

Will Gennady Golovkin's Baby Face Fool Matthew Macklin?

Written by David A. Avila

Wednesday, 26 June 2013 16:29



Baby-faced boxers are a strange lot.

They look innocent and incapable of violence and seem vulnerable to strangers with candy. But then you place them in a prize ring and they change demeanors like Mr. Hyde.

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Let's look at subject one: a boxer from Kazakhstan named Gennady "GGG" Golovkin.

He's currently 31 years old and looks like he might cry if Mike Tyson stared at him. The tossed brown hair makes him seem like he works behind the counter cooking popcorn for a local movie house theater. When he talks, there's nothing menacing in his tone. He doesn't even sneer.

But wait until he steps in between the ropes. He changes tone quickly as if putting on a death mask.

Golovkin (26-0, 23 Kos) defends the WBA and IBO middleweight world titles against United Kingdom's no-nonsense Matthew Macklin (29-4, 20 Kos; *pictured above on right, with Golovkin left, during Wednesday presser in NYC*) on Saturday June 29. Their meeting will not be gentle and takes place at Foxwoods Resort Casino. HBO will televise.

Boxing has had plenty of other baby-faced assassins. Perhaps the best known of all was East L.A.'s Oscar "The Golden Boy" De La Hoya. As girls threw panties at him and blew kisses, he destroyed 30 of 45 opponents inside of the boxing ring. Many of those he beat entered with undefeated records such as Ike Quartey, Genaro Hernandez, and Miguel Angel Gonzalez.

It must have been puzzling to fighters to see a smiling De La Hoya during press conferences looking like an "easy mark" until the gloves were put on. Then that lightning jab and jolting left hook may have been the last memory for 30 opponents who lost to him in the boxing ring.

That's kind of what Golovkin does. He ambles around during press conferences with that innocent smile as if trying to prove he's as harmless as a dandelion. But inside the ring he's literally an assault machine bent on taking consciousness from whoever dares enter.

Thankfully, Macklin knows about harmless looking middleweights. He faced another in Sergio "Maravilla" Martinez and knows you cannot underestimate anyone in the boxing ring.

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"I gave Sergio a good fight. Sergio was a nightmare," said Macklin about his last world title opportunity against Martinez. "GGG as good as a fighter as he is, our paths have not crossed."

Macklin won't be fooled by all of the Golovkin puppy dog looks and smiles. He's seen what kind of destruction derives from the Kazakhstani's fists. It's not a very pretty sight looking at swollen eyes and rivers of blood from a fighter's nose.

Deceit is part of the baby-face fighter's game. Boxers like Sugar Ray Leonard, Marco Antonio Barrera, Felix Trinidad and Wilfredo Benitez could lull fighters into a false sense of security, then bam. It was over. De La Hoya made over \$700 million fooling people into thinking his punches were limp noodles.

Golovkin has the innocent act perfected and patented. But don't be fooled. Just ask Poland's Grzegorz Proksa or Japan's Nobuhiro Ishida. Both had never been knocked out or stopped but were fooled by the Golovkin lower lip thing.

You just can't trust those baby face guys.

Rudy Hernandez, a trainer and former fighter, said that guys like De La Hoya and Leonard had those unblemished faces for a darn good reason.

"They don't get hit very much," said Hernandez years ago of baby face fighters like De La Hoya and Leonard. "They're the ones doing the hitting."

That's Golovkin.

His trainer Abel Sanchez knows a thing or two about baby face assassins and helped cultivate the inner serial killer mode in Golovkin.

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"He hurts people," said Sanchez who trains Golovkin in Bear Bear Lake. "He can't train with middleweights because they don't last."

Macklin believes he will last.

"He hasn't really beaten anybody of any note. I remember watching him myself and I know how good a fighter he is. Yes he is accurate and heavy-handed. So am I," said Macklin.

Will Golovkin's sheepish looks fool Macklin?

During a recent lunch at a tony Greek restaurant the middleweight champion smiled and answered questions politely and innocently.

"I want to fight the best," said Golovkin. "Matthew Macklin is a very good fighter. It will be a very tough fight."

Then he proceeded to give that Catholic school altar boy look with an imaginary halo over his head.

Everybody knows those altar boys are the worst.

[Comment on this article](#)

Carmine Cas says:

No Macklin isn't stupid, the cat's been out of the bag regarding GGG's

leon30001 says:

[QUOTE]This article is silly.[/QUOTE]

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Agreed. I'd like more Borges; maybe not everyone's cup of tea, I gather, but the fellow can write, a rare commodity in boxing journalism these days.

leon30001 says:

Aye bit of Springs goes down well no question!