

No Secret : Kessler Should Win Big Saturday

Written by Phil Woolever

Wednesday, 09 September 2009 19:00

PUNCHING PIE IN THE DENMARK SKY - Gusmyr Perdomo says he knows the secret to beating Mikkel Kessler in Herning, Denmark this Saturday night.

"Kessler is a great champion but we have studied him extensively and I have the correct plan for victory although I will not reveal it until the fight time," suggested Perdomo.

Unless said plan involves tag-teaming with Joe Calzaghe, it's highly probable that the only really unknown factor about this fight is whether or not Perdomo, 16-2 (10), who has never been stopped as a pro, will be able last the distance.

Want to know a secret? He won't.

Nothing against brave and willing Perdomo, but unless Kessler, 41-1 (31), really wants as much in-ring fine tuning as possible, Kessler will most likely finish the mismatched WBA Super-middleweight title affair well before the halfway point.

"I guess I will just have to be the first to knock him out," said a stoic Kessler.

I saw the 33 year old Perdomo's last fight, a fourth round TKO against Laurent Goury in Dusseldorf last November. Goury, then 14-17, is a durable journeyman who has faced some strong opponents, but that's about all he can claim as a boxer. Perdomo did a solid job walking Goury down and looked good against a limited foe, but unless Venezuelan Perdomo was either holding way back or has improved about 400%, Saturday's main event is no contest.

Perdomo's best win was probably a TKO 2 in Buenos Aires over Hector Javier Velazco, then 37-7-1, for the WBA Fedalatin Supermiddleweight belt. Perdomo dropped Velazco four times in route to the early ending. Other than that, Perdomo's biggest claim to fame is a split decision loss to Felix Sturm in September of 2003.

Perdomo trainer Michael Timm will have his underdog charge as prepared as possible, but the honchos at Universum have bestowed their stable member Perdomo with a nice payday and huge opportunity while providing Kessler, who recently joined Sauerland in a new promotional agreement, with a decent warm-up prior to his official start in Showtime's Super Six World Boxing Classic.

What they haven't done is expose the 30 year old Kessler to much of an upset threat beyond the usual fluke or longshot probabilities.

To many prognosticators, Kessler is probably a favorite to win the Showtime sweepstakes which starts on October 17th with Arthur Abraham vs. Jermain Taylor in Berlin and Carl Froch vs Andre Direll in the UK.

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Kessler's initial appearance in the tournament round robin rumble is officially slated for November 21st against Andre Ward but make no mistake, in terms of consequential action, he and eventual foe Ward are actually the first to blast off when they appear Saturday against separate opponents in different time zones. Showtime is televising both contests.

Ward, 19-0 (12), is in his own warm-up show at Temecula, California, against Shelby Pudwell, 22-3-1 (9), best known for losing by first round stoppage against still unproven John Duddy. You could probably put parlay odds on Poderno and Pudwell at 1,000 to 1 and still hook very few rational wagers.

Win or lose, Kessler and Ward both probably have contract clauses protecting their biggest investors from problems that could arise due to injury, arrest, etc.

While the chances of either principal losing their Saturday bouts are slim, there is always the realistic probability that some unforeseen injury like a cut or sprain could derail Kessler or Ward's best laid plans.

It's not unreasonable to question the wisdom of Kessler or Ward taking tune ups, when it's far from impossible that something like an accidental headbutt or torn ligament could effect their ability to clash as scheduled.

Kessler's attitude, like most champions, is probably that he's going to keep winning and it doesn't matter who its against.

"Of course there's a risk, but I'm not the type of man that's afraid of risks," concluded "The Viking Warrior".

One thing that could cause Kessler as many problems as Perdomo is ring rust. Kessler looked very good in his last fight with a 3rd round KO of Danilo Haussler but it was almost a year ago, on 10-25-08.

"It was very disappointing to be inactive for such a long time," admits Kessler, "But I will prove I am in great shape. Everything in training went very well. I am glad fans in the USA will be watching. Obviously there is much more at stake than the WBA title."

Kessler's only setback came in November '07 when he lost a unanimous nod against Calzaghe in Cardiff, Wales.

And in regard to that secret of Perdomo's, Calzaghe showed the side to side movement and rhythmic pressure punching it takes to freeze Kessler out of his own game plan.

Calzaghe had the required tools to pull it off. Perdomo doesn't.

Ward likely has the necessary boxing skills needed against Kessler. The question is whether or not he'll carry enough pop to hold off Kessler's eventual assault.

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First come Saturday night's "previews".

Ward and Kessler will get some fresh film footage for a good closeup look at each other, and Showtime fans will get a good, Super Six appetizing look at both.

This weekend's results should feature a couple of highlight reel knockouts.

Then Kessler and Ward should be ready for what will likely be a knockout of a fight in November.