

Adamek - Golota : A Probable Nokaut However You Say It

Written by Phil Woolever

Wednesday, 21 October 2009 19:00

PAST THE VODKA TONIC: The forecast for Lodz, Poland is heavy early winter thunder when national attractions Tomasz Adamek and Andrew Golota collide this Saturday night in what should be a packed house at Atlas Arena.

That location approximately 100 miles southwest of Warsaw may also be outside much of the USA boxing radar, but around eastern Europe, Golota-Adamek shapes up as a considerable conkfest.

When scrutinized in terms of true heavyweight technique or championship implications it may not be near as compelling a clash as other upcoming big boy battles like Nikolai Valuev against David Haye, Vitali Klitschko versus Kevin Johnson, or even the rematch between Alexander Dimitrenko and Luan Krasniqi; but in terms of potential drama Adamek-Golota could be the best bout of the bunch and former light-heavy and cruiser titlist Adamek could well be the best pound for pound fighter in the aforementioned group.

In Germany, Europe's present boxing capital, there was great interest in the Showtime "Super-Six" middleweights and Klitschko - Arreola and all previously listed contests in the paragraph above will probably see huge TV success. It's still quite possible Golota-Adamek will overshadow most of those encounters in terms of per capita impact, almost certainly in most households due east of Berlin.

While the 32 year-old, perhaps peaking Adamek, 38-1 (26), has all the recent momentum and positive experience on his side, the hulking 41 year- old Golota, 41-7-1NC (33), has the big punch, assuming the often reliable theory that heavy leather is the last thing to go.

Should that hypothesis hold up heading into Lodz this weekend, we've got a pick 'em fight.

Most of the responsibility for how the affair turns out rests on Golota's huge but unsteady shoulders. While Adamek appears to be a consummate professional, Golota has often proved to be anything but.

Golota's last really significant match was for the WBO belt, against Lamon Brewster in May 2005. Golota was blasted out in the first.

Adamek, who relinquished IBF cruiserweight laurels, has been dropped twice in the first frame, against Paul Briggs in their '06 rematch, and in '02 against a fellow named Mihai Iftode. The big difference is that while Adamek got up and won both those battles, Golota is known for crumbling under pressure, most notably versus Mike Tyson and Lennox Lewis.

Golota's low blow meltdown loses against a still top level Riddick Bowe cemented his "Foul Pole" legacy as a flake instead of an all-time performer. Adamek lost a point vs Briggs for multiple nutshots, so it's always possible Saturday's bout could end up far south of the border.

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So it looks like Golota, listed at 6'4 with a 79-inch reach has the edge in size and possibly retained power, while 6'1 Adamek, with a 75-inch wingspan has everything else.

Warsaw-area born Chicago-transplant Golota is said to still be hugely popular in his homeland, and unlike New Jersey based Adamek, also born in Poland, there was reportedly a crowd to greet Golota when he arrived at the airport.

Golota has fought three times in Poland, Adamek 21. Hometown advantage is another pick'em. With most boxing crowds that probably goes to whoever draws first blood, and this could get bloody indeed. Golota has been busted up all over, and Adamek's nose is a mighty bulbous target.

Style wise, Golota typically fights with his gloves at around shoulder level and mounts sweeping shots from each side, though he's also demonstrated the ability to keep his guard up. If Adamek tries to come over the top, he's open to Golota's potentially wicked uppercuts or hooks.

On the other gloved hand, if Adamek gets through with enough of the two handed blasts he's shown in many recent brawls, Golota could quickly assume his oversized punching bag posture.

It is exactly those type questions that make this tough to call until they actually start throwing, but the outcome will likely become obvious not long after that.

If Golota can summon even half the energy and drive he showed against Corey Sanders a decade ago, Adamek won't make it to the second session. Even if Golota arrives in the same relatively decent shape he did against Kevin McBride or Jeremy Bates in 2007, Adamek will face serious problems.

Recent footage from Golota in training shows that his arms look like well preserved Black Forest tree trunks, similar to George Foreman's before his challenge of Michael Moorer.

Yet therein lies the probably most crucial ringside rub. Foreman had the psyche to withstand almost a full fight's worth of assault from Moorer and still be ready to launch the victory bomb. Golota hasn't demonstrated near the same consistent fortitude.

Golota's most recent appearance was a first round retirement against Ray Austin due to an arm injury last November. Team Golota presented glossy photographic evidence of a badly torn biceps to dispel further criticism, but that damage isn't the key point here unless the arm gets injured again.

What counts is whether or not yet another debacle bruised Golota's fragile ego even more.

Either way, Adamek-Golota should be interesting to see, one type train wreck or another.

If Golota shows up ready, it's his fight to lose.

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Adamek will certainly be showing up to win. If he pops his larger opponent enough early he probably will, and how it happens will be ugly.

SPEEDBAG Courtesy of Main Events' Ellen Haley, some facts and figures to put this bout in proper perspective:

- This will be a 5hr live televised program. It will begin on cable and switch to terrestrial TV on Poland's biggest network, Polsat. The only other time this happened was when Poland played in the World Cup.
- The primary broadcaster Polsat will have 23 HD cameras covering this fight.
- This will be the biggest audience ever to watch an event in the biggest arena in Poland. The arena is completely sold out at 15,000+. Tickets are being sold on the black market and Allegro (European version of eBay). The last time tickets were sold in such a fashion was when U2 appeared in Poland.
- Historically Andrew Golota has always been the biggest attraction in Poland. To date the biggest televised event in Poland was when Golota fought Tim Witherspoon in 1998. That TV audience exceeded Pope John Paul II's visit to Poland in 2005. Saturday's card promises to break that record.
- Polsat predicted that 1 out of every 4 Poles will watch this event in Poland and viewership is expected to exceed 10 million.
- Multi-generational viewership: There are Polish people of every generation watching this; the fathers cheer on Golota and the sons support Adamek.
- Polsat is the dominant TV station in Poland. It reaches 94% of the nation.