

Can Tony Thompson, With Old Larry Holmes Body, Beat Wladimir Klitschko?

Written by Michael Woods
Tuesday, 03 July 2012 09:56

WELTMEISTERSCHAFT IM SCHWERGEWICHT
HARD ROCKS
DER ECHE HÄRTETEST

Wladimir
KLITSCHKO
VS.
Tony
THOMPSON

PLUS
SOUNDS & FIGHTS
*Attraktives Verprogramm
ab 19.30 Uhr*

7. JULI 2012
**STADE DE SUISSE NATIONALSTADION
BERN**

The poster features two boxers, Wladimir Klitschko and Tony Thompson, in a boxing stance against a background of a mountain peak. The text is bold and white, with 'VS.' in red. The event details are at the bottom.

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There is no way Tony Thompson can beat Wladimir Klitschko on Saturday in Switzerland.

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No way in hell...unless he does.

Unless Thompson, the 40 year-old DC native, pulls a Josesito, or Klitschko (57-3, 50 KOs) looks "sportswriter 36" instead of the still-stellar master pugilist whose skills, dilligence, focus and stratregic superiority have made him the best heavyweight of the decade, along with his big brother, the very same thing will happen Saturday which happened in 2008, when they faced off before.

My gut tells me that this time things will go worse for Thompson (36-2, 24 KOs), who showed glimpses of effectiveness enroute to being stopped in round 11 in Hamburg. Why? Because since then, the Tiger has feasted on journeymen grade pugs enroute to this second title shot. He beat Adnan Serin, Chazz Witherspoon, Owen Beck, Paul Marinaccio and Maurice Harris. He stopped 24-14-2 Harris in his last outing, last May, and has been absent from the ring since then. Props must be given to his promoter, Dan Gossen, for working the system to get Thompson to the point where he gets this title shot, but it must be said that this second chance would not have been possible, in all probablility, in another era. Because of the severe shortage of viable contenders to the Wlad Klitschko crowns (IBF, WBA, WBO, IBO) men like Thompson can bide their time, stay semi-busy by beating Grade B hitters, and wait for the sanctioning bodies to show them some love. The Golden Era, or even the Silver Era, this is not.

That said, I will watch, because one...never...knows. The Josesito Effetct is still fairly fresh in our minds, reminding us that many plans go off the rails because one man decides he will ad lib, he won't follow the script, he will rise up when others expect him not to do so. You can watch the bout, which takes place in Bern, on EPIX, or on EPIXHD.com (4:30 PM ET kickoff).

Thompson was asked on a conference call why this time might be different. He explained he came in injured for their 2008 fight. "Well I don't know why the fans would (think he has a chance to win), but I know why me and my team -- you know everybody in my team knew I had an injury in the first fight, it's hard enough to fight Klitschko with two legs, but I really was on one leg. I had a torn meniscus in my knee. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to train throughout training camp or you know prepare for the heavyweight championship of the world. I think this time, we were able to prepare. And, you know, with a healthy body we actually have a legitimate shot -- I can't help what anybody else thinks if I have a legitimate shot -- but we know and so that's all that matters to me."

In Klitschko's last fight, his foe Jean Marc Mormeck offered a disgraceful effort. He looked like he showed up simply for the check, and his absence of aggression and of professional pride somehow got him to round four, when he was stopped out. Thompson, seemingly speaking to

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this garbage session, weighed in. "You know a lot of people they sit back and they just accept the inevitable, that's not -- that's not what we are coming over to do. This is going to be a fight, I can guarantee -- I'm not going to say to you that I'm going to guarantee victory and all that, and yes I'm going in to this to win but one thing I can guarantee is that I'm going to fight. I'm going to come forward. I'm going to press the fight. I'm going to try to take the lead in every round. So I'm not going to sit back and let him jab me, right hand me to death."

Thompson, a likable lad, showed a fine sense of humor in the call, when he poked fun at his regular-guy body. "I might not have, you know, the biggest punch of fighters out there, I don't have the greatest Holyfield body. Matter of fact, I've got the early 1990s Larry Holmes body." Really, he probably increased his fanbase 20% with his decency and humility on the call. "Obviously, I've beaten the guys that are B talents," he admitted. "I've beaten those guys. And it's up to me to prove that I belong on an A talent level. And that's what this fight is about. I want to know and be on that level myself."

He reminded fight fans of the bright spots in the 2008 bout, and clarified why his injury kept him down. "Anybody that saw the punch stats knew I outlanded Wladimir. I kept going up in punches landed. I was the only guy that consecutively in three different rounds, you know, went higher and higher in terms of the punches that I landed on him. And that has never been done in his career. But the problem that happened to me was I didn't have the power to drive through those punches. I didn't have the two legs to stand on to actually sit down on those punches and deliver them with heavyweight-type force."

Wladimir, on the call, noted that this title defense was not his call. "I didn't choose Tony Thompson to fight. I'm forced to fight Tony Thompson because he's, for all the respect that I want to give him, he has been fighting his way back to the top to become number one challenger in position -- number one at the IBF. And so I have to defend my IBF title and fight him. I'm going to be pretty honest and open here. I would rather take some -- some fighters that I hadn't fought. Someone new. But I had no choice. So I have to defend my titles, and I think that to fight Tony Thompson is definitely not an easy job, so it's not going to be a vacation fight for me."

He again lightly dissed Thompson regarding the torn meniscus. "I will suggest to Tony Thompson to fill out application and to tell in advance what kind of injuries he has this time. So we know in advance what is going on. Because in the first fight, he said to me tete-a-tete, even you know, without press, he said, "Wladimir, I'm going to beat you; I know what to do with you; I'm going to win this fight. And he was very self-confident. I mean, he was super-confident and there has been nothing spoken about any knee injury." Another diss came regarding the use of

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headbutts. "I felt his headbutts pretty good," Wladimir said. "I don't know about the other punches, but headbutts were good." He then offered a little scouting report on the challenger. "I compared him with to a spider: big body, small head, and long arms which is perfect for boxing and which makes it super complicated to fight against a guy like that and he looked fat, but he anticipates -- he anticipates when to punch and he anticipates when the punches are coming. I definitely have not fought anyone that is as unpredictable as Tony Thompson."

Klitscho surprised me a bit when he busted on Thompson, bringing up his knee. "You know, it's in the past. Who is interested in that, who -- what was in the past? You got knocked out. That's it. Give some respect to champion and, you know, give me good challenge. Nobody's interested in that. Everyone is interested in the result and end of the result. So that's why just my suggestion to Tony Thompson if he did say it, and to other boxers, just, you know, suck it up, bite your tongue, your lips, and just move forward."

Hey...anyone recall the fallout from Wladimir's 2004 TKO5 loss to Lamon Brewster? When he gassed out and fell into the K Hole? Let's let the late George Kimball refresh your memory.

"After wilting before Brewster's fifth-round onslaught," Kimball wrote on TSS, "in their World Boxing Organization heavyweight title fight at the Mandalay Bay, the Ukrainian tried to alibi away his performance by claiming that his food had been tampered with, and trainer Emanuel Steward subsequently claimed that his fighter was suffering from "unusually high blood sugar." Also: "The Klitschko camp even fired cutman Joe Souza, claiming that his liberal application of Vaseline had "trapped body heat" inside the fighter. If that were true, Souza would have an entire century's worth of co-conspirators, including virtually every man who ever hefted a spit-bucket."

Did you recall that lawyer Judd Burstein went a step further, laying out an alibi case in a letter sent to Nevada's state attorney:

"Mr. Klitschko has also confirmed that his head was completely clear after the Brewster fight was stopped; yet he could not speak or move his body with ease It is also important to note that Mr. Klitschko's blood sugar level after the fight was 230 -- almost twice the normal level. Medical experts have confirmed to the Klitschko team that such an elevated count may well indicate that Mr. Klitschko was given a foreign substance."

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Hey, what about, "You got knocked out, that's it?"

Readers, weigh in. Who out there thinks Thompson has some Lopez in him, and can bring home those crowns to the States? And who thinks Wlad is going to chop down that spider head and Larry Holmes body even earlier than he did in 2008?

[Comment on this article](#)

deepwater says:

this fight is a joke not worthy of mention.

Radam G says:

WOW! Strange copy. But I have to go into deep water, and not tell my joke about this joker who couldn't even wear in Larry Holmes's jackstrap, less alone be in an image of the contrary great one. Holla!

the Roast says:

If Thompson had old Larry Holmes skills he might have a chance but he doesn't so he doesn't. I am reminded of the time old Larry Holmes upset prime Ray Mercer. Mercer was coming of his destruction of Morrison and or Damiani. Holmes had been crushed by Tyson. My buddy Martin and I decided to skip the TVKO PPV. We thought Larry would get smoked in 1 round. I forget why but we went out to get something and saw the fight was about to start at this bar. We stood outside to watch the first round thinking Larry would not last. 1st round. 2nd round. 3rd round. Ok, Larry is doing pretty good, we gotta go inside and catch this. Nine rounds later Holmes had pulled off a stunning upset and our girlfriends thought we were dead. What year was that? The Roast is getting old.

undisputed34 says:

In short...I think the fight will be a notch above or below a wlad sparring session with Andy Lee. Haven't decided if its the over or the under though...

amayseng says:

@roast that was a great story it made me laugh...

the Roast says:

[QUOTE=amayseng;18113]@roast that was a great story it made me laugh...[/QUOTE]

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Thanks amayseng!

brownsugar says:

Comparing Thompson to Holmes is like comparing aerobic fitness trainer Richard Simmons to Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Thompson is effective with his slow lumbering style with smaller opponents.... fore-arming them to the ropes with his left and clubbing them with the right.

But it'll take a miracle for him to get VK in that position.