer is also one of the few fighters who became a national star. That's because he is managed by Sauerland Event which is one of the top companies in the planet. Sauerland Event regularly sells out 10,000 seats venues, has a contract with a major German network and is responsible for turning an unknown Russian giant named Nicolay Valuev into the WBA world heavyweight champion. In short, Sauerland Event and is on the same level as Don King Productions and Top Rank. I want to thank Sauerland Event's Media Manager Heiko Mallwitz for serving as translator for this interview with Markus Beyer.

Mr. Beyer, next May 13 you will defend the WBC title against Sakio Bika (20-1-1). Did you see him fight?

Yes, I saw the tapes and I can legitimately say that he is a good boxer with a powerful punch. I

don't take him lightly. I'm training hard and I will come out on top.

You faced some of the top-ranked super middleweights in the world. Who was the toughest?

I would say Richie Woodhall and Denny Green. I won the WBC world title for the first time against Woodhall on October 23 1999 in Telford (England). He was 25-1 (15 KOs) and had been British Commonwealth and European middleweight champion. I knew he was tough. I sent him down once in the first round and twice in the third. I got a unanimous decision: 114-113, 115-113 and 115-111. I faced Denny Green twice. He surprised me the first time, with his rough style. I won by 5th round DQ. When the deal for a second fight was made, I trained harder than ever before and... surprised him!

Denny Green is the biggest star of Australian boxing. His next fight against Anthony Mundine is supposed to set the new attendance record. Do you think that Green is a great champion?

He is very strong physically, has good boxing skills and hits hard. He could become a great champion.

Cristian Sanavia told me that you KOed him with the punch of a lifetime. Did you study it while training?

No, I didn't. I just realized that I lost a couple of rounds and I had to do something. So I went after Sanavia and KOed him in the sixth round. I don't agree with Cristian who called that shot the punch of a lifetime. I hit him with a left-right-left combination. I threw equally spectacular punches against Manuel Lopez and Leif Keiski: I KOed them in the seventh round. I also remember my victory over Simon Andrews (TKO 5) in London. Going back to the rematch against Sanavia, it was a very important fight for me and I was determined to win. I did it by giving 100%.

You easily defeated a fighter who was very publicized in the United States: Omar Sheika. What's your opinion of him?

He is a good boxer, but was stopped by WBO champion Joe Calzaghe (TKO 5). Sheika also lost on points to Eric Lucas (WBC), Jeff Lacy (IBF) and me. The scorecards were 116-112, 118-110 and 116-112 in my favor. I don't believe that Omar Sheika will receive another world title shot.

Let's talk about the other super middleweight champions. Would you prefer to face WBO/IBF king Joe Calzaghe or WBA titlist Mikkel Kessler?

I would welcome a match with Joe Calzaghe. He has two belts that I would like to add to my collection and his boxing style is perfect for me. I also believe that we could fight for a big purse.

Would you like to fight in America?

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Of course, if the situation is right.

Did you have any idols growing up?

I played soccer and boxed, so my idols were from those sports. In soccer, I liked Joachim Streich. He was a forward who played 98 times for the East German team and scored 53 goals. Among boxers, I looked up to Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard.

Markus Beyer

Born: Erlabrunn (Germany) on April 28, 1971

Nickname: Boom Boom

Stance: Southpaw

Amateur Career

1995 World Championships – Berlin (Germany) – Bronze Medal (156 lbs)

1996 European Championships – Vejle (Denmark) – Silver Medal (156 lbs)

Professional Career

Debut: in 1996

Record: 34 wins (13 KOs) and 2 losses

Trainer: Ulli Wegner

Manager: Sauerland Event owned by Wilfried Sauerland

Super Middleweight Titles

German champion

IBF intercontinental champion

WBC international champion

WBC world champion

1st reign from October 23, 1999 to May 6, 2000

2nd reign from April 5, 2003 to June 5, 2004

3rd reign since October 9, 2004