

## Chris Arreola & Vitali Klitschko Ready To Go

Written by David A. Avila  
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LOS ANGELES-Only four feet separated world champion Vitali Klitschko from Mexican-American challenger Chris Arreola under the near 100 degree temperatures at LA Live in downtown L.A. on Tuesday. Only four days remain until their clash.

But it's taken a lot longer for a Mexican heavyweight to be so close to winning a heavyweight world title.

"I'm just ready to go," said Arreola.

Arreola (27-0, 24 KOs) steps in to challenge for Klitschko's (37-2, 36 KOs) WBC heavyweight title on Saturday Sept. 26, at the Staples Center in downtown L.A. The fight will be shown on HBO, not on pay-per-view.

Many people claim that Goossen-Tutor Promotions who guide Arreola's career are more concerned with taking the money and less concerned with winning the title. The Mexican fighter shakes his head at that ideology.

"I'm here to win the title," said Arreola, 28, looking much slimmer than the opening press conference in August. "Its not about the money, the money will always be there."

Aside from the usual faces and media types, there weren't many fans at the open press conference held in the square across the street from Staples Center. It's almost if the fans aren't sure to believe that a boxer of Mexican descent can actually win the world title.

Nine months ago it seemed like a cinch that Mexico's Antonio Margarito would steamroll over Pomona's Sugar Shane Mosley at the same arena. Then the unthinkable happened and it was the Mexican who was steamrolled.

Last weekend Mexico's best fighter Juan Manuel Marquez faced a rusty Floyd Mayweather Jr. in a welterweight fight. He was crushed but at least made it to the final bell despite fighting two weight divisions higher than he should.

### Some Experts Like Arreola

Now we have Arreola who fights out of Riverside and grew up in nearby East L.A. The casual boxing fan is not exactly certain that he can do it. But the experts think he has a great shot.

"I think he has the right style to beat this guy Klitschko," said Bennie Georgino, who has trained, managed and promoted in his lifetime that goes back to the 1930s. "This kid Arreola is not afraid to go in there and brawl."

In Southern California it's still a shock for many of his boxing brethren to see Arreola fighting as

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a heavyweight. Most of the boxing people remember seeing him as a tall and skinny light heavyweight who surprised many at the 1999 National Golden Gloves that he won by virtually knocking everyone out.

"I remember we didn't know how good he was going to do," said Juan West, who trained him as an amateur. "He just kept going all the way."

After a brief sabbatical from the sport, Arreola ballooned past the heavyweight limit and never looked back. When he decided to return it was to be as a full-fledged heavyweight.

"I remember the first time I got hit by a heavyweight," said Arreola. "I said to myself 's--- these guys hit hard. I better not get hit.'"

The main advantage Arreola always possessed was that light heavyweight speed in his hands. When he fired combinations they came quickly and fluidly. It's that quickness that surprises people.

"Chris throws the best combinations I've seen," said Cisse Salif a strong heavyweight who has never been knocked out. "He's very strong and he's always attacking."

Salif also knows both Klitschko brothers and has sparred numerous times with them in Europe and the U.S.

"One thing about the European fighters is they are always in shape," said Salif who has also sparred with Arreola many times. "They never get lazy like American fighters. That's the difference."

So what does Salif think about Arreola and Klitschko?

"I think Chris can beat Vitali," Salif says. "He's never faced a fighter like Chris who isn't afraid to throw punches. He throws punches from all angles."

### Arreola Wants War Not Jabs

Odds makers have Klitschko a huge 6-1 favorite as he should be if you go by the numbers. He's only had two losses. The first came against Chris Byrd but an injury to Klitschko's shoulder forced him to quit though ahead on the score cards. The second loss came against Lennox Lewis at the Staples Center when a massive cut forced the doctor to stop the bout though the Ukrainian was ahead on the score cards.

Maybe the biggest question is whether Klitschko can go 12 hard rounds against a fighter who will make him do more than shoot a jab and occasional right cross?

"After five weeks of training, 100 miles running, 120 rounds of sparring I know who will be the winner," said Klitschko, 38, at the press conference. "I'm happy to be fighting a tough guy like Chris Arreola. I'll show him what experience means in the ring."

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Arreola was slightly miffed that a certain boxing web site posted a story that Klitschko is already scheduling a title fight for December.

“One thing that bugs me is they think its’ a cakewalk,” said Arreola, who read the item himself on a web site. “It’s not going to be no boxing jab fest, it’s going to be a war.”

### Other fights

Javier “Monster” Mora, another Mexican-American heavyweight out of Orange County, has been added to the fight card. He faces former cruiserweight contender Johnathan Banks (21-1, 15 KOs) whose only loss came to Tomasz Adamek.

“I do what I do and I do it good,” said Mora (22-4-1, 18 KOs), who is managed by John Arthur who also guides James Toney. “I do it better when I’m in shape.”

Mora was the heavyweight who was ruled the winner over much maligned Kirk Johnson when that fighter’s knee gave out. It was overturned and they never fought again.

Undefeated heavyweight Alexander Ustinov (17-0, 14 KOs) of Russia faces once-beaten Cedric Boswell (30-1, 24 KOs) in a 10-round bout. The Klitschko clone is as tall as Vitali but at 32 has yet to be firmly tested. Boswell, whose only loss came to Jameel McCline six years ago, is 40 and running out of time. It’s a good match up to see who has anything left to compete and slides into the top 20 as a heavyweight.

Also on the fight card are Olympians Shawn Estrada and Javier Molina. Plus, junior lightweight knockout artist John Molina also is set to fight. A late addition to the card is Salvador Sanchez the nephew of the great Mexican featherweight world champion.