

Glen Johnson Has To Make It Ugly This Time

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Wednesday, 04 November 2009 19:00

This Saturday night former light heavyweight title holder Glen Johnson 49-12-2 (33) will fight a rematch against IBF champ Chad Dawson 28-0 (17) in Hartford, Connecticut. Johnson lost their first fight via a 12-round unanimous decision by the score of 116-112 on all three judges cards. Johnson vigorously protested the decision afterward and to this day claims the fight was stolen from him. Saying he was robbed is a little bit of a stretch but the 116-112 scoring (8-4 in rounds) doesn't give an accurate depiction of the fight.

The fight was extremely close and could've gone to either fighter by a point. And it can't be overlooked that with Dawson being the younger fighter who is viewed as one of boxing's potential future stars, fighters in his situation are always going to get the benefit of the doubt in the close rounds fighting a fighter like Johnson who was 39 at the time and was never viewed as a star in professional boxing. Nobody is saying that's fair nor is it right, but that's the way it goes and Johnson knows this as well as any fighter in boxing.

For Glen Johnson, beating Chad Dawson this time out will not be any easy task. Since their first fight Dawson has grown some and filled out a little more physically. On top of that he's fought twenty four rounds with Antonio Tarver that's surely matured him as a fighter and boosted his confidence. On the flip side Johnson smartly stayed active by fighting two fringe contenders and kept himself in-shape like he has throughout his career.

The problem Johnson faces is he's forty years old and at this stage of his career can't change his style. Dawson knows exactly what Johnson's going to do; that is, bring the fight to him and try to overwhelm Dawson physically while looking for the big punch in the hopes of turning the fight. This strategy served him well during the first fight and almost got the job done. When they met the last time Johnson even had Dawson shook a couple times during the fight but couldn't finish him.

If you're Glen Johnson you have to face reality and accept that what almost got it done in the first fight needs to be modified for this one. In this fight Johnson has to throw punches at every part of Dawson's exposed body and torso. If that means hitting him on his shoulders, forearms, wrist or on his hip bones, he has to do it. The uglier Johnson makes the fight the better his chances are that he can unravel Dawson. And if he unravels Dawson that can turn out to be just what Johnson needs to draw Chad out and force him to fight and trade with him. And by doing that Dawson will have abandoned his legs making it easier for Johnson to stay on top of him and fight him on the inside, thus further neutralizing Dawson's jab and ability to box.

There's no doubt in my mind that the Dawson we'll see this weekend will be a better fighter than the one we saw a year and a half ago. However, since the decision went against Johnson in their first fight, Glen has excoriated Dawson through the media and has publicly denounced Chad's performance and the judges' scoring of the fight. And lately Dawson has remarked that he's tired of hearing Johnson cry about how he was robbed in the last fight.

Glen Johnson Has To Make It Ugly This Time

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Wednesday, 04 November 2009 19:00

Then in the next breath he says he needs to use his skills more consistently and not allow himself to get into a slug-fest with the hard-hitting Johnson.

“We want to erase any memories of the first fight and put on a good show,” Dawson said. “The first fight I got caught up in a slug-fest late. I need to use my legs and my skills more this time. I’m not a fighter that goes for the knockout. I just have to showcase my talent. I plan on winning convincingly.”

Winning convincingly says Dawson? Maybe that's exactly the mindset that Johnson needs Dawson to carry into the ring on November 7th. Perhaps Dawson will be more intent on erasing the stigma of the last fight that he'll plant his feet and trade one time too many or take a few unnecessary risks in trying to separate himself from Johnson this time.

That said, the only way Chad Dawson will fight that way is if Glen Johnson forces him to and leaves him no choice.

The mindset that Glen Johnson needs carry into the ring with him for this fight is, maintain the "Smokin" Joe Frazier he brought for the first fight, but also incorporate a little Fritzie Zivic and Harry Greb with it. In other words fight and do whatever it takes to get Dawson out of his boxers' mindset and make him look to the referee to bail him out due to Johnson's rough-house tactics.

Then maybe Dawson will come undone and Johnson can take advantage of that and seize the fight. Maybe...

Frank Lotierzo can be contacted at GlovedFist@Gmail.com