

## Sergey Kovalev Officially Joins New Bombers Brigade With Cleverly KO

Written by Michael Woods

Saturday, 17 August 2013 21:17

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Welcome to the club, Sergey Kovalev. We're glad to welcome you officially, even if Welshman Nathan Cleverly isn't, into the New Bomber Brigade, alongside your mates Gennady Golovkin, Adonis Stevenson, Deontay Wilder and Lucas Matthisse.

Kovalev, (*seen in photo by Main Events, as ref pulls plug on Cleverly*) a Russian, violently snatched away Clev's 175 pound WBO title, and inserted himself into the mix as one of boxing's new merchants of menace, guys who you need to tune in to see, because they are more likely than not to end the fight early, and in nasty fashion.

Kovalev did just that in Cleverly territory, at Motorpoint Arena in Cardiff via a TKO4 on Saturday evening, after he sent the champ to the mat twice in the third, and for good in the fourth. The time of the finish by the calm purveyor of cerebellum distress was a mere 21 seconds into the fourth.

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In the first round, in a fight televised by HBO, we saw Clev getting backed up right away by Kovalev (22-0-1, with 20 KOs). The jab by the winner was stiff and so was the right. Clev's jab got out there at 1:30, but for a volume guy, he wasn't as busy as you might expect. Clev's dad and trainer Vince promised pre-fight that his kid would stop Kovalev, and do what he needed to do to adapt during the fight, if need be. The 26-year-old Clev, who got seasoning sparring hundreds of rounds with Welsh Hall of Famer Joe Calzaghe early in his career, came out for round two warmed up. But the 30-year-old Kovalev, who lives in Florida, used solid rights to good effect, though a cut opened on his right eye. He kept hurling, though, lead rights, and ate a clean right with no problem, at 25 seconds. Once again, the "volume guy" was not the busier man, and we wondered what Clev, not a bomber who can change things in one feel swoop, could do to adapt.

In the third, Kovalev hit with that left hook to the body, to mix things up. Clev had Kovalev backing up some, but then a left hook stunned Clev. Two rights sent Clev down at 48 seconds. He hit the mat again, taking a knee, with 22 seconds to go. He was almost out at the bell. Now was the time to adapt...

In the fourth, Kovalev came out for the finish right away. A few pops buzzed Clev again, and he was weak-kneed, causing the ref to wave his hands. A left hook to the head made Clev's right glove hit the canvas to help keep him up, and that was all the referee, a sage decider, needed to see.

Kovalev went 100-297, to 37-128 for the loser.

There will be an appetite for Kovalev to meet Adonis Stevenson, if as the oddsmakers expect, he downs Tavoris Cloud on Sept. 28, in Canada, and on HBO. Kovalev is a handful for anyone, I suspect, though there might be a few souls who will say they need to see him in against a foe whose best win to this point was against someone of higher caliber than Tony Bellew. Readers, what do you think of Kovalev, and who would you like to see him face off with? Could the crafty graybeard Bernard Hopkins handle this Russian with the destructive tendencies?

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### **SouthPaul says:**

First time ever seeing Cleverly. Garbage.

### **Bernie Campbell says:**

Reminiscient about the integrity of the voting scandal between Bush and Gore some years back in Florida!

### **SouthPaul says:**

You must be sleeping walking, Bernie. Go back to bed, mijo....

### **brownsugar says:**

Kovalov was more impressive than I expected... what was the Cleverly camp thinking.

This was a boy against a full grown man.

Bring on Stevenson, Shumenov, Pascal, and even the "Ancient Grey Beard Master" I don't see a lightweight alive who can defeat this guy... who happens to be at the peak of his powers.

Did you see the way he reduced the volume puncher to a low output hitter by becoming the volume punched himself (even though he knew he would not be able to sustain the attack a full 12 rounds?).....ingenious.

### **amayseng says:**

i watched the replay of the last two rounds, i was impressed he similar to ggg does not load up on his shots.

he just has that power, he turns those hooks over with proper extension, he didnt load up until he had cleve hurt.

there are a lot of fights for ward out there if he wants them or wants to move up and challenge himself..

### **brownsugar says:**

Ward has acknowledged this guy...He actually said what you did....plenty of challenges..its a shame he's got no challenges left at 168, but its not for the lack of trying.

### **brownsugar says:**

Kovalov's long arms, power and boxing ability makes him a modern day Bob Foster. Very hard to beat.

### **brownsugar says:**

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Retire now Bhop...its OK...you've earned it.

### **amayseng says:**

i agree id rather see bhop retire on top as a champion then after a loss.

bhop is for sure an all time great, but at some time 48 or 49 or 50 will catch up with him against the wrong

fighter.

beat murat, beat froch in england and then retire

### **gibola says:**

Congrats to Kovalev and I admit I was totally wrong - I picked Cleverly to come on late and win. Nathan is a good guy and has more talent than he showed Saturday night but his tactics were awful. Standing at the perfect punching range with your hands cupped round your head isn't going to work with a puncher, it's a recipe for disaster. If you don't mind I'm going to have a rant.... I don't know if it's just me but I see more and more modern fighters to whom defence is simply standing upright in a peek-a-boo. They offer a huge target and take the impact of blows, even with their gloves up. 'My gloves are up so I'm defending myself' - NO YOU'RE NOT! Amir Khan does it and Freddie Roach watched him get battered and never improved his head movement, Cleverly did it, all the Germans do it (Abraham, Huck, etc). It's not necessarily a longtime European thing - the British boxers I followed in my youth - some of them very aggressive in style - Honeyghan, McGuigan, Benn, Eubank, Watson, Herol Graham - all moved their heads and were solid defensive fighters. I despair when I see modern fighters just letting their opponent tee off on them without moving their feet, bending their knees, moving from the waist or moving their heads. Cleverly was a sitting duck because he had no defence. End of rant!

### **Carmine Cas says:**

Cleverly had no chance standing in front of Kovalev with no lateral movement, head movement, and throw 2 punch combos. He never gained his respect or gave him a moving target. The russian's right hand and left hook perfectly found it's way around and above his guard. Cleverly had the wrong strategy if not the right tool for that fight. I'd love to see Kovalev fight Adonis

### **Carmine Cas says:**

Kovalev is very relaxed and fluid, he doesn't load up on shots just like GGG. Good point Amayseng