

Duva Wants Kovalev-Adonis Next, Says It's Up To HBO

Written by Michael Woods

Monday, 02 December 2013 21:47



Sergey Kovalev stood in a tunnel after he'd done his thing, separating Ismayl Sillakh from his senses in Quebec on Saturday night, and assessed the man he'd like to next give some separation anxiety, Adonis Stevenson.

Holding onto his WBO light heavyweight belt, which he held tightly, indicating with his body language to any that came close that he'd not soon be relinquishing the strap, Kovalev watched as Stevenson did his thing against foe Tony Bellew. Adonis fought smart, scouted his foe, looked for holes to exploit, and after letting the Brit dodge and dance and potshot him a few times, got down to the hurt business. He sent Bellew to the mat, and finished him off soon after, in round six. And what did Kovalev think of the showing by the WBC 175 pound champion?"He's easy," the 30-year-old Ukrainian native stated.

Not so sure about that, but I am quite certain I'd like to see if Kovalev (23-0 with 21 KOs) is right, or if the lefty Stevenson can be the man to squash the Kovalev momentum, which picked up heavy steam in Quebec.

So, Kovalev promoter Kathy Duva, can you make it happen? Could we see Kovalev fight Adonis in their next bouts? "We want Stevenson, we wanted for this Nov. 30, I said put us in with Stevenson, and HBO said not yet," Duva told me. "We want to make it very much, but we will fight whoever we can, the Bute-Pascal winner if Stevenson wants Froch or Hopkins. I told (HBO executive) Peter (Nelson) and Yvon (Michel, Adonis' promoter), 'Let's make this fight.' Stevenson said he was game if the money is right. It's up to HBO."

Duva admitted that hearing Adonis talking about "if the money is right" post-fight gave her a recognition shiver; she knows that if a guy doesn't want a bout, a sure way to insure it doesn't happen is asking for too much moolah. So yes, she thinks Adonis might be trying a squirming tactic. Duva said she expects to touch base with HBO and hopefully figure out this situation in the next "week or so."

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If the Kovalev-Stevenson thing doesn't happen right away, and she mentioned March as a nice target time, an offer from Russia is a possibility, she said.

For those curious, no, Kovalev peeling down to make light heavy, and trying to do his steamroll thing on Andre Ward isn't an option, according to Duva. "Ward can go to light heavy," she said. "But we want Stevenson. I think HBO wants it very much. We're not the impediment."

Duva told me she's feeling a certain levity during this holiday season. No, she hadn't dipped into the spiked egg nog when we were chatting; rather that Kovalev is such a bright spot, and someone who leaped onto boxing fans' radar in short order. Kovalev actually shared in the positive vibes of the season during a Thanksgiving feast Team Main Events and Team Kovalev had at the hotel restaurant in Quebec on Thursday evening. PR ace Ellen Haley sprang into action and hustled together a holiday feast, with all the trimmings. All indulged, expect for Kovalev. "There was 20 people, my daughters were with us," Duva told me. "Sergey was not able to partake. He had a salad," she said, chuckling. "But he didn't seem to care, he was laughing."

And that's a telling indication of what makes Kovalev a person that Duva feels comfortable with touting as 2013 Fighter of the Year, because he beat four top ten guys, one of whom was a current champ, the other being a former titlist. He's not even the slightest bit the reluctant warrior. He's happy to not be working at a gas station, like he did when he was 12, happy be nearing the pound for pound mix, happy to hold the belt, happy to be getting to a place where his purses will build a fat nest egg for him and his family, happy to fight whoever is placed in front of him, happy to get down to the business of inflicting himself on a foe, feel-em-out period be damned.

"He loves to fight," said Duva simply. "I thought Sergey stole the show. I thought he pulled away from Adonis."

This isn't to say that Kovalev is an automaton, a robot for hire who simply goes with the flow and only shows a surly side when he's fighting. He does chafe when he isn't meshing with someone; Duva said he and ex trainer Abel Sanchez didn't get along all that well when they worked together two years ago, and minor sparks flew before manager Egis Klimas hooked Kovalev up with John David Jackson. Kovalev took awhile to find common ground with the current trainer, too, she said. That might stem from a slight chip on his shoulder, which came from being passed over in the amateur ranks in Russia, and feeling like he was the red-headed

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step child to Golovkin's fair-haired boy in Cali. You saw some of that side when he was yapping at Sillakh on Saturday. "He wants people to recognize that he's better than all these guys," Duva said. Duva does too; she thinks Kovalev has fought better foes to this point than Golovkin has, and while she makes sure to mention she's a Golovkin fan, and that she actually thinks Golovkin and Kovalev are of equal status overall, she says that the Russian and the Kazakh are similar in their approach to getting it done in the ring. Maybe, she allows, Kovalev exhibits less patience, in a good way, than Golovkin does. "Both are tremendously fun to watch," she said. "But Kovalev is just a ball of excitement, he's coming at right you from the beginning, there's no getting comfortable, he's not taking his time.

"It's wonderful having a guy I can go with to HBO who will fight anyone," she said, "it's a wonderful position, which we haven't seen maybe since Pernell Whitaker, and maybe Lennox Lewis. And he loves his position, he loves to fight."

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Radam G says:

Kat Duva is doing some great promoting of "Krusher" Kovalev. I find it very revealing that the trainer -- Abel Sanchez -- of 3g dumped him. And that the Russian powers that be saw him as an @asshole not possessing top skills.

The Krusher is going to get TFKOed when he steps up. He is very marginal aight! And in the not-too-distant future, everybodee and dey momma will see why the Russians snobbed him in their super-world-class-amateur program and 3g's trainer told him to take HIKE! Holla!

brownsugar says:

I remember seeing Kovalev for the first time 14 months ago ... the square jawed, anvil chinned fighter reminded my of my friends put bull... Greystone...who is normally a lovable cuddly baby who demands to be rubbed and petted when you walk in the door...but when another associate of the dod owner came by with his full pedigree American Boxer.....Greystone had to be recused to his steel holding pen as he exhibited a his natural territorial instincts. The white and blue, lion-headed pit bull transformed into a covetous beast as he attempted to claw and chew

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his way out his confinement.

I don't want to anthropomorphize a pit bull to describe a person...but Kovalev truly exudes a genuine testosterone fueled sense of territorialism when he enters the ring. His aggression scale is off the charts. We can only dream of what a Kovalev versus a prime Michael Spinx, Bobby Czyz, or Bob Foster would have looked like.

Getting back to my first sighting of Kovalev..... The then clean shaven fighter shot out of his corner like a man possessed ... After he floored his opponent with a nonstop two fistef assault, instead of walking to the opposite corner, Kovalev stepped over his fallen foes head in a gesture of disdain and disgudt as if he was walking over a carelessly discarded empty bottle of beer.

When Kovalev knocked him down the second time... the ref had to physically insert himself between a visibly fuming Kovalev (all but frothing at the mouth) and his prostrate opponent to prevent Kovalev from stepping over the unconscious form of his helpless prey again.

Mean - hearted stuff.

Its interesting what the article says about Coach Abel.... It's well known that GGG spars with light heavies and Cruiserweights because his hard punches necessitates more durable partners...a prime example is of this is Travoris Cloud, whom by all accounts, GGG beat like a speed bag.

Coach Abel brought in Kovalev who happens to be good friends with GGG, in effort to give his fighter some "good work".To Abel's disappointment...he says he had to dismiss Kovalev within the first week of sparring because Kovalev couldn't bring himself to hit GGG with bad intentions... Abel said the Krusher was ultra polite and wouldn't engage, punch, or counter GGG with anything meaningful.

Reminds me of a pitbull who will let his masters toddlers ride him like a pony, pull his ears, and poke him in the eye while showing no signs of aggresion because a loyal canine will usually find no throat among family and friends....but it will charge after a German Shepherd twice his size for the crime of encroaching on his turf.

The ring is Kovalevs' territory... Its HIS turf... don't expect him to allow any interlopers to invade his domain anytime soon. When he eventually gets Stevensen in the ring expect the fight to conclude inside of 5 rounds or less.. The longer Stevensen makes The Krusher wait.. the less time the fight will last.

BFF says:

@ brownsugar. Nice piece!

At this point i dont care who the krusher fights, i just wanna keep seeing this beast in squared circle destroying anybody, eventually superman is going to have to fight him, and I'm guessing it will be sooner than later. I doubt Bhop wants in the ring, he is too wise to pick that fight...

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Agreed BFF, Bhop didn't get this far by fighting everybody...it's no coincidence that he suddenly "befriended" Ward.