

Written by Robbi Paterson
Friday, 30 May 2014 21:26



November 23, 2013: One of the biggest armed robberies the United Kingdom has ever witnessed took place in Manchester.

Nope, it wasn't one of Moss Sides' finest hoodlums holding up a bank in the city centre with a sawn off shotgun after the Police and National Television were both tipped off beforehand by one of the the culprit's cronies. This was armed robbery in an even stronger and purer definition.

The crime was committed by referee **Howard Foster** in a professional boxing match at the sold out Phones 4u Arena, when he suffered a judgmental panic attack during the 9th round and, in the process, extinguished the dreams of

George Groves by flinging his right arm around the neck of the challenger and waving his left to signal the end of the contest. **G**

Make no mistake about it, **Carl Froch**, the champion, received a glorious gift.

On top of the stunned and disgusted witnesses in attendance, millions watched live on pay-per-view, too.

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However, that's all history now.

The two combatants will meet again at Wembley Stadium, London, this Saturday (May 31), in a highly anticipated rematch.

80,000 attendees will, this time, be looking for a satisfying conclusion having materialized itself from a contest as equally entertaining as their first affair. But don't rule out the sequel surpassing the dramatic fistic violence of the previous encounter. You'd need to rewind your memory back 21 years to conjure up a fight with similar captivation, when Nigel Benn squared off against Chris Eubank for the WBC/WBO super middleweight titles at Old Trafford.

If Froch, 36, the WBA/IBF super-middleweight champion, tentative and plain ordinary during the vast majority of the last fight, brings his A game, and Groves, 26, is equally in tune as he was last November, this could be a back and forth tussle of gigantic proportions.

I collected some predictions from fight game experts. Enjoy, and please add your own, in the TSS Forum.

James Ali Bashir, Kronk Gym assistant trainer of world heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko: It's a pick 'em fight to me. Froch obviously isn't the fighter he was just three years ago, but mentally I really think he's gonna be the stronger guy. Groves on the other hand feels he had the momentum when the last fight in his mind, and some others, was stopped prematurely. However, I lean towards Froch to win again. This time decisively by unanimous decision or late stoppage, in a great fire fight.

Sean Crose - Boxinginsider.com: This one may well be war. The first fight was terrific and there's real animosity between these two. Here's the thing, though: Groves gave Froch all he had the first time around - and Froch survived. While the stoppage was understandably controversial, it was Froch who had the momentum on his side when the bout abruptly ended. Therefore, as game as Groves is, I see Froch getting to him sooner this time. That's not to say Groves will crumble quickly or that he won't have his moments. I've little doubt he will. Still, I see Froch winning this one decisively sometime between the seventh and ninth rounds.

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Aaron Lowinger, TSS: At the top of the sport, boxing can be a chore to a late-career champion like Carl Froch. Except for those two or three nights in the year, it's a grind that can take a mental toll. I think Froch still wants to be at the top, and that right hand in the first round last November woke a sleeping Cobra. He's just in a different class than Groves. I see Froch taking Groves by KO.

Raymond Markarian, TSS: I like Froch to win a unanimous decision. Froch has too much skill and experience for Groves.

Kelsey McCarson, TSS, Bleacher Report: I think the fight will be eerily similar to the first one. Groves will have some raucous success early, but Froch will adjust in the second part of the fight and take over down the stretch. This time, Froch will have to work harder for the knockout win. There will be no controversial stoppage. Froch will legitimately knockout Groves in Round 10.

Colin McMillan, former WBO featherweight champion: Although Carl Froch has been a great warrior of British boxing and fought some of the best fighters in the world, it is time for the changing of the guard. Groves has the superior hand and foot speed, and will be buoyed by the performance he gave last time. A much closer fight, but Groves by decision.

Matt Hamilton, ESNnewsReporting.com: If you look at the first bout I think a hugely overlooked aspect was quite how badly Groves' natural punch resistance faired against Froch's power on the relatively few times he was tagged. He was marked up as early as the third round and retrospectively I think he was looking for a second wind as early as the 5th or 6th round. Groves has only gone 12 rounds twice – against a 400 year old Glenn Johnson and then in what I felt was a clear losing effort against James DeGale – I'm inclined to thus agree with Carl's assertion that Groves isn't (or to my mind, at least, thus far proven himself to be) a 12 round fighter. I don't see the judges (should they be needed) doing Groves any favours, certainly not to the scale of his frankly gifted decision vs. DeGale and I'm am thus left fancying Froch for the win – be it by mid to late round stoppage again or by unanimous decision. Gun to my head, I have it as a Froch KO win in the 10th.

Ben Doughty, TipTV.co.uk: Ever since the rematch was announced, I have been saying that Froch will come from behind and grind George down again, this time without any controversy. I re-watched the first fight last weekend and had a change of heart. Groves can win on points with the major caveat that he has to box smart and not get drawn into a war of attrition. Groves.

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Thomas Hauser, TSS, noted author: Froch by knockout.

Blake Hochberger, TSS: Froch by UD, puts his punches together and outworks Groves. Wouldn't feel very comfortable betting on this fight.

Frank Lotierzo, TSS: In their first fight, Groves punched Froch from pillar to post, separating Froch from his confidence round by round. You could see Groves having fun as the fight progressed. Yes, he got buzzed in the 9th round, but Howard Foster had been waiting the whole fight to step in on the hometown boy's behalf if possible; the fight wouldn't have been stopped anywhere else on earth. Groves doesn't have everyone working against him this time. I think he knocks Froch out late.

James Smith, Inthiscornertv.com: My feeling is that we will see a much more focused and prepared Carl Froch this time out, unless he has totally aged out, which I don't think is the case. He will put on more consistent pressure, cut the distance and get another late round stoppage - but this time a legit one. Should be an excellent fight all the way through.

Aaron Tallent, TSS: If a new George Groves goes into the ring with patience, he will come away with a late-round stoppage. If he tries to do too much too fast, he will find himself in trouble. My guess is that he will do the former, making a rubber match inevitable. Groves by KO.

Springs Toledo, TSS, author: Carl Froch's most important asset is his will. His technique is average, his athleticism less than average; it's what's inside that makes him formidable. George Groves is a stylistic foil for Froch -he is fluid, fast, and his slashing shots land too often on Froch's head, which is too often in the line of fire. Groves may pick up where he left off and outpunch Froch over the first half of the fight. If Groves is in condition and can cope with Froch's desperate drives, he will take a decision. If he knows enough to jab and step to his left to better line up his right hand with Froch's chin, he'll land it more often and with more force -if he does that, he may stop Froch. Groves says the left hook will end the fight, but that may be a smart ploy; it's his right that was doing damage. Froch may try storming out to hurt Groves early. He would be well-advised to move his head and step inside of Groves's slashing shots with short, straight ones of his own. If he does that, he may stop Groves or at least take over. This is a tough prediction. I'd go with Groves by UD, but wouldn't rule out a stoppage win.

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Chris Wheat, TSS: Froch by close decision. Won't be an easy fight but he will be better prepared and not taking anything for granted.

Phil Woolever, TSS: From television, the stoppage didn't look so terrible to me, although if there was ever a time for a standing 8, this was it. Unless he has slipped dramatically I think Froch stops Groves again, around the same time, but without controversy. Groves may pull it off, but it will be a rare, though not unprecedented, circumstance if two UK fighters achieve an equal, elite level during the same time period.

Lee Wylie, TSS: Froch wins the fight inside the distance. Groves will be dangerous during the first five rounds. If Froch is still around after that, which I think he will be, fatigue will set in and Groves' lack of discipline will begin to rear its ugly head. As talented as Groves is, I don't think he is mentally strong enough to fight his fight for 12 rounds against Carl Froch.

Michael Woods, TSS: Coinflip fight for me. Have the Froch reflexes dimmed more so over the span of the first fight to this one? Did he really look past Groves in the first one, and therefore prepare better this time, and could therefore be a better boxer on fight night? Without much conviction, I'm going with the guy with the reflexes edge, the younger hitter, Groves. But again, with little conviction, to be honest. Froch is a hard man, and doesn't take to even the possibility of losing easily. His desire is a top trait. Coinflip...which I love as a fan.

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Radam G says:

Froch will win by scorching kayo. Groves had his chance and could not finish the dance. Again, it will be the same romance. Holla!

Buzz Murdock says:

Froch's foundation seems based on his trainer and past deeds. There's an uneasiness about his manner which belies an uncertainty. Groves is in way over his head with a mad trainer who

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was was 0 and five as a fighter, and was knocked out three times. I like Groves. Froch's wars have caught up with him. What was once an awkward style now seems pedantic, slow and reflex void predictable. Kinda like myself, pedantic, slow, and reflex void predictable. Time has a funny way of changing me/I used to be someone different in my memory....That's Karl's song, probably his swan song.

DaveB says:

I favor Froch by ko. Froch is only 36 and I don't think that is a big deal. He doesn't seem to have lost anything. He underestimated and got caught but he got back up. Groves surprised me too. Froch does what he always does, he comes on stronger as the fight gets longer. In the first fight Groves was mentally and physically spent and I think that will happen sooner this time around. It won't be easy. They are going to war and there will be no prisoners. Froch in 7.

Grimm says:

I'm tired after watching Metallica in Stockholm last night, but not as tired as Groves will be after securing a narrow win on points via SD.

Froggy says:

Groves wins !

Froggy says:

Oops !

Buzz Murdock says:

Crystal ball shattered. A few wasted metaphors...my prediction missed badly....

flackoguapo says:

[QUOTE=Radam G;53981]Froch will win by scorching kayo. Groves had his chance and could not finish the dance. Again, it will be the same romance. Holla![/QUOTE]

Balla'! Shot calla'!! haha

Radam G says:

[QUOTE=flackoguapo;54033]Balla'! Shot calla'!! haha[/QUOTE]

Thank you! Hehe! Holla!

deepwater2 says:

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How many of us called it ? Not many on here

Radam G says:

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Actually the percentage of the scribes also call it for Froch by kayo. Holla!

amayseng says:

[QUOTE=Radam G;54041]Actually the percentage of the scribes also call it for Froch by kayo. Holla![/QUOTE]

You and Deep were in the know, Bslug I believe as well. Me, I though Groves learned his lesson and would be able to do for 12 rounds what he did for the first 5.

but just like Tim Bradley against Pac, he had to fight at 150 percent just to stay competitive with Pac, when that energy wore down Pac picked him a part.

Same thing here, Groves had to fight full out to keep Froch at bay. When his legs tired and his reflexes he became open for the left hook setup to the straight right...

Good fight. Both men showed up and put it on the line.

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