

Ward Trainer Hunter Rates Froch Ahead Of Ward, Says Ward Will Stop Froch...WOODS

Written by Michael Woods

Tuesday, 06 December 2011 15:42



This fight was set to take place Oct. 29, but a cut forced Ward to postpone. He says he's healed and ready to rock. (photo by Howard Schatz)

It's been a marathon, this Super Six tournament put on by Showtime, and we are now into the sprint stage. The final is Dec. 17 at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, and the finalists, Andre Ward and Carl Froch, took part in a conference call to hype the scrap, which will run on Showtime (9 PM ET).

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It was Ward's trainer Virgil Hunter who offered the money quotes, as he said he slots Froch above Ward at this time, and reiterated a September prediction that Ward will stop Froch.

"I rate Froch ahead of Ward right," the trainer said, for having been a champion before Ward and for having fought more A class boxers. Perhaps this implants a seed in the mind of Ward or perhaps the 27 year-old tunes such mental chess out, as he has known Hunter since he was 9 and is used to such tactics to motivate.

I put Hunter a bit on the spot when he deftly danced around his earlier stoppage prediction. He then said, after a filibuster, "I believe Ward is going to stop Carl Froch. I'm not afraid to stand by it if he does or doesn't. I don't mean any disrespect, if he doesn't it won't disappoint me.

Froch's promoter the last couple fights, Eddie Hearn, drew some laughs when he called the Brit a "horrible, stubborn kind of sportsman." He meant that in a good way, referring to his never say die attitude.

Ward's trainer, Hunter, is one of the better interviews among trainers today, and he perked up my ears when he said that he cannot state that Ward's camp was perfect. He cited obstacles, but didn't specify. I asked him for specifics, and he said he wasn't referring to any injuries, but just regular speedbumps. He said he prefers that, he likes problems to arise so Ward (24-0 with 13 KOs; from Oakland) can solve them, and thus the trainer can sleep well knowing the fighter is in a mode where he can adjust to fightnight difficulties. "I like a struggling camp," said this master of contrarian logic.

For the record, Lucian Bute, Mikkel Kessler, and Andre and Anthony Dirrell will be present at the finale.

Froch (28-1 with 20 KOs; age 34; from Nottingham, England; sole loss to Mikkel Kessler) wasn't in a cantankerous mood, as he sometimes can be, though we might have heard him get a bit cocky or fiery after Hunter said that he foresees Ward stopping Froch. But his line dropped off the call and then the session ended.

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Ward sounded like he expects the stiffest test of his career. "I feel fast, strong and explosive. You don't win these championships, you take it. I'm prepared to do that."

Hunter sounds like he thinks Ward is going to fight a more fan friendly fight than we've seen in the past, because he thinks Froch won't go into a defensive mode like other Ward foes have, to avoid a beating.

"Andre is a 'money fighter' he said. "I'm excited about this fight, Carl Froch is to be respected. I don't think he's going to do like the rest of the fighters we fought after three or four rounds start protecting themselves. After four or five rounds they know if they continue a beating is way worse than a knockout, it could be career ending."

Hunter said he brought in some killer sparring partners but didn't want to name names. Meanwhile, I know Froch has been sparring young gun Peter Quillin, among others, in NYC.

Hunter also said that his man's KO percentage would be better if he'd taken longer getting himself seasoned. He'd have 18 or 19 stops if he kept in the "pancake league," the trainer said.

"Carl turned pro at 25 I believe and Andre was a champion at 25. Carl hasn't hurt anybody since Jermain Taylor. I'm not taking away from him, we do realize he's a heck of a puncher but you have to speak the truth, he's had nobody in trouble since Taylor, who has a tendency to gas out."

TSS Universe, please let us know who you think will prevail in the finale, in our Forum.

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DaveB says:

Still picking Ward to win by UD. Ward was one of my two original picks, the other was Abraham who didn't do to well. I thought he could transition to 168 but it didn't happen. I think Froch has definitely gotten better since the tournament began as did Ward and these are the two best of

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the field. With Bute in the wings I think it gets harder not easier. You really have to give these guys credit to face the best of the best. My hat is off to all of them.

BHarper85 says:

I've been really looking forward to this fight since it was set after the semifinals. It presents a very interesting stylistic match-up. Ward's sublime boxing skills, coupled with a willingness to get down and dirty when it suits his objectives provides a great foil to Froch's unorthodox style, granite chin, and refusal to give in no matter the circumstances. It's a classic skill vs. will fight and, while I give Froch a chance to exert his will into a late stoppage, I think Ward is well on his way to dominating the P4P lists in the years to come and will effectively box his way to a fairly close UD victory. Regardless of the outcome, Lucian Bute better be worried because either fighter will be his toughest opponent by far and I think would defeat Bute. I can't wait to see it.

ali says:

Froch is going to get a boxing lesson...

brownsugar says:

You said it BHarper and DaveB... (wow TSS must be a magnet for well spoken folks). I don't think Froch has any "give" in him... meaning, I'm sure he's thinking all the correct positive thoughts and believes in his abilities as a champion who earned it the hard way.

He's an excellent pre-fight-hype guy who's almost as fun to listen to as he is watch but he hasn't been given any good material to work with in the way of trash talk for this fight.

Ward and his trainer (GodFather) Hunter have somewhat modified Froch's normally loud and comical prefight hype machine with their subtle, yet introspectively haunting prefight observations.

These 2 guys are always sounding deep and spiritual,.....serious and humble..... yet bloody but unbowed,.... speaking about their vision for the future of Ward while refusing to fan the flames of the pre-fight hype machine with typical "momma said knock you out"-type comments..

Froch knows he's in for something different this time around and is doing everything possible to prepare for the fight of his life. He's a great competitor and he's surely not coming to lose.

I expect to see a beautiful chess match unfold,.. with Ward "muting", containing, and leading Froch away from his game plan, while enforcing his own. I'm picking Ward by majority decision.... anything more will just be icing on the cake.

Barring Pac vs Mayweather,.. for me this has got to be the most anticipated fight in the last couple of years. Thank you Super Six!!!!

Radam G says:

The Super Six Tournament Champion to be, I lean toward "SOG!" Enough spitted! Holla!

MisterLee says:

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Andre Ward 2011! Ward 2012! Fo' sho!

dino da vinci says:

Mister Lee, Here's what happened. I left for a bit to get some things accomplished. Upon coming back, it's like, where's everybody? I find myself looking for names of posters I recognize, but to no avail. I'm informed that during the "Great Change", TSS's version of the Ice Age, many great ones didn't make it. Glad to see you, for one, survived.

the Roast says:

A moment of silence for those lost in the Great Change..... I can't wait for this fight. No, not just to see Rachel jump up and down, I have to see who will lead. I think it will be Ward. Froch is a good counterpuncher. I think its going to be very close. I don't know who will win but I'll take either of them to beat Bute. This fight can't miss!

Radam G says:

A year of loud CHEERS for those _____, _____, and especially da b*tch cloners, "lost in the Great Change"....WTF! Dey got da fizzy-dizzy triple FU** outta Dodge! BUNCH of blank shootin' muthasuckas. And dey don't have cojones or nookies to come back. What's real, dey lack.

Hehehehehe! All this sit in on Wall Street and sit yo' lazy a\$\$ in on every city of the world, "da 99 percent against da one percent," and the "Arab Spring," and every other darn type of spring movement coulda started because of "the Great Change" of TSSU! [Giggling my arse off!] Fo' get YALL! Ain't tryin' ta giv' fup [sic] my milk and cookies. Ninety-nine percent, SORRY!

Danggit! Change really knows how to fudge up da wirrrllllldddd! Shake it up and slap it ta attention, babbbeeee! Holla!

dino da vinci says:

Radam, do you have proper instructions on how one should go about entering the kingdom of the 1%?