

Dr. Klitschko Set to Operate

Written by Joey Knish

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This Saturday Dr. Vitali Klitschko gets set to make the first defense of the WBC heavyweight title he won earlier this year in punishing Corrie Sanders over eight rounds. Now it is Mike Tyson conqueror, Danny Williams who steps into the Doctor's Office, and it may be a short visit.

Aside from a hard fought battle with Champion Lennox Lewis, Vitali Klitschko has dominated every heavyweight he has faced since turning professional and Williams doesn't seem to merit more than a puncher's chance.

The Klitschko career started with a bang as the heavy-handed native of Kyrgyzstan knocked out each one of his first 27 opponents, and only three of those made it past the third round. That bang went bust in 2000 when a shoulder injury forced Klitschko to quit at the end of the ninth round against Chris Byrd. Calls rang out and many – myself included – berated Klitschko for quitting in a fight he merely needed to remain upright in order to win. Other fighters have overcome injuries and fought through them. Why not Vitali? Regardless, only the man in the ring knows how badly he is hurt and if he is better off today for having opted to surrender his belt then he made the right choice.

Against Lewis all those who questioned Klitschko's will to win were silenced as he put up a great fight against King Lennox and only a grotesque cut in a dangerous location stopped him after six exciting rounds. Other than the misstep against Byrd and being cut up by Lewis, Vitali has been unstoppable. Can Danny Williams stop him?

Danny Williams was handpicked to lose to the one-time baddest man on the planet, Mike Tyson. The Tyson that Williams faced in July of this year was shadow of the man who destroyed the heavyweight division many moons ago. Beating an older, slower Tyson was not the grand achievement some may think, and let's not forget that Williams was in a heap of trouble early in that fight. Only leaning on Tyson helped keep his legs from betraying him in the first round but, to his credit, he recovered and stopped "Iron Mike" in the fourth round.

Williams was selected to face Tyson because of whom Danny and his team now refer to as "the old Danny Williams." That Danny Williams is the one who lost a decision to the average Michael Spott. It's the same Williams who lost to British journeyman Julius Francis over 12 rounds and was TKO'd in 6 rounds by plodding Sinan Samil Sam after being knocked down three times. As his team will lead us to believe, "that" Danny Williams is not "this" Danny Williams.

"This" Danny Williams knocked out Mike Tyson. And that's all he's done so far to distinguish himself from the Williams of old.

Prior to beating Tyson the knock on Williams was nothing physical, but rather mental. He had been known to freeze when the opportunity was greatest and had never been able to put all of his physical tools together in one box. The bigger the fight, the less was to be expected of

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Williams.

Gifted with fast hands and power in each mitt, Williams will be looking to knock out a man who has never been down. He will give up 6 inches in height and, if history is any indication, will likely carry 15-20 extra pounds around the ring over his opponent. Not exactly the attributes required to win a boxing match, but which might work in a brawl.

It is a kill or be killed mentality that "this" Williams and his team are trying to convince us they have as they prep for the biggest fight of their career. In their corner is an underachieving boxer with a history of fighting a losing battle with mental demons as he faces off against the best active heavyweight of the day.

With Vitali Klitschko anything is possible. He won't fade late (or early) like his brother, works methodically behind a heavy jab and can throw punches in bunches when the time comes. He may come out fast and furious and put Williams' shaky starts to the test, or may break him down piece by piece. For Williams the options are not so varied, he seemingly has none. To brawl with a fighter who has knocked his opponent out 33 of 34 victories and has never been down doesn't look to be the way to victory. However, being the heavier and far shorter man isn't the recipe in order to bob-and-weave his way inside of Klitschko.

Vitali has been on the world stage before and shone under the bright lights. There is no chance that he will take Danny Williams lightly on Saturday, unlike Mike Tyson, and let's not forget that Tyson reportedly injured his knee in that bout.

Under a steady dose of heavy jabs and thundering right hands Britain's dream of being home to the heavyweight champion of the world will crumble.