Written by Rick Folstad
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The thing to remember about Nate “The Galaxxy Warrior” Campbell is that he’s Opie Taylor outside the ring and Freddy Krueger inside it. Campbell doesn’t beat you as much as he robs you, reaches in, yanks out your heart and stomps on it, gives it a good whack.

That’s what WBO junior-welterweight champ Timothy “Desert Storm“ Bradley (24-0, 11 KOs) will be trying to avoid when he defends his title against Campbell on Saturday night at the Agua Caliente Casino in Rancho Mirage, Calif.(SHOWTIME). If this were a football game, Bradley, who lives in North Palm Springs, Calif., would be the home team. And he should grab onto any advantage he can get.

Campbell (33-5-1, 25 KOs), who fights out of Tampa, is one of those annoying, non-stop fighters who won’t allow you to catch your breath. He’s easy to find. Check under your chin. That’s where he spends most of his fight time.

Bradley is aware of Campbell’s in-your-face style. He watched him pull off the upset of a lifetime 17 months ago in Cancun, Mexico when Campbell muscled the lightweight title out of the hands of heavily-favored Juan Diaz.

“I couldn’t believe it,” Bradley said on a recent conference call promoting his fight with Campbell. “Sitting there in Cancun, I could not believe it. And I actually lost money on that fight. I think I lost five pesos. When I saw Nate put those hands on Juan I was like, ’this dude is unbelievable.’ “

What’s unbelievable is, Bradley found someone to take his bet.

Not to say Diaz took Campbell lightly, but you don’t look past a fight with Campbell. You circle the date on your calendar and get ready for a rough night.

Asked why he thought he could do any better against Campbell than Diaz did, Bradley first reminded every one that he wasn’t Juan Diaz.

“I’m not one dimensional,” he said. “Juan Diaz is one dimensional. He can’t move, he can’t box. He can’t adjust in the ring. I can make my adjustments in the ring. That makes me feel more confident.“

Campbell moved up to the junior-welterweight division after he lost his lightweight title on the scale in February when he couldn’t make weight in his win against Ali Funeka.

Despite forfeiting his title, Campbell again looked pretty good against a top contender who could punch. And again, Bradley was impressed.

“I was like, ‘wow, I would never want to get in the ring against that dude,’” Bradley said. “But to

be the best you've got to beat the best. That's why I'm taking this challenge. I want to be the best fighter in the world at 140 pounds."

And he said he has to go through Nate Campbell to call himself that.

Campbell doesn't try to fool anyone in the ring. He doesn't go for cute or tricky. He isn't as fast as he is relentless, he isn't as gifted as he is determined, and he isn't as slick as he is tough. He doesn't win by knockout, he wins by attrition. He beats away the early swagger most fighters carry into the ring with them, then starts to work on what's left.

"When the bell rings, I'm out to do damage," Campbell said. "All that about being nice, I leave that outside the ring. We can be friends after round 12. But from the first round to the last, I'm out there to take his head off, to bust his ribs. I want to hurt him. I want to ruin him. That's my job. We get paid for this."

Also on the card is a title fight between Devon Alexander and Junior Witter, who will be fighting for the vacant WBC junior-welterweight title.

Bradley beat Witter for the WBC and WBO titles in May 2008, and then gave up the WBC belt when he refused to meet the deadline for agreeing to fight Alexander, the WBC mandatory challenger.

"This fight actually represents something a lot bigger than just Bradley and Nate getting it on," said Terry Trekas, Campbell's co-promoter and advisor. "This represents the top fighters in the division fighting each other without it being mandatory, without there being ridiculous catch-weights or insane financial demands. This is two guys basically saying 'let's do it.' "

"Expect fireworks," Bradley said. "A total train wreck between two hungry, determined fighters who come to fight."

" I have no pressure on me," Campbell said. "I have nothing to prove to anybody in Palm Springs. They already think Timmy is going to win, so I'm just going to do my thing."