

Hungry Huck Would Welcome Cruiserweight Super Six

Written by Phil Woolever
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Freshly anointed with plenty of sweat and no unnecessary blood or tears, new WBO cruiserweight titlist Marco Huck isn't the type to relax upon his latest laurels after taking the belt in scintillating style from Victor Emilio Ramirez Saturday night in Germany.

Observations of the amiably animated Huck indicate he'd be unlikely to issue any complete championship proclamations until he'd faced all available elite fighters in the 190 pound division.

In fact, if a round robin format like the upcoming "super six" super-middleweight tournament were proposed, Huck would probably jump at the opportunity with the least questions asked.

As Huck has repeated since a stoppage loss, his only defeat, to Steve Cunningham in a December '07 slugfest for the IBF crown, Huck's strongest desire as a professional is to line up conking contests against all the best fighters in his weight class.

Although it wouldn't make the most business sense from a long term marketing standpoint by almost any means, Huck's attitude might make him willing to face off in a rematch against Cunningham next weekend.

Cooler heads at his promoters, Sauerland Event, will prevail but having Huck in the championship mix is definitely a nice addition to the cruiserweight landscape either way. Besides, the folks at Sauerland are usually on the right page for boxing fans in terms of quality, competitive matchmaking.

Still, it's nice to look forward and imagine what could be in store as Huck defends his title, especially after the intense action that transpired between he and Ramirez.

The fight occurred in a city approximately 120 miles outside Berlin called Halle, but inside the packed Gerry Weber arena, Huck and Ramirez took up temporary residence giving each other hell for 12 stirring, back and forth frames.

Huck battled with reserve to avoid potentially dangerous trading with the heavy handed Ramirez and lost a point for low blows, but overall his fight plan was effective and well carried out, as the scoring of 116-111 (twice) and 115-112 showed.

"I've never fought anyone who punches that hard," admitted Huck. "He was very tough."

A bitterly disappointed Ramirez felt he deserved the nod, but he admitted Huck was a top quality foe. Ramirez could likely become one of the gatekeepers to the upper echelons.

Meanwhile, there are all sorts of lucrative options for Huck, who shapes up as the cruiserweight "wild card" type in terms of matching up against the other titlists.

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If there ever was a tournament type format, Huck currently seems most likely to fall somewhere in the middle of the championship belted crew.

Thomasz Adamek, who took the IBF title from Cunningham, is king of the roost, and Cunningham would still have to be the favorite over Huck, who's biggest win so far probably remains over Jean Marc Montrose.

Depending on which incarnation of WBA titlist Guillermo Jones showed up, that encounter is a pick 'em affair.

Huck should be favored to beat WBC ruler Giacobbe Fragomeni, still a primarily unknown commodity.

Add hot and cold veteran Herbie Hide to the mix of major belt holders and Cunningham, and you'd have a tournament that could surpass the super middleweights in terms of frenzied knockdown scenes.

Meanwhile, it would be interesting enough if a pair of bouts between the aforementioned fighters actually got it on.

"Captain" Huck doesn't look ready to command the division, but he's definitely capable of adding plenty of excitement.

Huck, now 26-1, looked none the worse for some extreme wear against Ramirez but one has to wonder how many more such wars of attrition he can endure.

Huck, age 24, is the type of brawler who could have mauling mileage piled up enough so any upcoming round could see the wheels come off. With that in mind, his coach Uri Wegner is stressing a more patient approach in which Huck's considerable conditioning plays a major factor in later rounds, much as it did against Ramirez.

Huck was having a respectable showing against Cunningham for a while, but faded toward the finish. Huck promises that won't happen again.

"I learned a lot in that fight," reflected Huck. "I am anxious for the chance to show that I am now not only stronger, but smarter. I understand what it takes to win a long, hard fight."

Huck proved that point against Ramirez, but Team Huck might want to think about a fight or two against less formidable opposition and aim for a big spring showdown instead of either a rematch with Cunningham or a unification tilt.

Huck is very strong and very willing, and for now, still an improving work in pounding progress.

In this game, that's often just enough to separate the men from the boys, but as Ramirez found out Saturday night not all men can be champions for long.