

Haye Drew The Wrong Klitschko Brother

Written by Frank Lotierzo
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If all the back talk and speculation is true, this coming September 12th WBC heavyweight title holder Vitali Klitschko 37-2 (36) will defend his title against former cruiserweight champ David Haye 22-1 (21) in Germany. As most know Haye was supposed to challenge Vitali's younger brother Wladimir this past June for his WBO title, but was forced to pull out of the fight due to suffering a back injury during training. Undefeated Ruslan Chagaev replaced Haye and was stopped by Wladimir after the ninth round.

However, before sustaining the injury Haye purposely went out of his way to insult and demean both brothers every chance he got. Haye took shots at Wladimir Klitschko suggesting he wasn't tough and couldn't take a punch, going so far as to say both he and his brother were hurting boxing and the reason for the declining interest in what used to be boxing's flagship division. Haye then turned his attention to the fighter who looks to be his next opponent, Vitali Klitschko, implying that he resembled a robot more than a professional fighter.

David Haye is not going to go away and will finally get a shot at two things he really wants, a fight with one of the Klitschkos, and a shot at the heavyweight title. Haye hasn't fought since stopping Monte Barrett last November. Since then he's attacked and mocked the Klitschkos more so than Cassius Clay did Sonny Liston over 45 years ago. One thing Haye has already proven beyond a doubt is -- he knows how to play the game. Here's a fighter who has beaten one fringe contender in his career fighting as a heavyweight, he isn't even undefeated and was stopped in his only loss, yet he's talked his way into a title shot not once, but twice. All due praise goes to David Haye for accomplishing that. Fighters with some ability and who pay attention as to what goes on outside the ring sometimes don't need a manager.

Assuming Vitali Klitschko isn't hurt during training, something that is nothing close to being a given, this fight will probably be realized. Which is probably a bad thing for Mr. Haye, being that he drew the wrong Klitschko to hope to hit the lottery against. Haye actually hit the lottery already by getting a title shot and even drew the right fighter, Wladimir Klitschko, to fight. Then he screwed it up and didn't go through with it due to his injury. Maybe he really was hurt too badly to fight, then again maybe there was something else to it. Either way he's in a tougher spot now having to take down Vitali instead of Wladimir Klitschko.

The reality is Haye only has one way in which he can win the fight versus either brother: he has to score a knockout. The bottom line is he's just not a good enough boxer, nor does he have the temperament to outbox either of them even if he possessed the tools to do so. On top of that he doesn't have the size, physical strength or build to present a real problem for them. If he were smaller and could present a small package, he might be able to disrupt them and take them out of their comfort zone. On the other hand if he was close to their size and was really strong, he'd have something to work with. But he doesn't. He's too big to out-quick them with his limited skill set and too small to move them around or manhandle either Wladimir or Vitali the way he'd need to in order to beat them.

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Having said that, he has the greatest equalizer any fighter could possess...he can punch. He may not have the greatest means to deliver his power, but he is willing to let his hands go and that's huge. In a match up with Wladimir, Haye had two things he could hang his chances on. One - he is a fast starter and likes to assert himself mentally and physically. Two - if he jumped on Wladimir he'd either force him to fight defensively or he'd force him to open up and fight, increasing his chances to plant a fight-altering shot on him. Wladimir forces himself to fight at a measured pace and doesn't like to chance getting nailed. So Haye might have, again, might have had a chance to hit the jackpot. I would've picked against it, but at least he was a live dog with a puncher's chance.

That's not the case for him in a matchup with Vitali. Haye has a chin issue, something that is known to the entire boxing community. Sure, that would've been huge versus Wladimir too, but he at least stood a chance to get Wladimir out before his chin betrayed him. This is a luxury he doesn't have fighting Vitali. Vitali has shown that he has a first tier chin and is the only heavyweight title holder in history who has never been off his feet during a fight. Klitschko absorbed some massive shots from Lennox Lewis and Corrie Sanders, who both punch harder than Haye, and other than being shook once or twice, was never close to going down or being stopped. Which translates into Haye more than likely having to fight Klitschko for the full 12-rounds without being tagged with anything big and being stopped himself.

The one thing Vitali has always done better than Wladimir until recently is tie up and clinch, preventing his opponent from following through with a finishing punch if he needs a breather or is briefly in trouble. So you can see Haye has a tall order in front of him. He has to fight mistake free while engaging Klitschko enough to earn the decision. Vitali Klitschko is the wrong fight for David Haye. He won the lottery getting the fight with Wladimir Klitschko for earlier this year, but couldn't follow through with the fight and had to pull out of it. Now it appears he's getting a second chance at the other Klitschko.

Only this time he drew the wrong brother to actually win the lottery!

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