Written by Lee Wylie
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Golovkin, seen here in NYC, gets a thumbs up from Wylie, but the writer still cautions admirers not to go overboard, not yet.

Undoubtedly, Saturday night was the best night Gennady Golovkin 24-0 {21} has ever had as a professional fighter. Against an extremely awkward opponent in Grzergoz Proksa 28-2 {21}, who was perceived to be the Kazakhstani's toughest opponent to date, Golovkin looked quite brilliant, completely overwhelming his overmatched opponent inside five, one-sided rounds. As soon as Golovkin landed a left hand early in the opening frame, Proksa closed shop, and was reluctant to let his hands go for the remainder of the fight. As a result, Proksa spent far too much time feinting and posturing from the outside, instead of punching. The feint, when performed correctly, is one of the most useful tools in any fighter's arsenal. Performed incorrectly however --should a fighter do it too much as was the case with last night with Proksa-- then he runs the risk of telegraphing his feints. If an opponent isn't lured into thinking the feint is the beginning of a punch --as Golovkin clearly wasn't-- then it becomes a wasted motion and an opponent can ignore its false intentions. Proksa carries his hands very low, and shoots from the hip, in order to disguise the angles of his punches, a Muhammad Ali, Roy Jones Jr, Sergio Martinez dynamic. The problem with this of course, is if you don't allow you hands to move against a heavy handed fighter, then you simply become a fighter who has his hands down by his waist on defense, and this is suicide against a known puncher like Golovkin.

Rather regrettably, prior to the fight I hadn't been overly impressed with Golovkin. His amateur pedigree was obvious, but I saw him more as a good fighter who had, thus far, simply

dominated inferior opposition who complemented his seek and destroy style perfectly. To further my point, I actually picked Proksa to pull off the upset last night. I thought his herky jerky movement, volume and southpaw angles would have been the perfect foil for the slower moving Golovkin, preventing him from getting off and from shortening up the distance. I couldn't have been more wrong. As I've already mentioned, hesitancy to throw punches was partially to blame, but the rest of what lead to Proksa's massacre lies within the work of Golovkin's, who I may have severely underestimated, in particular, his level of skill.

Here are my own observations from last nigh on the winner:

#1. His dominant hand:

Golovkin, who fights out of an orthodox stance, could be naturally left handed. Even grazing shots that came from the left hand, that didn't seem to land all that cleanly, hurt Proksa, who hadn't tasted the canvas as a pro or an amateur before last night.

#2. The jab:

Golovkin's jab may be lacking in technique, but its power is there for all to see. There haven't been too many fighters who could hurt and wobble an opponent with the jab. Sonny Liston was one, Marvin Hagler was another. It looks like Golovkin's jab may be cut from the same cloth as those two. It may not be delivered with any real speed or snap, but the length of it, as well as its capacity to inflict some hurt on an opponent, more than makes up for any shortcomings in the technique department.

#3. Defense:

This was the area where I was most impressed with Golovkin. Rather than block punches behind a high guard, which lengthens a fighters' transition time between defense and offense, Golovkin prefers to carry his hands openly and just below his chin. No word of a lie, I saw some defensive techniques from Golovkin last night that have become lost in the modern fight game. Apart from good head and upper body movement, Golovkin showed some serious skill in his ability to slip and parry. Golovkin also displayed his ability to pick straight punches off by coming down on them with the point of his elbow {sometimes known as barring} and there was even the old technique known as the stop hit, which is an old Wing chun technique that many fighters from the past utilized {intercepting an attack with the jab while turning the attack away simultaneously}. It's very rare you see it at all these days. Golovkin's hands are not that fast, but by employing many of these defensive techniques, his hands are already in a semi-offensive position. Hence, Golovkin appears faster than what he really is.

#4. Calmness:

Every time Golovkin had his man in trouble last night, note how calm and patient he was in going for the finish. Many a fighter swings wildly once they smell blood. Not Golovkin. As he moved in for the kill, Golovkin's eyes were wide open, looking for gaps. Some people think combination punching is all about speed. Golovkin showed exactly how combinations should be

thrown. Mixing up straights, hooks and uppercuts, to the head and body and around an opponent's guard, taking advantage of any openings available. Even when Proksa looked ready to be taken out, Golovkin wasn't afraid to take his time, even taking a step back at one point in order to make sure he's throwing the most efficient punches for the situation. The ability to finish an opponent is an art and it's something that is taken for granted these days.

#5. Pressure:

Many an observer, including HBO's Max Kellerman and Roy Jones, have compared Golovkin to Julio Cesar Chavez Sr because of the similarities in their styles. While there are a few traits which could lead one to draw comparisons between the two --namely Golovkin's ability to snake a left hook to the body underneath an opponent's guard-- I think they are slightly different, especially in their approach and the pressure they apply. At times, Chavez was unrelenting with his pressure. If you look at prime Chavez, his emphasis was to pin a man against the ropes before systematically breaking him down by while not allowing his opponent to get his own work done in the process. {Take a look at the Edwin Rosario fight as an example}. Golovkin on the other hand, is slightly different. His pressure is more like that of Joe Louis or Carlos Monzon pressure, it's subtle pressure. Golovkin's emphasis is about pressurizing his opponent into making mistakes, so that he can capitalize on them with his heavy hands. Apart from when Proksa was hurt up on the ropes, Golovkin wasn't really looking to get inside at all costs, as was often the case with Chavez Sr. Golovkin is far more upright as he's moving in, remaining in perfect balance so that he's always in position to punch with maximum effect.

Don't confuse what I'm saying here, these comments are strictly about what techniques Golovkin employs inside the ring and they shouldn't be mistaken for direct comparisons to the likes of Liston, Hagler, Louis or Chavez Sr. Gennady Golovkin is a talented fighter, but he's light years away from being considered the equal of these men. In all honesty, he may not even be the equal of some other middleweights out there. Despite not looking all that big, Golovkin appears to be very physical but I'd like to see what would happen once someone can back him up. Would Golovkin be as effective or dangerous if he's forced onto the back foot? Julio Cesar Chavez Jr may be able to answer that question for us. Also, what would happen when he's in there with someone that could better the movement of Proksa, who shares the same southpaw stance but possesses much better foot work and hand speed as well as power and possibly a better chin? There's a middleweight out there in Sergio Martinez that would certainly provide some answers to those questions too. Then of course, there's the time-old saying that a fighter isn't a fighter until his chin has been tested. Even though we've been told he's never been hurt in training or sparring, I'd like to see what happens when Golovkin's hit cleanly on the chin in an actual fight. No matter how good an opponent's defense is, his chin will be tested at some point. Pernell Whitaker, who was hit more than most think, wouldn't have been the fighter he was unless his chin held up. Golovkin's good, but let's just wait a minute before we plaster saint him.

There's more to being a fighter than good fundamentals and power. It's times like this, when it's

easy to get carried away with a fighters talent, that I say to myself --Donald Curry. Everyone should do the same.

Right now though, I'm happy to admit that I got it wrong with Golovkin. He's a serious talent who just made the middleweight division all the more interesting for all of us. Let's just leave it that...for now.

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

Great copy. But one should never look with his eyes, but should know the full story. Donald Curry's bad diet -- not any opponent or an illusion --destroyed his grestness. Holla!

brownsugar says:

I've been screaming for the last year and a half that Golovkin embodied the talent to make us forget about boxing's fading stars.
appreciate the authors honesty about picking against Triple G, ...we all get it wrong sometimes... and that's part of the fun of being a fan.
Because no one is always right.

Grimm says:

He actually did get hit with a few solid bombs from a good puncher, and showed awareness, composure, chin. The guy has got the goods, and made me feel I was witnessing something truly special.

amayseng says:

i'm with grimm.. ggg is solid in all facets of the game. speed, accuracy, coordination, defense, footwork, with EFFORTLESS power in both hands and he goes to the body as well as he goes to the head. he is the complete deal thus far and very invigorating to see an up and comer. nothing wrong with getting excited for a fighter

spit bucket says:

GGG vs SOG... I think Ward wins close UD or SD. I drank the Kool-Aide and it tasted good. Haven't seen anyone so relaxed in the ring since Michael Nunn. @ amayseng, your effortless comment is spot on. I thing Golovkin beats every other elite middle except Ward. Would love to seem in against Froch (and not just for the pleasure of Rachael's exquisiteness...). He doesn't fight as though seething with rage. He is artful, focused, and seriously dangerous. He moves just enough to avoid incoming punches and no more, showing composure and confidence. Barring injury I see a long career because of his ring wisdom and wonderful defense. Don't think

I've seen another fighter deliver bombs with such ease and grace. And we get to see this exceptional fighter in a pretty stacked division... lucky us!

ali says:

Spit bucket James Toney is most relax fighter in the ring I've ever seen but Nunn is up there. Now on Golovkin he has some heavy hands a strong jab and a soils chin. But his defense is terrible and he's slow *** hell. If he was to fight SOG I will empty out my bank account and put all my money on Andre Ward and I would nervous at all come fight night. Let's see how he does against better opposition before we start talking about putting him in the ring with a top five p4p fighter.

Radam G says:

What da double fudge! Is the world really ending in two months? I doubt it. But I find myself agreeing with SCLA Ali. Triple G is aight! But you cats are going overboard. Da dude fought a chump! Ain't a bit of sense to turn on the pump. Triple G moves like he has a camel hump. Da top gun will probably put his @ss in a serious slump.

It makes no sense to go to a fire fight with a strong wind. Triple is a spark, but not a hellfire. Holla!

brownsugar says:

Ok, it's Official, boxing can now be recognized as an international sport.

With future SuperStars emerging from every corner of the globe.

I know Wylie and Editor Mike have both sounded the precautionary alarm,.....

it goes as follows:

....."DON'T DRINK THE TRIPLE G COOLAID JUST YET,.. because behind every bright new prospect lies a potentially cyannide laced cup of Jim Jones sized proportions".

And I respect that,.... understanding that the ultra savvy TSS Alumni aren't generally moved by overnight sensationalism.

However Golovking wasn't just made in one HBO appearance.

His skills were tempered at the elite level in the scalding flames of international competition. in 350 fights the only men to truly get the best of him once he reached his peak was a Russian named Gaydarbek Abdulovich Gaydarbekov who basically fought his whole carrier in the amateurs at the elite level, starting at flyweight.

Golovkin also lost a lopsided decision to an Egyption named Mohamed Hikal (currently 33 yrs

old) at the 2005 Amateur championships. Hikal then lost to Englishman James Degale at the 2008 Olympics.
(proving any given day... anyone can be beat)

[B]So I'm gonna preface the following statements by saying my next comments may indeed be nothing more than unsubstantiated hype. nothing more than inflated hyperbole, fit for the rubbish pail... However my gut feeling tells me Golovkin is the Real Deal[/B].

Watching Golovkins performance was reminiscent of watching Mayweather destroy every opponent at 130 with sublime grace and efficiency while calling out every elite fighter within 2 weight classes. (Mosely, Kostya Tszyu, Del La Hoya, etc)

Not to say that there's a whole lot of similarity between Golovkin and Mayweathers styles except their preternatural skill in the art of boxing.

Ward..... you had better get ready,.. I'm not sure if this is a battle you can win.

It nearly brought a tear to my eye to watch Golovkin employ a modified shoulder roll stance briefly while jabbing on the outside,
and using shoulder butts...along with well timed (and well disguised)shoves when the opponent wasn't in optimum punching range , in addition the use of rapid yet well placed combinations against an A-Rhymic and awkwardly moving target.

I sincerely believe that Golovkin would be at home fighting the likes of SugarRay L., Hagler, Hearns, Duran, and Calzaghe.
(dare I even mention the great SRR)

Don't get upset,.. every generation brings a new star... such is the way of Professional Boxing.

A year and a half ago I said that Golovkin was the lead Vangard of a host of Middleweights that I like to call "The 4 Horseman of the (Middleweight)Apocolypse"

Golovkin, Pirog, N'Jikam, and Korobov. (and possibly Geale)

With Golovkin being the first to invade our shores.

These guys will render both Martinez and Chavez irrelevent in the Middleweight division.
While providing a cure to middleweight tunnel-vision.

I think we will see a return to when the best used to fight the best.....
and that couldn't couldn't come at a better time than now.

ali says:

B-Sug wow!!!!! I don't see it but at the end of the day u might be right but I seriously doubt it. He has a punchers chance against the the greats u named but that about it if he doesn't get lucky

they mop the floor with him. Golovkin can only fight one way, Ward can do it in alot of different ways and can make adjustment on the fly I really doubt if Golovkin can do that also.

Radam G says:

Wow! You GO SCLA Ali! You got my attention, especially IF that is REALLY you. WTF! I don't it's you with my way of thinking.

The world is playin' da fo'-real G like myself. This Triple G cat would get double mopped by da top dawgs. He ain't all that and a bag of chips. Da sucka is just all that without the bag of chips. I'm reminded of Glady Knight and the Pips.

Dat muthasucka betta' get back on a midnight plane crossing the pond, because SOG or SBC would put the double mop on him. Even Kid Chocolate would do it to him. Holla!

Radam G says:

Now "The Latin Snake" Sergio Mora is calling out "Triple G." But I think that TG would take Mora. Holla!

Grimm says:

Going against the public opinion can often be a sign of real knowledge and insights - but equally often a sign of a simple will to seem knowledgeable or having a special gift others lack.

As some great fighters - no, I don't call him great just yet, since greatness comes with feats - GGG may not be a 10-pointer in one specific category (maybe not even power, though for sure a 9-pointer), but it is the package that makes the man...and most of all how he uses that package.

I've seen Proksa in some fights. This was no pushover. He is a talented, tough and awkward fighter with power and speed. Sure, he has flaws, but so far he's been a tough nut to crack for all opponents. It took GGG one round to suck the spirits out of him, and not so much longer to totally pick him apart. GGG is good, no question about it - how good remains to be seen.

But really - if he's only hype and no hope...how come it's the best namnes out there that's being presented as the failuretest of his level? Gotcha.

the Roast says:

I'm not ready to put GGG in the HOF just yet. He was fun to watch and I want to see more. Sergio-JR winner, Pirog, John Mugabi, all are welcome. I hope GGG dosen't sit on his hands like Pirog has done. Lets see what happens. I remember way back when the young Roast went to his buddy Frank's house to watch a Donald Curry fight. Young Roast was all in on Curry. "This guy will beat Leonard!" I said "This guy will beat Hagler!" I said. I sat down with Frank to watch Curry fight Lloyd Honeyghan that night. Six rounds later Frank said,"WTF were you

talking about?"

Radam G says:

Hey the Roast in Milan, Italy, Don Curry just worked out three weeks for that bout and had to lose 40 pounds to get down to welterweight. The cat ate himself outta super greatness. He recently, not to long ago, got out of jail in Texas for not paying child support. Holla!

the Roast says:

Sounds like Curry should have faked an injury and skipped that Honeyghan fight if he wasnt ready. I thought he would bounce back but the he got KOed by the Bodysnatcher. He made a mistake that night, backed straight out with his hands down, got caught. Again I thought he would bounce back. When he lost to Rene Jacquot I got off the bandwagon. It was down hill after that.

Radam G says:

Some pugilists just cannot handle defeat. When they lose for the first time, it is a long ride down hill before they get off the hill. And realize that they are no longer a thrill. Holla!

brownsugar says:

[QUOTE=ali;19625]B-Sug wow!!!!! I don't see it but at the end of the day u might be right but I seriously doubt it. He has a punchers chance against the the greats u named but that about it if he doesn't get lucky they mop the floor with him. Golovkin can only fight one way, Ward can do it in alot of different ways and can make adjustment on the fly I really doubt if Golovkin can do that also.[/QUOTE]

Hey Ali..you don't have to be Nostradamus to see this Golovkins potential... just like you and Mr Lee didn't need a crystal ball to see the potential of SOG Ward. The only thing separating Golovkin from greatness is a Sugar Ray Leonard type hype machine and a few wins over highly rated competition. This guy is on a collision course with hall of fame greatness. I favor him over Martinez or Chavez by KO today.

Radam G says:

WOW! Haha! Holla!