

## Not Much Ado In Des Moines, But Golota-Adamek Is Big In Lodz

Written by Rick Folstad  
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This is pretty big stuff if you're from Lodz, Poland, but it probably won't sell in Des Moines.

Andrew Golota (41-7-1, 33 KOs), the Polish poster boy for low blows, bizarre injuries and assorted antics committed inside the prize ring, will face IBF cruiserweight champ and fellow Pole Tomasz Adamek (38-1, 26 KOs) on Oct. 24 in the new Lodz Arena in Lodz, Poland.

Huge in Poland. Not so big in Toledo.

If you want to pick sides in this fight, you might want to consider Golota. The big guy could use a little positive karma. Controversy follows him around like a little puppy.

In his latest fight this past November against Ray Austin, he was dropped in the first round and suffered multiple tendon tears near his left bicep. Golota never answered the bell for the second round, which probably didn't sit too well with the beer-drinking gang back home in Warsaw. You don't quit if you're still sitting upright on your stool. You quit when they wheel in the gurney and administer last rites.

But that's just Golota. His fights with Riddick Bowe back in 1996 are legendary for the amount of grimacing they produced among the many adult males who witnessed the carnage both in person and on TV. He set new standards in the art of delivering low blows, made "south of the border" a game plan.

Watching the fight at home with some of my buddies, we decided that from that fight on, a low blow would be called a "Golota." It's the kind of punch that can turn a full grown man like Bowe into a 250-pound whimpering soprano in trunks.

In his first fight with Bowe in Madison Square Garden, Golota was pretty much having it his own way when the referee started warning him about throwing low blows. By the seventh round, with Bowe again dropping to the canvas clutching his groin with tears in his eyes, Golota was disqualified.

Walking back to his corner, Golota was jumped by one of Bowe's henchmen, who smashed a cellphone over his head. Golota reacted by throwing one of the few legal punches he threw all night. Too bad he didn't throw it at Bowe.

Suddenly, it was the Roadhouse Inn on Saturday night, fights breaking out both in the ring and in the stands. During the madness, Golota's promoter, Lou Duva, collapsed onto the ring floor after suffering a heart attack.

Another fun night at the Garden.

In their rematch five months later, Bowe was down in the second and fifth rounds and Golota

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was head butted in the second (opening a cut) and was down in the fourth.

Again ahead on points going into the later rounds, Golota was finally disqualified with two seconds left in the ninth after three low blows put Bowe down in agony again.

Apparently, Golota didn't learn anything from his first fight with Bowe.

Then there was that sad night in October 2000 when Golota fought Mike Tyson, quitting on his stool after only two rounds, though it didn't look like Tyson had even touched him.

Pelted with drinking cups and hot dogs on the way back to his locker room after quitting, it was later discovered that Golota had a broken bone in his head which could have pierced his brain at any time during the fight. He also accused Tyson of head-butting him.

Tyson later tested positive for marijuana and the result of the fight was changed from a technical knockout to a no contest.

Crazy game.

In all, Golota fought for a version of the heavyweight championship four times and could have probably won the title if he hadn't mastered that south-of-the-border punch.

Now, at the age of 41, he's getting ready to face a younger and quicker Adamek in what they're calling "The Polish Fight of the Century," which, unfortunately, is like "The Wisconsin Fight of the Century." It's going to have limited appeal.

"One shouldn't really box at my age," said Golota, who still boxes at his age. "I'd rather be 12 or 13 years younger."

We'd all rather be 12 or 13 years younger.

"Still," he said. "Bernard Hopkins is 44, so I still have everything ahead of me."

Everything but another shot at the heavyweight title.

Asked if there were any hard feelings between the two fighters, Golota, who now lives in Chicago, joked, "I love the guy."

His humor was lost on Adamek, who responded, "I don't love him since he's male and I'm Roman Catholic."

Huh? Lighten up, Adamek. You asked for this fight.

While Adamek might not want to admit it, Golota is still a big name in Poland. And that might be what Adamek is really after, stealing some of the fame and popularity from one of the best Polish heavyweights of all time.

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Promoter Don King said this fight is about more than title belts or money.

“They’re fighting for country,” King said.

For Golota, that’s all that’s left.