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Heavyweight Shannon Briggs has accumulated 41 knockouts and 47 wins to go with just 4 losses and a draw in his 14-year professional fight career. At 34 years of age Briggs is looking for one more championship shot and, tipping the scales at over 270 pounds, Shannon “The Cannon” seems like an easy guy to find.

Briggs isn’t associated with any big name promotional racket so making a deal would be easy to do than with some of the major managers. And he is doing his part to make some noise as he let’s his fists do the talking. The last time the Brooklyn born fighter won a fight by the judges’ cards was back in 1997 when he won a decision against George Foreman. There have been seventeen victories since beating Big George, and none of them have gone to the final bell. Moreover, just one bout made it all the way to seven rounds – against tough Ray Mercer – and ten of those wins were within the first three minutes.

It makes one wonder why the exciting heavyweight has only been afforded just one major title shot . . . or should it be expected?

As his knockout ratio of 87% suggests, it is a risky proposition fighting Briggs, and the boxer makes no secret of the fact he intends to give the people what they want – exciting bouts that end with a bang. This week before punishing Chris Koval for three rounds Briggs stated that it was his job to give the people what they wanted, and the people clearly love the big knockout. Knockout fighters certainly grab the public’s attention and that should translate to more exposure and better paydays. But, as mentioned, being dangerous can also mean being ducked.

The aforementioned victory over Koval was broadcast so fans could see the destructive force Briggs has been of late. Online television network JumpTV (who carried the Briggs-Koval fight for just $4.99) is a long way however from HBO, Showtime or even ESPN. But Briggs has done his part by remaining active – he fought five times last year and twice so far in 2006 – and his ascent in the rankings has been slow and steady. Recent governing body rankings had Briggs as high as #5 (by the WBO), #8 WBC, and #10 in both the IBF and WBA ratings. In stopping Chris Koval this week Briggs added the fringe USBA title to the NABA and WBO NABO belts he already laid claim to.

The tricky part for “The Cannon” is to continue along the same road that his seen him rise in the rankings while at the same time push for a major title shot. At 34 years old he isn’t quite over-the-hill by any means but he does not have youth on his side either. Weight has become an issue although it has yet to be his undoing. Briggs weighed in this week at 273 pounds, a number that is 20 pounds more than his low of last year.

Against both Koval and Dicky Ryan (his two opponents so far this year) the extra weight never played into the fight. But if he expects to succeed against better opposition his condition must improve. It was interesting to hear Briggs talk the talk and claim that he was in the “best shape”

of his life for the bout with Koval having trained “extra hard.” Somehow “extra hard” turned into “extra heavy.”

When looking at the top heavyweights today it is hard to discount Shannon “The Cannon” Briggs as a legitimate contender. In no particular order today’s top heavyweights are a mix of Wladimir Klitschko, Hasim Rahman, Sergei Lyakhovich. Lamon Brewster, Nicolay Valuev, James Toney, Samuel Peter, Ray Austin, Calvin Brock, Chris Byrd, Sultan Ibragimov, and Luan Krasniqi. Sure there are a few left out who are capable of fitting in this group, but the point is that there is no dominant heavyweight right now. What separates Samuel Peter and Briggs? Briggs and Brewster? Would Briggs-Lyakhovich be a mismatch? Rahman vs. Briggs could be explosive, as would Klitschko and Shannon. I would give Briggs a chance against any of those fighters mentioned about; that is not the same as saying he would be favored to win, but power is the usually the last asset that a fighter loses and Briggs has shown he still has it.

Boxing’s marquee division still hasn’t found its savior, and Shannon Briggs isn’t it. But “The Cannon” just may be the most active and exciting heavyweight as he delivers the knockout action that people flock to see.

He has paid his dues and made his opponents pay, now it is time for Briggs to cash in.