

## Forrest-Quarthey Fight Predictions

Written by TSS Press

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Live Saturday night on HBO from the Theater at Madison Square Garden, former champions Vernon Forrest and Ike Quarthey square off in an eliminator to see who eliminates who from future contention. Quarthey was welterweight champ from 1994-1999 before suffering losses to De la Hoya and Vargas. Forrest has two wins over Mosley in 2002, but two losses to Mayorga ended that ride. Forrest and Quarthey are now both on the comeback trail, and chances are the loser Saturday night won't come back to New York again any time soon. The undercard features former champion Kassim Ouma versus Brooklyn's own Sechew Powell. This is how The Sweet Science writers see Saturday's bouts.

I think Forrest is too tall and skilled for Quarthey. You don't realize how small a fighter is until you see them in person, and Quarthey is a little guy. Quarthey also appears a bit slower since he came back, a bit more plodding. Forrest TKO 9. As for Sechew Powell and Kassim Ouma, I think Powell is going to box his way to a decision win.

### **Mitch Abramson**

On this night of junior middleweight action, two American boxers will suffer close decision losses to pressure fighters from Africa. In the co-feature, a battle of southpaws, Sechew Powell is taking a big step up in class when he meets former champion Kassim Ouma. The bet here is that it is too big a step for the undefeated New Yorker. Powell faltered when he faced journeyman Grady Brewer, but two of three judges came to his rescue. This time Ouma's volume punching will prove too much for the talented but inexperienced Powell, handing him his first loss. The main event promises to offer a similar stylistic matchup, boxer against puncher, between two men on the comeback trail. Vernon Forrest and Ike Quarthey are both in their mid-thirties, and both have 40 fights under their belts, including 37 wins and two losses. The fight will be almost as close as their records. Quarthey will ride out some rough moments, but will apply enough steady pressure throughout the bout to earn a decision victory. Ouma and Quarthey both win by decision.

### **David Berlin**

I believe what I'm hearing from the Vernon Forrest camp...that's he's 100% healthy. In that case, he wins an easy decision over a game but outgunned Ike Quarthey.

### **Randy Gordon**

In their primes, I might have leaned a bit toward Quarthey. What I've seen, though, on his comeback is a much reduced version – one with less oomph, less resistance. Forrest, on the other hand, has had serious health problems and it is dubious that he is as good as he used to be. My spies have better things to look at. When in doubt, pick a technical draw ... I don't believe Kassim Ouma was himself when he lost his belt to Roman Karmazin. I believe he is one of the most talented guys in the world and though Sechew Powell is a talented youngster, this is too much too soon. Ouma will have to work, but he should prevail on points.

### **Michael Katz**

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Quartey and Forrest is an intriguing matchup that could go either way. Without any real conviction, I'll pick Forrest to pick Quartey apart with jabs and win a hard-earned decision ... Ouma looks like he might have burnt out already while Sechew is still moving up. As good of a boxer as Ouma is, his lack of power will hurt him against a bigger guy like Powell. Powell by decision.

### **Bob Mladinich**

Quartey and Forrest are not what they were at their best. Only their names are the same. There's interest...no heat. Unless Forrest does something spectacular enough to erase the picture of Mayorga offering his chin like a piñata and laughing at Vernon's best, which is unlikely, even a win is just treading water. If he has a vestige of his old skills – rotate cuff injury, not withstanding -- he should manage to go the distance, against a pressuring Quartey, landing enough to get a split decision. It's better than kissing your sister, but won't create a clamor for a big match.

### **Joe Rein**

Ouma looked great until his fateful night with Karmazin and then the skeptics had their way with him. Now he gets a chance to get back into the mix against a tough opponent in Powell. Still, Ouma has better skills and more experience and that should carry him to victory, unless of course his mind is somewhere else. Powell has the ability to make this an exciting fight though and should Ouma come out with another B performance then look out. I don't see that happening again and I see Ouma outsmarting his foe and prevailing by a clear-cut decision ... In a possible career eliminator main event, Quartey and Forrest face-off to decide their futures in the sport. Everything is at stake so both men will likely come out with a high-octane intensity that makes for one helluva fight. Forrest has been a mystery after dominating Shane Mosley twice only to lose twice to the amateurish brawler, Ricardo Mayorga. This is his chance to prove that he's not a washed up one-hit wonder. He can do that by using his long-reaching jab to keep Quartey at bay and control the fight. Quartey is a strong puncher but will only be effective if he can get inside ala Mayorga. I'd pick Quartey if he was in his heyday, but he's a slower version since his return and I don't think he'll have enough to contend with his bigger, faster opponent. I like Forrest by decision, but Quartey's big heart won't make it easy for him.

### **Benn Schulberg**

The ever-enigmatic Vernon Forrest has made it difficult for boxing fans to erase the memory of his first loss to Ricardo Mayorga. A win over the always dangerous Ike Quartey will help us all forget the past. Forrest by unanimous decision ... This is the junior middleweight division's most significant non-title fight of the year. Sechew Powell has been dominant in his first 20 fights, but will face his toughest opponent yet in Kassim Ouma. However, look for Powell's height and reach advantage to carry him through the fight. Powell by unanimous decision.

### **Aaron Tallent**

If the main event unfolds at even 75% of the fighters' previously proven talent, it will still be a decent contest. A comparison of recent form and opposition in respective comebacks seems to favor Quartey strongly, and Forrest's arm injury is still a crucial question. The vibe, however, says Forrest ... Even if Ouma wins big, he's still got to prove himself. In the ring, that is. More important, if he can remain a content, productive citizen after many crappy early breaks, he's

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really achieved something. That said, it seems like Ouma is on a tightrope boxingwise, and Powell could knock him off it as much as anyone.

**Phil Woolever**