

Chad Dawson, If Ward Didn't Take A Piece of Him, Should Handle Stevenson

Written by Ron Borges
Thursday, 06 June 2013 10:09



If Chad Dawson still is who he thinks he is Adonis Stevenson will never get to be who he hopes to be Saturday night at the Bell Centre in Montreal.

In a sense, Stevenson may have made the same ill-advised decision Dawson made in his last outing, although in reverse: a choice to take a foray into a place where his body doesn't really belong.

The WBC light heavyweight champion returns to his natural weight Saturday night after his disastrous decision to drop down to 168 and challenge unified super middleweight champion Andre Ward nine months ago, a choice that led to the worst beating of Dawson's career.

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Dawson, who claims to have had to drop nine pounds the day before the weigh-in to reach 168, was knocked down three times by Ward before being stopped in the 10th round and now must erase the long shadow of that one-sided night while standing in front of one of the biggest punchers in boxing.

Yet the questionable truth of that is part of the back story of this fight as well as part of the consequence of Stevenson's choice to abandon the super middleweight division, where he'd risen to become mandatory contender, to challenge for a championship at a weight he's never carried before.

Stevenson knows Dawson will enter the ring at the bell Centre carrying a dark memory with him of that brutally concussive night with Ward. It is a memory that must be erased for Dawson to successfully defend his title and one Stevenson must refresh to capture it and carry the day.

"When I touch him he's going to panic," Stevenson said during a pre-fight press conference in Montreal this week. "Sure he's got skills but if you touch him you can beat him."

Certainly that has been Stevenson's M.O., having cold-cocked 80 per cent of his opponents while building up a 20-1-1 record with 17 knockouts. Truth be told however all of those victims were residents of the super middleweight division. He has taken the opposite road of the one Dawson unsuccessfully trod on his last outing, going up in the hope of knocking Dawson down.

The wisdom of that remains debatable. Dawson is taller, quicker, younger, better defensively and vastly more experienced than Stevenson. He has a jab that can be stiff and controlling, two things that will only be enhanced by Dawson's 4 ½ inch reach advantage, and he has faced down far more challenging competition at light heavyweight.

That jab and Dawson's far deeper resume have the champion convinced Stevenson, while dangerous, is dangerous in the way something is only when left to roam about uncontrolled. Dawson understands that and dismisses it as an impossibility Saturday night.

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"I understand he's a big puncher but he's getting into the ring with a different animal," Dawson (31-2, 17 KO) explained recently. "Those 17 knockouts he got were against nobodies. Now he's getting an opportunity to go in the ring with a real somebody.

"I'm on a different level. He hasn't been in the ring with anyone. There are no world champions on his resume. I'm going to show him he is not the man for this division.

"I'm back at my natural weight. I feel strong. I have my trainer (Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, whom Dawson rejoined after working of late with John Scully) back. Once I get my jab working it's going to be an easy night for me."

Certainly it has that possibility because if the shorter, short-armed Stevenson can't get inside that jab he can't win. Only at close quarters will he have a chance to land the devastating power shots that got him the biggest chance of his life and to get there he will have to pay a significant price because Dawson is an accurate though sometimes indifferent puncher who is slicker than a can of motor oil defensively and willing to win by using his jab like a picador's lance.

Stevenson also cannot make the mistake of thinking what Ward did to the drained and dehydrated Dawson is typical of the fighter he is facing. While the champion lacks Stevenson's punching power he found ways to outbox Bernard Hopkins, Antonio Tarver twice, Glen Johnson and Tomasz Adamek while holding some form of the light heavyweight title for most of the past six years. Such things are not accomplished without having a commanding presence in the ring and a clear understanding of distance and how to maintain it.

Stevenson at his best does not measure up to any of those opponents so the question becomes is Dawson still what he was after having ravaged his body to make 168 in his last outing and then been ravaged by Ward for his trouble?

If he is, Adonis Stevenson's dream will go unfulfilled. If he is not, Chad Dawson will find himself in the crosshairs of one of the most dangerous punchers he's ever faced.

"I know he can punch," Dawson said dismissively. What he meant, loosely translated, is "Yes

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he can punch. The question is can he land?"

In the semi-main event of the HBO telecast, Yuriorkis Gamboa (22-0, 16 KO) pursues his third "interim" world title when he faces unbeaten Darleys Perez (28-0, 19 KO) for the WBA interim lightweight championship. Gamboa has already held the WBA interim featherweight championship before unifying that title and then moving up in his last fight seven months ago to easily outclass Michael Farenas and capture the WBA interim super featherweight championship.

Now Gamboa is headed for the interim trifecta and frankly the former Cuban Olympic champion is such a rare talent there seems little reason to doubt he will succeed.

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Carmine Cas says:

Dawson quit, yet no one labeled him a quitter. Victor Ortiz gets his jaw broken and he's subjected to the firing squad. There are some good fights this weekend, too bad they're on competing networks

Carmine Cas says:

You're in NY right? Yes the gov def has word based filtering. The revolution is long overdue

amayseng says:

You start the revolt and ill be by your side.

No joke.

F this government and their stealing from this country and its great citizens.

amayseng says:

Not a chad fan but not against him either.

Quitting was a result of being physically ill due to the weight drain.

Look at de la Hoya vs PAC.

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When you drain down like that your organs suffer for it.

I'll give chad the benefit of the doubt.

Of like to see ward fight chad at 175 before too long

and although I have ward beating him handily I say chad makes a better account of himself.

Radam G says:

Nope! No excuses! Broken jaw or weight drain, you don't quit. The nature of the game is breaks and drains. Tons of fighters won titles inspite of broken jaws and weight drain. I can name some, but I'm jet legged. Holla!

Carmine Cas says:

[QUOTE=deepwater;31690]how bout ward vs Hopkins if Hopkins gets by the guy at Barclay center?[/QUOTE]

Hopkins doesn't want it, where in NY are you? I'm on the island

Carmine Cas says:

[QUOTE=Radam G;31693]Nope! No excuses! Broken jaw or weight drain, you don't quit. The nature of the game is breaks and drains. Tons of fighters won titles inspite of broken jaws and weight drain. I can name some, but I'm jet legged. Holla![/QUOTE]

Ali admitted that had he known his jaw was broken in the Ken Norton fight, he would have quit. Dawson quit, Ortiz had a more legitimate reason

Carmine Cas says:

[QUOTE=amayseng;31686]You start the revolt and ill be by your side.

No joke.

F this government and their stealing from this country and its great citizens.[/QUOTE]

That's what I like to hear lol

amayseng says:

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[QUOTE=deepwater;31690]how bout ward vs Hopkins if Hopkins gets by the guy at Barclay center?[/QUOTE]

I think ward takes it by youth alone.

Maybe 8/4.

The Hopkins who fought Callaghan should win that.

I'd still like to see it.

Although at 48 part of me wouldn't.

Carmine Cas says:

[QUOTE=deepwater;31702]I was in Greenwich village now in long beach for awhile[/QUOTE]

You must have really been in "deepwater" damn lol

Matthew says:

I'm more inclined to be critical of Ortiz for quitting against Maidana than I am for his staying on the stool against Lopez. It's easy for me to question his courage when I'm not the one with a broken jaw (and a pretty badly broken one, at that), so I would rather heap praise on the guys that have fought through that kind of pain (like Ali and Arthur Abraham). However, the beautiful thing about boxing (as opposed to MMA) is that quitting still brands you with a scarlet letter. Once you quit once, it's that much easier to quit again. I would somewhat question Dawson's mental makeup, and wonder how much the Ward beating took out of him. I think he'll win this weekend, but I don't know if he'll be the fighter he was pre-Ward.

Radam G says:

He is the fighter that he was pre-Ward. SOG Ward just got exposed him. If he gets into another war as he was in with Ward, he will quit again. Just as Ortiz will always quit when he is uncomfortable, so will Bad Chad. They are 70 percent fight and 30 percent bark and bytch. Bark and bytch will always make you quit under pressure and injury. Holla!

ali says:

Duran quit and he was treated like a hero go figure.

Radam G says:

That is right, SCLA Ali. Don't get it twisted! Duran quit because he wanted to rumble. But the

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Sugarman kept making him stumble. Those other mudsuckas quit because they didn't want to rumble, so they went for a bytch tumble.

It woulda been better if they did an Oliver McCall. Hehehe! At least he had half of a bΔll, and didn't beg the ref to stop it. He cried and mumbled. His whole game has crumbled. Holla!

Matthew says:

Duran still hasn't fully lived down "No Mas." Those words still resonate with many fans. Unfortunately, a whole generation of uneducated people only know Duran based on those two words. It took a beatdown of Davey Moore, a razor-thin loss against a prime Marvin Hagler and a miraculous win over Iran Barkley to gain back a measure of the respect he lost in New Orleans.