

Shumenov Wants To Unify At Light Heavy

Written by The Sweet Science
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LAS VEGAS (April 14, 2011) – WBA/IBA Light Heavyweight Champion Beibut Shumenov (11-1, 7 KOs) remains fully prepared to continue his history-making journey to unify the light heavyweight titles before the end of 2011 with one of the other 175-pound division world champions.

Shumenov's dream suffered a setback in January when WBO titlist Juergen Braehmer pulled out of their unification title fight only a few days before their scheduled showdown in Kazakhstan. In only his 12th pro fight, Beibut was supposed to fight Braehmer (36-2, 29 KOs) in a world unification match, breaking what is believed to be the record for fewest fights in a major unification bout in which both featured fighters were world champions. The mark held by WBA cruiserweight king Evander Holyfield, who set the mark in his 15th pro fight against IBF champ Ricky Parkey in 1987, is still within Shumenov's striking range.

Shumenov, the 2004 Kazakhstan Olympian, has been on an unprecedented, accelerated pace since his pro debut only 3 1/2 years ago, defeating two world champions in his first eight bouts, Montell Griffin and Byron Mitchell. A year ago, Shumenov established the mark for fewest pro fights needed to capture a major World light heavyweight title, defeating Gabriel Campillo by decision for the WBA crown in his 10th bout, breaking the record of 15 set by Jeff "Hit Man" Harding in 1989.

"I don't think about records," Shumenov said. "I just want the challenge of fighting the best to become the undisputed light heavyweight champion of the world in order to be considered the best. I have a lot more to accomplish in my career to even be mentioned in the same conversation as a future Hall of Famer like Evander Holyfield.

"I chose to fight Braehmer to unify the light heavyweight division, but he pulled out, refusing to be examined by the Kazakhstan Boxing Commission doctor, and breaching his contract. I put Braehmer in the rear view mirror and got right back on track successfully defending my titles against William Joppy, who I applauded for accepting the fight on such late notice. Now, I'm fully focused on collecting the other world light heavyweight titles."

Joppy became the fourth world champion Shumenov has defeated in his relatively young pro career. Beibut also joined fellow world champion, Lucian Bute, and former superstar Felix Trinidad as the only fighters to knockout Joppy, when Shumenov floored his experienced opponent in the fifth and then finished him off with a vicious left hook to the body in the following round.

"My goal is to unify the light heavyweight division," Shumenov repeated. "I want to fight the other world champions and I'll be watching their upcoming world light heavyweight title fights with great interest. I'm trying to learn everything so I can be the best."

Shumenov owns and operates the Las Vegas-based KZ Event Productions along with his

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brother, Chingis. In addition to promoting Beibut, Team KZ also includes three undefeated, world-rated boxers in WBA International Light Heavyweight champion Gayrat Ahemedov (16-0-1, 10 KOs), WBA rated No. 2 contender; WBA FEDALATIN Welterweight king Ravshan Hudaynazarov (14-0, 12 KOs), rated No. 9 by the WBA; WBA International Super Lightweight titlist Alexandr Zhuravskiy (11-0, 8 KOs), who is ranked No. 15 by the WBA.

“Beibut is a very special individual who has defied boxing logic since the very beginning of his career,” Shumenov’s head trainer Kevin Barry noted. “He has been instrumental in helping to develop the careers of Gayrat, Ravshan and Alexandr as a leader for them to follow. Beibut sets the standard and they try and keep up with him. Beibut Shumenov is priceless.”