

Hopkins Begg Dawson To Be "Bad," Wants Calzaghe Next...WOODS in NYC

Written by Michael Woods

Tuesday, 09 August 2011 16:10



(From Left to Right) WBC and Ring Magazine Light Heavyweight World Champion Bernard Hopkins, Albert Cadabra of Ripley's Believe it or Not! Museum and former Light Heavyweight World Champion Chad Dawson (right) pose on August 9, 2011 in New York City at a press conference to officially announce Hopkins' and Dawson's October 15, 2011 world title fight at STAPLES Center in Los Angeles, California. (Hogan)

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Some fightwriters look forward to press conferences about as much as they do visits to the dentists. Promoters droning on about this stellar matchup, and that marvelous advertising partner can indeed start sounding as repetitive as the drill when you've got a cavity to fill. But I've always enjoyed Bernard Hopkins at press conferences. The Philly native is a skilled orator, owns the room when he's at the mike, and I like to try and dissect his speeches, try and discern when he's indulging in trashtalking, or is engaging in psychological warfare.

There was some of each at BB King's in NYC on Tuesday afternoon, as Hopkins, who turns 47 in January, swung in to town to promote his Oct. 15 HBO PPV clash with Chad Dawson. It was Hopkins who had to carry most of the weight to try and create more buzz around this fight, as Dawson, most known for his technical chops as a pugilist, not as a promoter, didn't try and up the ante in the talk realm.

Now, there are some that feel this scrap is sort of an oversimmered stew. Dawson's cred has slipped a bit from three years ago, when he first started to try and lure Hopkins into a bout. The Connecticut fighter has dealt with managerial, promotional and family squabbles since then, and no one is quite sure if he peaked back in 2008, or has moved beyond his August 2010 title loss to Jean Pascal. Some question his level of desire, and never mind his love for the game, even his tolerance for it. He told the press that he'd show his fire on October 15.

"I'm more of a laid back boxer," said Dawson on the dais, "but I'm going for the kayo (on Oct. 15)."

Hopkins (52-5-2) during his turn at the mike and in one on ones after said he certainly hoped the 6-1 lefty Dawson (30-1) would be fiery and looking to be aggressive in their scrap. A win against a safety first Dawson, Hopkins said, wouldn't do all that much to reward fans spending their hard earned dough in this recession. "Let's work together to see who can whup each others' ass," Hopkins said.

I admit that I think this style matchup might be something of a letdown, that there could be lengthy periods of posturing, of looking for that perfect opening. We can hope otherwise...

Hopkins hammered the point. He hoped Dawson "is going to be what he says, not what his personality shows. Bad Chad Dawson has to be bad, or he's going to be embarrassed. No real man wants to be embarrassed like that. Chad Dawson, please be out of character, be 'Bad' Chad Dawson. That will bring the best out of me...We all win. The fans win, those who pay \$55 in a recession don't want to see two guys dance."

Later, I asked Hopkins if he was getting tricky, asking Dawson to be super aggressive. In my inexpert opinion, an aggressive Dawson, one who ups his typical work-rate, might be harder to handle for Hopkins than one who allows Hopkins to set the tempo. Hopkins admitted he sometimes uses the press to get his message out, but didn't cop to trying to use reverse psychology on Dawson.

Hopkins alluded to the fact that some fighters (Jermain Taylor, Kelly Pavlik, maybe Jean Pascal) haven't been what they were after they met Hopkins, and hinted that the same fate

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could befall Dawson.

The old master, he introduced the notion that he's a graybeard when he admitted he gets cramps, gets aches, and isn't immune to the ravages of aging. So why didn't he take on Dawson, a much more polished and less mentally unstable fighter than Pascal, when he was a more youthful 43? Because, he said, the storyline wasn't there. He took full credit for restoring buzz to the light heavyweight division, and said that because of the buzz, this fight makes more sense now. Probably so, as three years ago it would have been a harder PPV sell. "The light heavyweight division is alive and cooking now," said Hopkins, who by the way admitted he has been working on luring Joe Calzaghe out of retirement for a rematch.

He said that fight does weigh on him, that he thinks he deserved the nod, and told me that he worked on Calzaghe at the last Amir Khan fight. Calzaghe, he said, didn't close the door on coming back.

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brownsugar says:

Bhop's got more gray on his chin than I do,.. amazing. His only hope is to get inside of Dawsons head and flip the necessary switches. Dawson got into a bad place mentally when he fought Pascal,.. he had a look on this face like "why you trying to make me look bad"... As if he was to dominate his opponents automatically... as if every opponent was going to stand right in front of him while he shoeshines the night away with crisp combos delivered at his lesiere. Dawson had become so complacent that he forgot how to adapt... how to get out of his comfort zone and put victory first,.... style points second.

This time under tutelage of Stewart and company... far from the hangers-on, camp-grifters and shills trying to sell him a better way... Dawson will show BHOP why near 50year old guys ought not be in the ring with the raging youth. Gotto Love BHOP though..... I thought he'd duck Dawson forever... at least he's finishing up his career like fine wine instead of a \$2 bottle of rotgut. Giving his best best fights on the backend of his career proving the first 15 years wasn't a fluke. If BHOP miraculously wins,.. they'll start the debate about Bernard vs Robinson.... and I will have picked against him for like the 4th time in a row in vain.

Real Talk says:

I'm loving this, Hopkins steps up to the plate to give boxing what it needs. Good relevant fights that people want. Testing his level and his mettle when I myself was guilty up throwing dirt on his fighting days with the shovel. B-Hop saw the opportunity and didn't pass it up and resurrected his career like Lazurus or better yet Jesus of Nazareth, now we gonna see how much gas is left....in the tank while Hop and Chad are laughing straight to the bank I'm predicting another one that when it's over we can thank'em. If Chad aint on his A-game Hopkins gonna spank'em, like a kid that's being bad he's gonna be mad when Hopkins do it Old school and get in his @\$\$.

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Radam G says:

Ditto Real Talk! Preach! Brotha! Preach! Ya got ya A spit on! Holla!