

WHO YA LIKE? Glen Johnson-Allan Green

Written by TSS Press

Thursday, 21 October 2010 19:00

Hard-hitting, world-ranked **Allan Green** and veteran contender and former world champ **Glen “The Road Warrior Johnson**

participated in a national media conference call to discuss their must-win

Super Six World Boxing Classic

bout on

Saturday, Nov. 6

, live on

SHOWTIME®

(10 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast) from

MGM Grand Garden

in

Las Vegas

. Green and Johnson were also joined on the call by promoter

Lou DiBella

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The winner of the 12-rounder between Green (29-2, 20 KOs), of Tulsa, Okla., and the Jamaican-born Johnson (50-14-2, 34 KOs), of Miami, Fla., will earn a spot in the tournament Semifinals.

A veteran contender and former light heavyweight world champion, Johnson is a replacement for the injured **Mikkel Kessler**.

Green, who was outclassed in his Group Stage 2 bout against **Andre Ward**, can overcome his uninspired performance that he blamed on over-training with a win over Johnson in Group Stage 3. Green, who replaced the injured

Jermain Taylor

, was already in intense training camp for Kessler and was not deterred by the change in opponent. No matter the opposition, Green needs to win in Group Stage 3 to advance.

Johnson, who has appeared in seven world title fights and has defeated some of the best prizefighters of this era, including boxing legends **Roy Jones, Jr.**, and **Antonio Tarver**, now has an opportunity to reestablish himself as one of the world's elite prizefighters.

In the second half of the excellent Nov. 6 **SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING** doubleheader, undefeated World Boxing Organization (WBO) featherweight champion

Juan Manuel “JuanMa Lopez

(29-0, 26 KOs) of Puerto Rico will defend his title against two-division world champion

Rafael Marquez

(39-5, 35 KOs) of Mexico City.

What the fighters and DiBella had to say on Thursday:

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DIBELLA: “Unfortunately, we’ve faced a lot of challenges in this tournament, but I want to commend SHOWTIME for sticking with it and finishing out this tournament. I think it’s necessary. I think the format proved itself to work by virtue of how often the favorite has changed, by how many times guys who have lost matches and went on to win the next. You just can’t anticipate injuries and the kind of things that happen in our sport. But I’m very happy that Ken (Hershman) elected to continue with the tournament. It’s presented a tremendous opportunity to Allan and Glen Johnson because this fight takes on enormous significance with the winner having the opportunity to get into the Semifinals.

“Allan is one of the best 168-pounders in the world, but he’s coming off one of the poorest performances he’s had in a while and he has a lot to prove in this fight. He’s gone back to the drawing board, he’s made changes in his corner, and I know he’s more committed than ever.

GREEN: “I’m just looking forward to Nov. 6. I’m just glad to get back in the ring. I really don’t have to prove anything to myself. I just have to prove myself to the fans.

JOHNSON: “I’m extremely excited about the opportunity. I thank SHOWTIME for making me a part of this prestigious event. I’m just happy to be a part of it.

Glen, how do you expect dropping down to 168 to affect you and what was your reaction to being offered to join the tournament?

JOHNSON: “My first reaction was ‘Wow, what a great opportunity.’ This is, I think, the best tournament in boxing. When the possibility to be a part of it came up I was extremely excited. I immediately started doing what I need to do to get down to the weight. I haven’t done 168 pounds in like 10 years, so I just have to commit myself and go to work. This is what I do. This is my job, this is how I get paid. This is how I eat. That’s how I look at it. I just went about my business to take care of my job.

Allan, how disappointed were you in the loss to Andre Ward?

GREEN: “It was very disappointing. I had to make a lot of changes, but going into the fight, I knew I was ill-prepared. I knew things weren’t going to be right. I’m just eager to get back in the ring and I just had to make some changes. I had to go back to my roots and do everything right the way I used to. Now I feel great and I’m looking forward to Nov. 6.

How are you going to deal with Glen Johnson’s activity level?

GREEN: “I know Glen very well; Glen’s a friend of mine. He’s one of the first top guys I actually sparred with coming up. He’s not an easy guy to fight by any means. He’s not an easy fight for anybody. But I have my own game plan and I’m not going to reveal that.

Glen, what did you gain from Green’s performance against Andre Ward?

JOHNSON: “I watched that fight once and that was right when it happened. As Allan just alluded to, Allan and I are friends. I’ve known him for a long time and I know that was not the

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Allan Green that I know. I've sparred with him many, many times. He's helped me get ready for my fights and I've helped him get ready for his fights. I know that wasn't the Allan Green that I know. I didn't take much away from that. I didn't give it that much thought. I thought, maybe he had some problem or something. I didn't watch it another time – it was painful for me to watch it the first time. I knew something was wrong so I didn't look at it again.

Glen, how have you managed to maintain such a high level of performance?

JOHNSON: "I don't know. I've been asked that question a lot. I don't know if it's the fact that I don't smoke and I don't abuse my body. Maybe it's because I don't take drugs or drink. Maybe it's because I train all the time and try to get better. Maybe it's a combination of all of those things. All I am is thankful and grateful that it happens to me and for me.

Allan, do you feel extra pressure to perform well in this fight after the performance to Andre Ward?

GREEN: "I knew going into that fight that I was ill-prepared. I knew that I was a little heavy going into to camp and I knew that I was going to have trouble getting the weight off. I knew it wasn't going right. I don't like to put pressure on myself. My job is to go out there and perform. I'm not putting any extra pressure on myself to perform great or anything. I'm just going to go do my job and that's it.

Would you agree that it appears that both times you stepped up to a high level of opponent that you didn't perform well?

GREEN: "Of course I can understand that. It only makes sense. I had my big opportunity and my performance was subpar, so I can completely understand that.

Glen, can you be specific on when you guys sparred?

JOHNSON: "I know that Allan and I sparred when I was getting ready for Roy Jones, but we sparred a number of times after that. I've gone into his camp and helped him out when he was getting ready for other fights as well.

GREEN: "Yeah, he helped me get ready for the (Edison) Miranda fight and I helped him get ready for the Roy Jones fight.

Is there anything that you guys take from the sparring sessions?

GREEN: "I'm an honest man. I learned a lot from Glen. A lot of days he gave me the business, a lot of days he just put it on me. I'm not ashamed to say that I learned a lot. That helped me get a lot better. I had my times, too, but for the most part he got the better of me. It was a good experience for me getting ready for the fight.

Allan, how is your weight now and what are some changes you've made after your last fight?

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GREEN: “After the Ward fight got postponed because of knee injury I kind of fell into a funk and got real depressed and started eating a lot and not really training. I just started blowing up because I didn’t think that fight would happen. So I had to play catch up when I came into camp. I think I ended up having to lose 28 pounds in three weeks. I don’t know how I did it. But this time, I stuck to my diet – I’m a vegetarian – I stuck to my diet, ate the right things. This time when I wake up in the morning I weigh around 176 pounds.

Glen, how do you continue to perform at this level and not get disappointed with some questionable decision losses?

JOHNSON: “Well, I just don’t want to quit on myself. Everybody else is quitting on you, the last thing you want to do is quit on yourself. I always look at it that way: Every time I step in the ring and every time I’m training for a fight I always go at it 100 percent knowing that this could be my last chance, my last opportunity. I’m not one of those big market guys that will always get a chance and always get an opportunity, so I always give it 100 percent every time I step in there. That’s just the way I go about it. I just have to keep my spirit up because nobody else is going to do it for me. That’s the way I look at it and that’s the reason I perform the way I do.

Allan, do you see any type of scenario where Glen’s weight loss will be negative?

GREEN: It’s a possibility, but I’ve seen Glen work – he’s a hard worker. He’s not a very big light heavyweight anyway. As far as it affecting his performance, I can’t say that. I really don’t know.

Glen, you fought Bernard Hopkins 13 years ago. If I told you 13 years ago that you’d both still be active, what would you have said at the time?

JOHNSON: “I’d still be laughing just like I’m doing right now. Life is funny, man. You never say never. I remember when I first got introduced to boxing and George Foreman was the old guy in boxing. I was like ‘Man, when is this guy going to stop before he gets hurt?’ You know what, he did it and he did it well and he earned a lot of money. He had the last laugh at the end of the day. I really didn’t think that I would last this long in boxing. When I first started boxing all I wanted to make was \$10,000 so I could make a down payment on a house. Once I got my first compliment I was hooked. I just kept trying harder to get another compliment and it turned into this career. I’m just thankful.

“I’m the most excited guy right now to be a part of the most prestigious tournament in boxing. I was happy when I heard Allan was a part of it. The fact that things happened the way things happened and now I’m a part of it, I’m happy for me. I’m just going out there and doing what I have to do to move on.

Allan, what would be your ideal scenario for this fight?

GREEN: “Just to win. Just to win and moving on in the tournament and getting my revenge against Andre Ward and winning the tournament. Just to win. Just an impressive win.

Lou, do you think there is a future for this tournament style?

DIBELLA: "I hope so. I think that there will always be challenges in the sport to a tournament because anything that takes any length of time presents difficulties. You have your legitimate difficulties with injuries but you also have your political difficulties. This tends to be a sport of immediate gratification. People don't tend to look down the line; they look at the immediate payday. The tournament concept is a difficult undertaking. But if we're not creative in boxing and we don't take chances, we're going to head even more into the shitter than we already are. I really, really honestly do believe that we have to take these types of chances; we have to go for this type of innovation.

"I applaud Ken Hershman for this concept and I think it is proving itself to work. It started out and you had Kessler as the favorite, then Abraham became the favorite and now Ward is the favorite. It kept changing. Had everyone stayed in I think obviously a lot of people would be happier. But I think still you have excitement on the horizon. You're going to have two terrific fights coming up and I expect that the Semis will also be real good fights. I'm glad that they stuck with it. Look, anything that takes a long time in boxing is hard to do. We've got to be innovative. We've got to take chances even if those chances create challenges and difficulties.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

GREEN: "I'm just happy to be back in the ring. I have a lot of respect for Glen Johnson; he's a great guy, great fight, great friend. I'm just looking to get in there, come out with a victory and move forward.

JOHNSON: "I'm ready. Weight is not an issue, we took care of that. I'm looking forward to going in the ring and giving the fans a good show. Somebody mentioned what would be a perfect scenario? I would say that Allan and I both get in the tournament – that would be my answer to that question. I love Allan Green, no doubt. It's just a circumstance where we have to face each other in this tournament, but may the best man win. Do what you got to do and I will as well.