

Can Michael Katsidis Topple Juan Manuel Marquez?

Written by David A. Avila

Tuesday, 23 November 2010 19:00

Because Mexico's Juan Manuel Marquez has perched on the upper rung of the pound for pound list for years, most dismiss any notion that other than elite fighters the boxer known as "Dinamita" should have no problem with someone like Michael "The Great" Katsidis.

They would be wrong.

Elite fighters and their subsequent reputations are built on years of work and trial through fire.

Marquez did so for two decades and now enjoys the fruits of those labors. But some say it's Katsidis' turn.

Katsidis (27-2, 22 KOs) will try to topple WBO and WBA lightweight world champion Marquez (51-5-1, 37 KOs) from his perch of greatness on Saturday Nov. 27, at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. The Aussie who now lives in Las Vegas has been waiting for this moment. HBO will televise the altercation.

Few boxers have been so willing to prove their technical prowess like Marquez. In September 2009 he eagerly agreed to fight Floyd Mayweather despite a size, reach, speed and power disadvantage.

"It's my opportunity to show what I can do," said Marquez, who though soundly beaten by Mayweather emerged with his reputation intact. "I love to prove I can fight the best."

Marquez, 37, may be the best technical boxer on the planet who strategically dissects opponents like a modern-day General Pancho Villa might have pierced enemy encampments 100 years ago during the Mexican Revolution.

"He's so smart in the ring," said Sugar Shane Mosley. "His defense is great."

All those tools will be necessary against Katsidis, a warrior in his own right who never saw a brawl he didn't like. Who can forget his fight against Joel Casamayor in 2008 when he knocked Casamayor out of the ring then was knocked out himself in the 10th round.

Katsidis, 30, lost his brother Stathi Katsidis, who was found dead. Regardless, the prizefighter decided to continue his quest for the undisputed lightweight world championship.

"The fight will go on! I will do this for Stathi, my family and myself," stated Katsidis whose brother Stathi was a champion horse race jockey in Australia.

Few are surprised.

Six months ago Katsidis traveled to London, England to face undefeated Kevin Mitchell and was

Can Michael Katsidis Topple Juan Manuel Marquez?

Written by David A. Avila

Tuesday, 23 November 2010 19:00

expected to lose. Instead the prizefighter of Greek heritage proceeded to bully and dominate the British fighter in a mere three rounds. It was another impressive showing.

Katsidis now faces his toughest opponent ever in the wizard of boxing Marquez. But maybe the time is right for the Aussie. The Mexican boxer has become more compelled to entertain boxing fans with a more aggressive style that leaves him open for massive counters.

Marquez is clearly one of the best fighters pound for pound but against Joel Casamayor, Juan Diaz and Manny Pacquiao, the Mexican boxer has shown a willingness to dispense with a safety-first style. The fighter known as "Dinamita" has opened up offensively to look for knockouts rather than simply points victories. By opening up he is also leaving himself vulnerable to counter shots.

It's something that Katsidis will be shooting for.

Other bouts

Also on the same Las Vegas card will be WBC welterweight titleholder Andre Berto (26-0, 20 KOs) defending against Mexico City's Freddy Hernandez (29-1, 20 KOs) in a bout scheduled for 12 rounds.

Panama's Celestino Caballero (34-2, 23 KOs), a tall former junior featherweight and featherweight world champion, was unable to entice Puerto Rico's Juan Manuel Lopez or Cuba's Yuri Gamboa to fight so he's moving up to the junior lightweight division. Caballero faces Jason "The American Boy" Litzau (27-2, 21 KOs) who is eager to prove he deserves another world title shot.

Fights on television

Sat. HBO, 6:45 p.m., Juan Manuel Marquez (51-5-1) vs. Michael Katsidis (27-2).

Sat. Showtime, 9 p.m., Andre Ward (22-0) vs. Sakio Bika (28-4-2); Carl Froch (26-1) vs. Arthur Abraham (31-1).