

WILDER KOs LIAKHOVICH: A Star Is Born?

Written by Michael Woods
Saturday, 10 August 2013 22:11



Something happened on Friday night in Indio, California, and Twitter sure as hell noticed, as I suspect the Klitschko Brothers did. Deontay Wilder passed the toughest test of a career which to this point has featured not so much in the way of tough tests, and did so in the sort of conclusive fashion which got people talking, in 140 characters or less, and more than that.

Wilder (29-0 with 29 KOs), the 27 year old who won bronze in the 2008 Olympics and has at times drawn ridicule for being moved along too slowly in the eyes of the brilliant blogger

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brigade, Tased ex WBO champ Sergei Liakhovich in round one of their encounter, which unfolded on "ShoBox," able to be seen by those not affected by the standoff between Time Warner Cable and CBS, Showtime's parent company.

The time came at 1:43, as Wilder, he of the hellacious reach, touched Liakhovich (seen on his back, in photo by Tom Hogan), the Belarus born hitter, with a long, stiff right, sent him back toward the ropes, and followed with a nastier version of the same. The loser hit the deck, hard and fast, his muscles tensed and spastic, his brain sending emergency messages to his nerves, which wondered what train hit them. The ref didn't have to count, he knew Liakhovich was in no mode to continue, not after that Wilding session on his jaw. The finisher right snaked around Sergei's guard, around his left hand, which vainly tried to protect his chin.

I reached out to Liakhovich's advisor, Anthony Cardinale, to check to see if the vet is OK, and what the future holds for him, and for Wilder.

"Sergei is fine," Cardinale said. "He caught one right where it says 'Goodnight.' Wilder is going to be a problem for anyone who gets in the ring with him if he connects."

I asked if Liakhovich (25-6; has lost three straight, all by stoppage) will hang up the gloves after 15 years as a professional. "I won't comment on that," Cardinale said. "It is a decision that he has to make for himself." Cardinale was right there and helped John Ruiz engage in 12 title fights, against the best of the best in the later 90s and 2000s. His dad was a fighter so he grew up around the game, and has seen the heavy handed chin-smashers from the early 60s to today. I asked him to assess Wilders' power. Is it scary up close? "It's right up there with Ernie Shavers or Michael Dokes," he said.

For a second opinion, I reached out to Jameel McCline, the former contender who came within a point or so of winning a heavyweight crown himself in that same era Ruiz campaigned in. I asked Jameel if he thought Wilder, promoted by Golden Boy, could present a problem for the Klitschkos. McCline seconded Cardinale on the power issue.

"Wilder is the hardest puncher I have fought or sparred," said the man who boxed Lance Whitaker, Shannon Briggs, Wladimir Klitschko, Chris Byrd, Nikolay Valuev, John Ruiz, Samuel Petteer, and sparred with Wilder to prep for the Liakhovich fight. "He has endless ability,"

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McCline said.

But, I wondered, the kid started boxing at 21. He occasionally flails, looks green at times, gets overexcited. Is he not ripe to be dissected by a smart, cool technician? "No, he can box very well," McCline said. "He's a solid talent, with solid ability. He's a true student. I love his game. He will destroy any American."

Hmm, fighting words for Seth Mitchell, Cris Arreola, Bryant Jennings, et al....

Readers, your take on Wilder? Too green yet for a Klitschko test? Even if so, you have to respect a guy stopping all 29 men he has been in with. That ain't easy to do, not even if you're lining up cab drivers...Weigh in, in our Forum!

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Radam G says:

Wilder will become hevyweight of the world, PERIOD! A late start for a heavyweight is nothing. I can name five that started in their 20\$ and became title-belt holders. Heavyweighting ain't hard. Holla!

Bernie Campbell says:

What can I say, one slip, one deviation and he probably wont recover! That's what happens when sh.. is minutely planned! No room for ever!

Spinach Chin says:

The kid has power for sure, but Sergei is a dead man walking. GB's matchmaker should get a raise.

Bernie Campbell says:

No room for error! I wonder if anyone saw the fight with Wilder and Kerston Manswell! Before he

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fighters Areola just to make it itty bitty safe, he should have a rematch with Manswell! Just to keep him honest! See if its on Youtube!

brownsugar says:

Bernie even if an Areola jab touches Mitchell he could go down... but I wouldn't be too surprised to see Mitchell jab his way to victory.... in which case well have a brave but previously traumatised fighter faint at the mere sight of an incoming Wilder right hand. Their paths are beginning to converge....who will emerge on top? Wilder... Mitchell....Jennings....or Areola...?

Bernie Campbell says:

The subject of my passage was to focus on the prior encounter with Wilder and Manswell and a hopeful rematch! Any other incidental was pure coincidence!

amayseng says:

Didn't see it.

Got bak from NYC and my Showtime was jacked thanks to
The stupid powers of CBS and time Warner cable.

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brownsugar says:

[QUOTE=amayseng;34790]Didn't see it.

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The stupid powers of CBS and time Warner cable.[/QUOTE]

Wow...should be on Facebook by now

brownsugar says:

I mean youtube

Hop says:

TBH I'd love to see an American once again rise to ascendancy among the HW ranks. Obviously the power is there in spades w/Wilder, but is the defense? Who knows? I do like Deontay, though, and the excitement his fearsome KO threat bring into the ring each time.

[COLOR="#FF0000">[B][I]Give him a top ten HW opponent![/I][B][/COLOR]

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Bernie Campbell says:

Joe Hipp, born on an Reservation, subject to Tribal Laws exempt from other protocol! Did you consider him an exciting American Heavyweight? Do you consider him an American? More importantly does he?

Radam G says:

YUP! Joe Hipp is an American. And consider himself the original, first one. Holla!

Carmine Cas says:

I want to see him face someone who has minute chance, he looks promising though

gibola says:

Remember what was being said about David Price a few months ago before Tony Thompson punched back. Wilder is a huge puncher but I'll reserve judgement until he's in a real fight rather than decide anything from a series of executions. If he's so good why aren't they putting him in with a live body? Chisora would be a great next opponent after his win over Malik Scott. I suspect they're protecting Wilder to put him in for a big Klitschko fight he won't be prepared for.

kidcanvas says:

all wilder needs to do is touch one of the a fore mentioned on the jaw once... and its all over, as for them

mortcola says:

No, Kidcanvas, he has to be able to land several straight jabs and then two flush right hands against a head that isn't moving, and that has eaten so many heavyweight power shots in being stopped before that he can't take it at all any more. Chisora has a good chin and doesn't get hit by straight bombs, and pressures fighter so the lesser ones have to fight off the back foot. Wlad Klitschko hasn't been affected by anyone's power since getting his anxiety and conditioning under control, and is an absolute master of taking the distance and angle away from the other puncher, which is one reason why he rarely gets hit even though he is always within a close radius of his opponent. Took a few flush power shots, one from Haye, two or three from Wach, didn't wobble and fought through just fine. Price? Failed the test. Not under consideration anymore. Wilder is obviously a powerful puncher, but he is ripe for being made ineffective and countered into humiliating oblivion by an experienced not-yet-punchy heavyweight. I'll give you even money he isn't undefeated same time next year.

dino da vinci says:

@gibola. Absolutely great post. Same goes for mortcola who I had given up for dead. I met Joe Hipp on just one occasion. Seemed like a nice guy. We're long due for a heavyweight to

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emerge, ala Tyson, and captivate the sport for a bit. The whole, nature abhors a vacuum scenario at work.