

Riverside's Mikey Garcia, Josesito Lopez & Arreola Fights

Written by David A. Avila
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An extremely important fight between heavyweights Chris "The Nightmare" Arreola and Manuel Quezada takes place in the former grape fields of Ontario on Friday and two other Riverside fighters have big fights too.

Years ago grape vines were plenty in the same area where the Citizens Business Bank Arena sits on, and it's where Arreola and Quesada will untangle a part of the mess that's the heavyweight division.

Along with Arreola will be his gym pal Josesito Lopez facing Marvin Cordova Jr. in an eight round junior welterweight clash on the Goossen-Tutor Promotion and tickets are available. ESPN will show part of the card live.

Mexican-American heavyweights are the main event.

"One or two losses can damage a fighter's career," said Dan Goossen, president of the promotion company. "Manuel Quesada believes he has been in the shadows of Chris Arreola. On the other hand you have Chris Arreola who a lot of people felt was on his way to make heavyweight history as a world champion."

He didn't.

Instead Arreola lost to Vitali Klitschko badly then accepted the challenge of a former light heavyweight and cruiserweight champion Tomasz Adamek who many felt was over matched against the Riverside heavyweight.

Arreola lost a close decision to Adamek last April that more than a few from his own team said was due to poor training and eating habits.

"He should have won that fight," said Henry Ramirez who trains Arreola.

Quesada, a product of Bakersfield, arrived from the back door with many people saying he was not as athletic as many of the heavyweight contenders. But, after several years of hard work, the quiet spoken Mexican-American bust through the rankings with a surprising knock out of Travis Walker.

Then came a match against wily veteran Jason Gavern who was able to stifle Quesada's attacks and gain a split decision victory last April in Lemoore. It was a big set back for Quesada who hadn't lost a fight in five years till that night.

"This is my biggest fight for sure. It means everything," said Quesada (29-5, 18 KOs) who is training in Oxnard under the tutelage of Robert Garcia. "I took Gavern a little lightly."

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It's definitely the first instance in boxing history that two Mexican-American heavyweights are ranked in the top 20 and fighting each other.

It's kind of a make or break kind of fight. Whoever loses its going to be a tough road to get back into it," said Arreola (28-2, 25 KOs) who admits to missing multiple days and even weeks in his fights against Klitschko and Adamek. "Two fighters of Mexican descent they're going to try and KO each other out just to make history of there own."

Lopez

Also facing his own destiny is Josesito Lopez (26-3, 15 KOs) who now fights at the 140-pound junior welterweight level. Because of weight problems he hasn't fought in almost a year. The Riverside boxer is facing relegation to the status of club fighter should he lose to Las Vegas boxer Marvin Cordova (21-1-1, 11 KOs).

Two of Lopez's losses were very debatable decisions to Edgar Santana and Wes Ferguson.

The usually lean Lopez has the height, chin and speed to contend with most fighters as his training camp of a year ago proves. For about two weeks Lopez was the only sparring partner that the late Edwin Valero was unable to knock down or knock out. The Venezuelan tornado was sending sparring partners into unconsciousness like an anesthesiologist gone crazy.

Lopez proved he has the talent but has been unable to contain his weight. A year of not fighting could be enough to rust his joints and allow Cordova to take advantage. We'll see.

Garcia

Most important of the three bouts takes place in Texas when Riverside's Miguel Angel Garcia faces Cornelius Lock in an IBF featherweight elimination bout.

"I know he's pretty good," said Garcia (22-0, 18 KOs) who faces a hard-hitting southpaw in Lock (19-5-1, 15 KOs) a Las Vegas-based prizefighter. "They told me I'll be fighting in September too if everything goes right."

Garcia knows if he wins he'll fight for the IBF featherweight world title, but Lock wants that shot too. Neither fighter has ever fought for a world title.

Garcia fights Lock on Saturday in Laredo, Texas at Laredo Energy Arena. The fight will be televised on Fox television.

"Nobody works harder than that kid," said Willie Schunke whose gym Garcia uses as his base for training. "He's like a machine."

Fights on television

Fri. ESPN2, 6 p.m., Chris Arreola (28-2) vs. Manuel Quezada (29-5).

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Fri. Telefutura, 11:30 p.m., Eloy Perez (17-0-2) vs. Derrick Campos (20-8).

Fri. Telemundo, 11:30 p.m., Jesus Pabon (14-1, 8 KOs) vs. Ernesto Zepeda (39-13-4).

Sat. HBO, 7 p.m., Jean Pascal (25-1) vs. Chad Dawson (29-0).

Sat. Fox Sports Net, 8 p.m., Ji Hoon Kim (21-5) vs. Miguel Vazquez (25-3).