

Jermell Charlo, Once Close To Legally Blind, Now Seeing Straight

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Wednesday, 05 June 2013 14:52



In May, Jermell Charlo underwent laser eye surgery to correct incredibly poor eyesight in both eyes. When the eye doctor told him how close to legally blind he had been fighting, Charlo couldn't believe it.

"Back then, I didn't just know," Charlo told TSS. "I didn't know what I was going through. I would fight and know this was happening or that was happening, but the doctor told me I was basically fighting blind before."

The surgery was a success. Charlo said he went straight to sleep afterwards, so he didn't have to deal with the burning or itchy eyes some report after surgery of this kind, at least that he can remember. Unlike most other patients, though, Charlo's profession puts his eyes in harm's way almost every single day.

"I'm boxing, so I'm trying to be more careful," he said. "You can get hit in the eye and it feels like there's something burning in your eye or something. Other than that, I'm dealing with it. I like having perfect vision, so I think everything is going good. No real complaints."

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Charlo is scheduled to go 12 rounds with tough veteran Demetrius Hopkins on Saturday, June 8 at the Home Depot Center in Carson, California. The bout will be featured on Showtime's Championship Boxing telecast beginning at 10:00 p.m. ET.

Charlo is excited to be fighting underneath rugged warriors Marcos Maidana and Josesito Lopez as well as having an opportunity to share the spotlight with fellow Ronnie Shields disciple Erislandy Lara who will take on knockout artist Alfredo Angulo that night too.

"Right now, I'm focused on my boxing," he said. "I'm just trying to cope with everything. I'm anxious to get in the ring and see what happens."

It may seem strange to the uninitiated, but Charlo believes sight is an overrated commodity in the sport of boxing.

"I can see better [now] of course, but you can fight with your eyes closed," he said. "A lot of people don't understand that, you can fight with your eyes closed or whatever [else] is going on. It's just a matter of being in the ring and doing what you do."

What Charlo does in the ring, especially lately, is knock people out. Charlo has won three of his last four fights within the distance. He didn't make any bold predictions about the Hopkins fight, but he said he was anxious to see what he could do against someone with the experience and pedigree that the 32-year-old nephew of legendary champion Bernard Hopkins has.

"I'm already in shape," he told me more than two weeks before fight night. "I'm just a couple pounds above my weight right now. I'm ready to get in there with a veteran. I consider him a real veteran, but like any other veteran or any other fighter in the ring...I do what I got to do. I come to win."

Should he prove victorious, the rapidly ascending prospect said the sky's the limit for him as well as his twin brother and fellow undefeated junior middleweight prospect, Jermell Charlo. Jermell told me he and his brother are starting to get noticed around their hometown of Houston as those "boxers from television," and that both he and Jermell consider it motivation to keep

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getting better.

Charlo said there were no fast and easy ways to get better.

“I push myself to the extreme because I know I’ve got a lot of followers, a lot of friends and fellow boxers who look up to [my brother and me]. Houston hasn’t had a fighter like us in a long time, so me and my brother have to really, really put it on, really, really do what we have to do. We’ve got a lot on our shoulders. That’s why we stay in camp, train hard and do what we’ve got to do.”

It’s working. Fight fans and media pundits are becoming increasingly interested in the Charlo brothers’ boxing careers. Charlo told me he was glad to do his part.

“I hear that a lot of people are saying I’m getting better. I do feel like there are a lot of things I can improve on, things I can get better at and mature with. To me, it’s a matter a time. I just keep going forward. I just keep growing and growing and growing. I don’t look at it like anything other than moving forward.”

Yes, it’s full steam ahead for Jermell Charlo, who’s keeping his eyes locked tight on his future. And now, of course, he’ll be able to watch it unfold more clearly than ever.

Now please head over to boxingchannel.tv for [an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at Jermell Charlo’s eye surgery](#), a special contribution from Russell Davis. You can follow Russell on twitter [@Dangerussmind](#).

{youtube}n7ej8e7f2aQ{/youtube}

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Radam G says:

The twin is right. You can fight with your eyes closed or blinded. In the annals of da games, there was a many of half-blinded fighter -- the late, great smokin' Joe Frazier, and many of a fully-blinded fighter -- the late, great John Langford.

The now-full seeing Jermell Charlo is going to torch D-Hop. The canvas, the nephew of an all-time great is going to mop. Holla!