

Otis Grant - Magic Man Set To Disappear

Written by Joey Knish
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On June 10th, 1999, Canadian boxer Otis Grant had seconds to react as he saw a head-on collision coming right in his face. With his daughter Alexandria and fellow fighter Hercules Kyvelos in the car, Grant put his life on the line and turned the car so that he would absorb the impact of the oncoming vehicle on his side of the car.

Less than a month later and after three weeks in the hospital Grant reflected, "I did the right thing."

Kyvelos (23-2) and Alexandria got out of the car easily while Otis Grant suffered broken ribs, a punctured lung and shoulder injury. He was practically helpless while Hercules took care of Grant and his daughter. Doctors stated that it was Grant's excellent condition that saved his life in an accident that likely would have ended the life of anyone else, let alone ending a boxing career.

But Grant persevered, determined to fight again at the championship level. He was coming off a TKO 10 loss to Roy Jones Jr. when he challenged Jones for the WBC and WBA Light Heavyweight titles. Grant was making his light heavy debut in that bout, coming all the way up from 160 pounds, and it now looks like that was the last major title shot for the fighter who once held WBO and NABF Middleweight titles in addition to his Canadian crown.

The comeback officially started four years after the accident when "Magic Man" Grant beat tough Dingaana Thobela over eight one-sided rounds in 2003. Fight fans in the province of Quebec welcomed Grant back as his wonderful story unfolded. He ran off six more victories over decent opposition such as Henry Porras, Nader Hamdan, Charles Adamu and Donnell Wiggins for the hometown fans until meeting his match last weekend.

Fighting Librado Andrade, 23-0 (17 KO), in a WBC Super Middleweight Eliminator, the 38-year-old Grant simply didn't have enough left against a stronger younger fighter who was just too aggressive and determined for the veteran to outbox on this night. While Andrade looks well on his way to becoming champion one day, that dream has now died for Otis Grant.

The endless assault from Andrade dropped the Jamaican-born Grant two times in the fifth round and ended when he and his team elected not to come out for the eighth round. Andrade felt that in the end the difference in this bout may have been age. He said at the post-fight press conference that "if he (Grant) was five years younger it would have been a whole different fight."

And he might be right.

It seems we may have seen the last of the "Magic Man" Otis Grant who admitted after the bout that "it may be time to bow out, and bow out gracefully."

Unfortunately the time lost while Grant recovered from that terrifying accident is forever spent,

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leaving fans and even opponents such as Andrade wondering what could have been.

For Grant the question never comes up. He knows he made the right decision.