Written by Michael Woods
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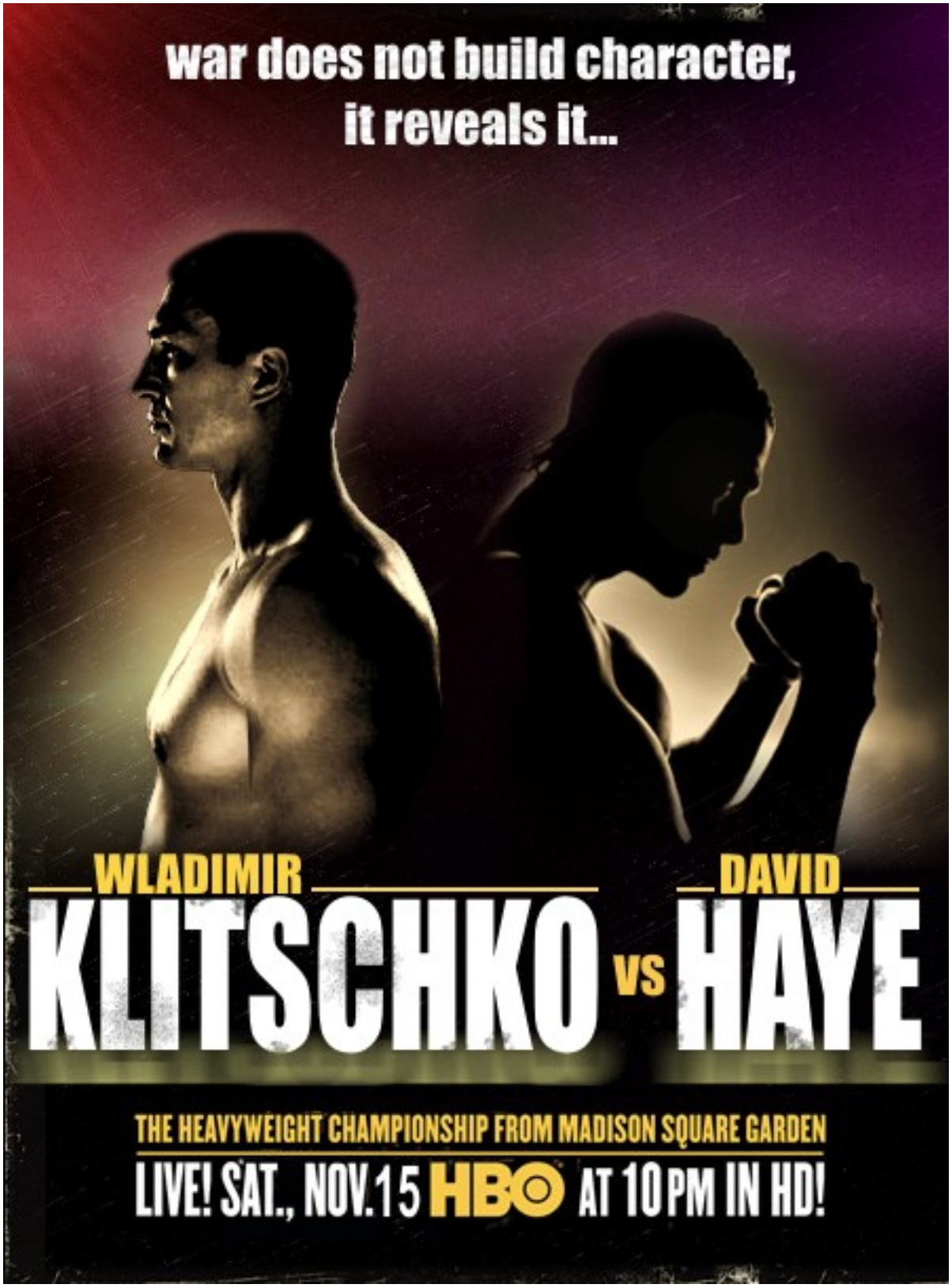

We are a scant 11 days away from what some have said is the most meaningful, most anticipated fight in the heavyweight division since Lennox Lewis took on the shell of Mike Tyson, on June 8, 2002 in Memphis. And I have to say, the lack of buzz surrounding the

Wladimir Klitschko-David Haye fight leaves me downright bewildered.

Where is the hype? Where is the promotion? Who's banging the drums for this?

It's not like this one is a dud being foisted on the paying public. There is genuine animosity between these two hitters, and for the life of me, I can't figure out why there is a ho-hummmedness associated with Klitschko-Haye.

If you had told me, back in the spring of 2009, after we saw Haye (25-1 with 23 KOs; age 30) get hypodermic needle-deep under the Klitschko skin, when he wore a t-shirt with a rendering of himself holding the severed heads of the Brothers K, that when Haye and Wladimir (55-3 with 49 KOs; age 35) hooked up there'd be this little electricity, I'd have scoffed.

Off the top of my head, a couple reasons stand out to explain the buzz-less-ness.

1) The fight will run in the States on HBO. HBO pays their fee, they get the rights to show the fight, done deal. They would like a nice rating for the show but since there's no pay per view, there is no overly resonant reason for HBO to put their full-on marketing push into the clash.

2) Perhaps ticket sales are trending so well for the tussle at Imtech arena in Hamburg that the promoters, the Klitschko brothers' K2, and Haye's promotional arm, don't see a need to prime the pump. That's nice for them, but what about growing the sport?

3) This event needs and Arum or a King. You've all heard this before, most often from Arum himself, who decries the lack of promotional skills in this current generation of promoters. I have to agree with him; why haven't Klitschko and Haye done at least a mini tour in the US, of New York and California? If the guaranteed money is so immense that they don't need to, well, why not just do that because it's the right thing to do, for the future? Don't both men want the maximum number of eyeballs on them to see them do their thing?

Now, the ball has not been totally dropped. Max Kellerman again did a nice job on his "Face Off," which put Wlad and Haye in chairs two feet apart, and allowed fight fans to assess the two men's countenance a month away from their clash. The affair got off to a compelling start when Haye refused to play nice from the get go, as he refused to shake Wlad's hand.

"I sense genuine animosity between you to," Max said. "Why do you dislike David Haye?" Wlad said Haye talks too much, that he's a "wannabe."

"He talked himself into the fight," said Wlad, giving props, before he busted on Haye for pulling out of their planned June 20, 2009 fight.

Haye was asked why he hates Klitschko. "Clearly, he's a d---head," he answered.

Haye promised to knock Wlad out, as Wlad sat, seething, but maintaining a veneer of cool.

Haye was asked about being labeled a liar for pulling out with an injury and then not furnishing documentation. He said he thinks it gives Wlad comfort to believe he is scared.

Max said that this fight is the richest fight in boxing now, apart from Mayweather-Pacquiao, which bolsters my case, and heightens my puzzlement as to why we aren't hearing more about the fight.

Wlad said Haye crossed the line with his decapitated heads t-shirt, while Haye said he wanted both the brothers' heads, and that he will have them. Wlad didn't flinch an inch as he fastened his magnetized gaze on Haye. You have to think Manny Steward was liking Wlad's intensity.

Interestingly, Haye felt the need to comment on the mood. He couldn't simply stay fixed in that atmosphere, as he promised a stellar fight, said he could feel the tension, and that he thought Wlad might punch him then and there, and that he might need to duck.

Both men predicted a KO win. Wlad then said, "He needs to be taught how to behave himself and that's exactly what I'm going to do...I hope I will see him in person, in the ring on July second," a reference to a fear I harbor, that Haye will pull out with an injury, or an "injury."

To end the session, Haye again refused a handshake.

There's no good reason I know of the energy, the tension, the promise of controlled violence that was in that room hasn't been presented to more fight fans, semi fans and potential fans out and about.

Hey, K2, Hayemaker Promotions, there's still time...not to be flippant, but maybe y'all should call up Arum or King, and cut them in for a taste, and get a hand in promoting this fight in proper fashion in the home stretch.

SPEEDBAG The brown leather jacket Wlad was wearing in Face Off was I believe the selfsame one Richie Aprile took off Rocco DeMaio and then gave to Tony Soprano, the one Tony then gave to his cleaning lady's hubby.

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

WTF! I don't know about the BUZZ, but these chumps are a buzzkill. Just maybe their bout will be quite a thrill. After all, they are both china-chinned suckas. Hum! I wonder who china will shatter first? Holla!

Robert Curtis says:

There ain't one. And there ain't gonna be one. No unless someone slips a joy buzzer onto your

chair when you get up for popcorn, or maybe drops an electric eel into your jacuzzi. It's pretty good bet this one will be more Zzzzzz than Bzzzzz. The only one with a gleam in his eye for this one has got to be Mortcola. To him, watching a Klitschko go to work is like watching a Kendo master slice salami with a Samurai sword.

DaveB says:

Man I can't speak for anyone else but I am excited within and I can't wait. If Haye fights like he says he is going to this fight will answer a lot of questions one way or another. Sometimes there are fights like this that are really good fights, at least as good as any other on paper anyway, but the combatants aren't well known to the American public. On the other hand there are a lot of fights where the fighters are well known and grab the public's attention but they turn out to be snoozers. While we don't know what will happen in advance, this should potentially be a good one. It should have received more press. It probably will receive more press when it is over than it has received prior to the fight. If that is the case, and I think it will be, in a backward way it will help promote boxing. It almost always seems that boxing is run by the gang that can't shoot straight. Unfortunately that is boxing for you. It is the only sport run this way. You can make a whole list of things and if most of them are bad but diehards still love it because of what is good - that's boxing.

ez da fez says:

Count me in with Mortcola and Dave B and count me out of the Robert Curtis/Radam clique. I'm taking off work for this bad boy. 3 possible scenarios: A: Klitschko teaches this brash, cocky brit "how to behave himself in the ring" and then Haye has to tearily apologize for his antics. B: Haye actually shocks the world and catches Wlad early and knocks him cold setting up the juicy final confrontation with big brother. C: Haye forces Wlad to fight and we have slug fest where both guys test the others questionable chin and possibly exchange knockdowns with Manny Steward and Vitali berating Wlad in the corner precipitating a deep water dramatic and devastating late round KO. Scenario A is most likely but all are entertaining. PEACE

Joe says:

This is the first heavyweight fight I've been eager to see in a very long time. At least he's not defeated prior to entering the squared circle. Look Wlad and Vitalihas been beating up guys like Rahman, Brock, All of Goosen's guys, etc. etc. etc. No one goes in there and even tries to knock the shit out of either guy like Lamon Brewster. It's just time for some other guy to be at the top of the heap - that's all. We'll see but I definatley "want" the Hayemaker to win it. Is he under Wlads skin enough to get him to fight carelessly - we'll see. Maybe we can slip a massage in prior to the fight so we can see Wlad flailing around the ring like he was during the Brewster skirmish.

Radam G says:

The heavyweights are BACK! NYET! Hehehehehehe! Holla!

the Roast says:

I am up for this fight. It will be the first edge of the seat heavyweight fight since I dont know when. Haye has made the matchup with his mouth and he is under Wlad's skin. Now he gets the chance to back up the talk. Haye's speed and power vs Wlad's once questionable chin will tell the story. If David cant land a big punch early Wlad will dominate. Wlad will win by KO. I think the fact that this fight is happening over the 4th of July weekend has hurt the buzz. I will by watching later on DVR. I hope for the good of boxing that Haye puts up a good fight.

michaelabii says:

The "face off" series with Max Kellerman is always compelling - this one especially due to the different personalities. This should be very interesting but it all depends on Haye and how he decides to fight Vlad. Vlad will do his thing but maybe start earlier this time. I see Vlad stalking Haye early, using the long pole like jab and throwing combos at long range. Hay has to get down and dirty for this fight - he will not outbox Vlad but he can get under and work Vlads body early with fast combos. He needs to bully Vlad at some stage and make it a dog fight with a high punch volume. I still dont believe Vlad can fight at that pace in a grueling fight. The mental pressure will be too much for him. Like I said - "it all depends on how David Haye chooses to fight Vlad".

brownsugar says:

I'm with you Roast.... Bout Time!!!!. this "Epic" battle(as far as todays' heavyweights go) reminds me of the final scene in the Movie Avatar...When the slim lithe blueskinned tree warriors beat the Commando piloting a mechanized "WarMachine"... The Mech was powerful,.. armed with a 50 cal which symbolizes Klits heavy jab and a rocket launcher that symbolizes his sleep inducing right hand... but the tree warriors were able to use their nimble dexterity and predator instincts to win with a common bow and arrow. No Way Haye would show his face is he didn't think he was ready...But if that's true then it means Klits was born ready and has to be made a huge favorite... however in a sport where timing and reflexes blend with preparation and desire.. amplified by adrenalin an pride... it only takes a fraction of a second... a millimeter...the slightest opening... and in the words of Teddy Atlas....BANG!!!! its over.. either way it goes... this fight is not going the distance....WK is no Macinarelli and Haye is no Eddie Chambers.

ultimoshogun says:

Very interesting scenario's, i'm excited for this one as well...we may see multiple knockdowns in this one. As I stated before i'm kinda hoping Haye wins this one just to keep the HW division interesting for awhile longer.

deepwater says:

klits co pretty much ruined boxing. the lost decade. just like the federal gov robbed the equitey out of this country the klitchos sucked the equity out of heavyweight boxing. haye by easy win.its destiny

mortcola says:

Bring on da salami!

the Roast says:

I'll get the wheat bread!!

deepwater says:

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