

Written by The Sweet Science  
Friday, 29 November 2013 13:56

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*Here are the weights from Quebec: Adonis Stevenson: 174.4 lbs., Tony Bellew: 175 lbs.; Sergey Kovalev: 174.6 lbs.; Ismayl Sillakh: 174.4 lbs.*

**QUEBEC CITY** - Thanksgiving may have been yesterday but WBO light heavyweight champion Sergey Kovalev and his first title challenger, Ismayl Sillakh, need one more day to determine which of them has more to be thankful for this year. The two 175-pounders face off Saturday night on HBO, from the Colisee Pepsi, in a 12-round title clash that will have one of them closing out 2013 in style.

Both fighters have built their reputations on punching power and are expected to once again let their fists fly, come Saturday night. The question is, which of these knockout artists will go home a champion and cap off the best year of their respective careers?

Sergey "Krusher" Kovalev, 22-0-1, 20 KOs, originally from Chelyabinsk, Russia and now fighting out of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, has had an outstanding 2013. So far he's scored three high-profile knockouts, including his title-winning effort against Nathan Cleverly, in his most recent bout. Kovalev is riding a 6-bout knockout streak and would like nothing more than to add Sillakh's name to that list. Another short night for the champion would further reinforce his reputation as one of the top light heavyweights in a crowded and talent-rich division.

Kovalev said, "Sillakh is a dangerous fighter, one of the strongest punchers that I have fought so far. I know that he wants to take my title, but I will not let him. I will win on Saturday. I waited a long time to get title and I intend to keep it a long, long time."

For Ismayl Sillakh, 21-1, 17 KOs, a native of Zaporozhye, Ukraine who now resides in Canoga Park, CA, his first crack at a world championship is by far his biggest opportunity thus far.

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However, he too has been on a roll this year, winning all four of his 2013 fights, three of them by KO. An upset win over Kovalev would be the perfect introduction to boxing fans for Sillakh, simultaneously making his name and vaulting him into the mix of the star-studded division.

"As soon as I was offered to fight Kovalev for the WBO World title, I jumped at the opportunity," said Sillakh, "I believe that everything happens for a reason." He added, "I am ready for this fight 100%. I will come out victorious. I will be the newly crowned light heavyweight champion."

Each fighter has an astronomical knockout percentage, and can legitimately claim that they are the hardest puncher that the other has faced to date. This should make for an exciting encounter with plenty of action. However only one man can go home as the WBO champion and cap off a truly excellent year. And only then will we know for sure which boxer, Kovalev or Sillakh, will be celebrating Thanksgiving late Saturday night.

The HBO broadcast begins at 10:15PM ET/PT with a replay of the Pacquiao - Rios fight, followed by the Kovalev - Sillakh battle and culminating with Stevenson - Bellew. A must-see show for boxing fans.

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### **brownsugar says:**

3 years ago I predicted the "Black Russian" Sillakh would become one of the premiere light heavyweights of the new millennium. Unlike GGG.... this pick didnt go so well.....It was with stark disappointment that I witnessed his humbling defeat on ESPN ...a promising career stifled in a fight that should have been a showcase of his sublime boxing skills and a one-way ticket from ESPN to HBO/Showtime.

I think Sillakh could break into the rankings with patience and careful management... I think he beats Dawson with ease....but it seems a bit dubious that he'd want a shot this early in his comeback with out first testing the waters against tougher opposition....has Sillakh undergone a secret rebirth????

Like most of the superbly trained easternblock fighters, Sillakh exhibited a solid boxing

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foundation in tandem with the free flowing natural skill of a fighter that would someday rule the world....

Sillakh has been fighting off-tv in the U.S. so I have nothing with which to measure the commitment of his comeback.

Kovalev however is fast becoming a light heavyweight version of GGG. ...an unstoppable force cutting a swath of destruction through the division like a relentless hurricane battering the east coast.

As much as I like Sillakh, unless he's had some kind of rare mental and spiritual resurrection....

Kovalev has the confidence, the chin, the desire and the momentum to dispatch his Russian compadre by round 11 TKO.

I hope I'm wrong about Sillakh....if Sillakh is truly 100%. Then we will all be in for a treat and have an opportunity to watch the TSS executed at its highest level.

### **Radam G says:**

Superman Stevenson by early KAYO! He is dancing with a bytch coward, who is perpetrating a fraud. "Krusher" will cut the turkey -- Ismayl Sillakh. Holla!

### **brownsugar says:**

Yep...its quite possible Sillakh gets blasted out early if he's not all the way back in top form.

Bellew is a better boxer than Cloud... Fights in spots and is patient wanting to set up his punches while throwing in combination. Don't know too much about him but I heard he's had some close shaves and a controversial win. On the basis of ability he does deserves the opportunity but I think he gets over powered by Stevensen late ..round 10 TKO.

### **amayseng says:**

I haven't seen enough of both these opponents to make a pick, however I will be watching out of sheer enjoyment of the sport.

from what Bsug mentioned it seems like Sillhak is either crazy or dead serious to make a statement asap fighting Kovalev who has been a killer of recent.

i think a Superman vs Krusher fight down the road would be phenomenal with a pretty certain rematch awaiting these two bombers.

rematch may be ppv worthy with a solid card

### **ultimoshogun says:**

And that was the last we ever heard of Sillakh.

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[QUOTE=ultimoshogun;40596]And that was the last we ever heard of Sillakh.[/QUOTE]

good Lord Kovalev.... i was just thinking man Sillakh looks slick and strong he may prove a tough out then

Bam he was down, then he was out

Kovalev is a beast

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[QUOTE=amayseng;40597]good Lord Kovalev.... i was just thinking man Sillakh looks slick and strong he may prove a tough out then

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Yeah that was funny (not ha ha), Sillakh was doing ok in the first round BUT even when Kovalev grazed him with punches Sillakh's expression changed like "WTF, that was a hard shot!" I doubt Sillakh will ever be the same again.