

I Like Marquez Over Judah, Ward Over Dawson And...

Written by Blake Hochberger
Monday, 14 May 2012 22:17



Hochberger loves a Canelo-Kirkland scrap. Readers, what is your fave fight on this list of matches that could well get made in the second half of 2012?

Finally... some good fights are being made (or at least being discussed)! Here's my take on the matchups and predictions for their respective outcomes:

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Juan Manuel Marquez v. Zab Judah- Say what you want about these grizzly veterans, they're both still top fighters. Judah will still give anyone a stern test, and still has enough zip in his left hand to hurt people. Although he's become more a barometer to measure prospects like Vernon Paris, he proved that he's not quite a gatekeeper just yet. He will bring the fight to opponents (just ask the aforementioned Vernon Paris). Marquez, however, is still one of the top fighters in the entire sport. He should take this as he'll be able to counter Judah with deadly accurate right hands when Judah leads with his left. Marquez will likely be down on the canvas at some point thanks to that aforementioned straight left hand, but JMM has more than proved he can get up off the mat and win a fight. This one will likely look like the Judah-Cotto fight where Marquez will play Cotto and wear down his fellow elder-statesman. **Marquez via TKO11**

Andre Ward v. Chad Dawson- YES! Is 7lbs really that big of a difference when considering weight classes? I wish more fighters would just fight the best guys available (within reason) rather than face mediocre guys in their own weight class. These are two extremely gifted physical boxers who are in their athletic prime. They're both phenomenal tacticians and athletes, and whoever wins will get a HUGE push towards the top of the P4P rankings. It's fights like these that often determine the fate of one's entire career. Big fight. I take Ward just because I don't think Dawson has the fire to beat him. **Ward outhustles Dawson to a UD12**

Mike Jones v. Randall Bailey- How nice is this? While Randall Bailey can definitely be seen as a gatekeeper at this point in his career, he can flat out hit. The guy's right hand has been pound-for-pound one of the hardest punches in all of the sport for the last decade (quietly, too). Mike Jones is a good fighter that could potentially have a big future. Getting past Bailey will be a huge step in that direction and would almost certainly lead to more big fights (of which there are no shortages at 147). Beating Randall Bailey proves a lot and says you can take a punch. I don't think Jones is ever going to beat an elite fighter, but a win here (which he'll get) should get him a few years worth of meaningful bouts. **Jones via UD12**

Saul "Canelo" Alvarez v. James Kirkland- There isn't a fight (a real one being discussed, anyway) more interesting to me than this one. While Canelo fell short of convincing me he was ready for 'the next big thing' moniker against Shane Mosley (see: lack of consistent combination-punching, failure to sustain his wildly effective body attack, and general lack of head movement), he showed the world enough to know he's a future champion. His composure and crisp, compact power punches will get to any fighter. He'll need his composure against the uber-aggressive James Kirkland. While Kirkland looked lost in his last fight, let's not discredit Carlos Molina. All that guy's done for the last few years it beat good fighters. Don't forget that Kirkland is a beast. (Watch this...Kirkland is in the black trunks: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/JP1ugoEW3kk>)

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While lacking the amazing explosiveness, Kirkland fights just like a poor man's 'young' Mike Tyson (I guess in theory he fights like 'Old' Mike Tyson). He plods forwards with solid head movement, and when he throws (vicious hooks and straight left hands), he throws with bad intentions. The embedded video above tells you the whole story on Kirkland: He's vulnerable, has below-average defense, is a bit chinny, comes forward, has a ton of heart (thanks largely to motivational trainer Ann Wolff), and can straight put people to sleep. Seeing his aggressiveness and frightening power against the calm, compact, and thudding shots of Canelo seems like must-watch TV. If Canelo hasn't worked out his head movement issues by then, this will be a fight filled with drama. If he has, he should be able to stop Kirkland, which would mark the biggest win of his career. Sorry Shane. **Canelo via TKO5**

Sidebar: Speaking of Shane Mosley, his name has been dropped by Devon Alexander as a potential opponent. With all of these great aforementioned fights being lined up, Amir Khan being out an opponent, and a very competitive weight class, Devon Alexander has the gall to call for Shane Mosley? Shane Mosley made it plenty clear that he's got nothing left in the tank against Canelo Alvarez. So what? Alexander wants to pad his resume/gain household name-recognition to beat on an old man who shouldn't be fighting anymore? I'm sorry, I know it's a business and Devon wants to make a name for himself outside of boxing circles, but this is pathetic. I'd guess HBO has enough sense to not put that fight on TV, and without televising it, Devon's name only sours for having little interest in fighting the best out there. Man up, Devon.

From what we heard on Jim Lampley's new HBO show (which I liked for the record), the plan with Canelo is Kirkland, Cotto, and then Mayweather. I absolutely love it. I've mentioned in previous columns that the matchup with Kirkland would be dynamite. I also mentioned how much sense it makes to put him in the ring with Cotto. If he can get by those two, it doesn't matter how it looks. That's a huge statement. Kirkland will be his toughest test to date, and Cotto is another caliber of fighter. While I don't think Saul is close to ready for Floyd right now, I can see him being in the ring with Cotto and doing well. Needless to say, Cotto held his own against Floyd. And if you can beat Miguel Cotto, nobody (especially not me) has any business telling you who you are or are not ready for.

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brownsugar says:

My mind tells me that Judah could possibly hit too hard for Marquez,.. That he may find the target too often with harder shots... But my heart and everybody knows,.. when Marquez gets heated up.... He starts smokin like a freight train midway thru... and only few on this earth have

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had the heart and ability to derail him... This is a very interesting fight on many levels.

undisputed34 says:

I agree with that all the way b-sug...I think that a fight between canelo and cotto would be must see tv. Canelo vs Kirkland could be marginally more exciting but Kirkland has too many holes in his defense to worry canelo, unless the Mandingo catches him early. If canelo finds himself in the ring with the cotto who showed up against mayweather, canelo gets taken into deeper waters than he's ever been and gets stopped late, I think...especially if Miguel keeps that stick in his face and reminds him every so often that his body punching is to be feared as well

deepwater says:

marquez vs judah could be a real good fight. ward over dawson very easy at 168. dawson over ward at 178. kirkland is shot, look at his eyes and listen to his speech. he already has brain damage. kirkland should have an mri.

ali says:

I got a feeling Zab is finally going to get a win over a big name opponent in Marquez. I just went on YouTube and watched some of Ward recent fights and I don't thin he can beat Dawson unless the fights at 168 and Chad is drained I hope he can atl east fight him at a catch weight.

maromero says:

I truly believe that Judah will give a hell of a performance for the first 5 rounds and then get worked to the point where he gets stopped by a better overall fighter in Marquez. Alexander is on crack for making that statement about Mosley. Ward and DAwson should fight at a cAtchweight