

Shumenov Pumped For Golden Boy Debut

Written by The Sweet Science
Wednesday, 04 December 2013 17:41

NEW YORK (Dec. 4, 2013) – **Beibut Shumenov** is a former amateur standout in Europe and represented Kazakhstan in the 2004 Olympic Games. The WBA Super Light Heavyweight World Champion, he became the fighter with the fewest professional fights to win a 175-pound world title when he captured the crown in his tenth start.

On **Saturday, Dec. 14**, Shumenov (13-1, 8 KO's) will make his **Golden Boy Promotions** debut and his fifth title defense when he faces unbeaten

Tamas Kovacs

(23-0, 14 KO's) of Slovakia, in the opening bout of a

SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING

quadrupleheader live on

SHOWTIME

®

(8 p.m. ET/5 p.m. PT) from the

Alamodome

in

San Antonio

,

Texas

. It is the second of back-to-back four-fight telecasts on SHOWTIME. This

Saturday, Dec. 7

, friends-turned-foes and former World Champions

Zab Judah

and

Paulie Malignaggi

fight for Brooklyn bragging rights when they meet in the featured match at

Barclays Center

in

Brooklyn

,

N.Y

.

In the eagerly awaited main event on Dec. 14, popular, colorful, undefeated rising superstar **Adrien**

“The Problem” Broner

faces the toughest test of his career when he risks his WBA Welterweight World Championship against hard-hitting

Marcos “El Chino” Maidana

. In addition to Shumenov-Kovacs, there are two more 12-rounders on the stacked card:

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Undefeated WBA Interim Welterweight World Champion

Keith “One Time” Thurman

defends against dangerous

Jesus “El Renuente” Soto Karass

and undefeated WBC Super Bantamweight Champion

Leo “Terremoto” Santa Cruz

defends against

Cesar Seda

Shumenov, a personable, humble 6-foot-2, 30-year-old who has lived in Las Vegas since 2007, grew up with his father, an accountant, mother, a school teacher, and younger brother in a one-unit home when Kazakhstan was a part of Russia. His parents were business-minded and hard-working, frequently putting in 10-to-12-hour days, and were often on the road.

Shumenov nearly died when he was less than a-year-old. While under the care of his aunts, he was fed spoiled milk. Two weeks later, when his father returned Beibut was blue-faced and had to be rushed to the hospital. They could not locate a vein and had to give him IV through the head. His parents were told he would die.

He survived, but was a sickly child for years. He was unable to play sports until he was nearly six when he started taking Taekwondo, karate, wrestling, Muay Thai and kickboxing. He mostly kept involved in the family's businesses. He and younger brother, Chingis, were to become attorneys. Beibut once worked as a clerk for a judge in Kazakhstan and Chingis once worked as a prosecutor and is the current Deputy Mayor of Shymkent, Kazakhstan.

After watching a Mike Tyson fight on television, Shumenov turned to boxing at the age of 13 and quickly established himself as a fighter with ability. In the amateurs, he went 180-20 pounds. There were enormous expectations for him to bring home the gold in the Olympics. He won his first fight, but broke his hand in the process and then lost his second bout.

“I broke my right hand in the fight that I won,” Shumenov said, “But I wasn't able to punch with it and lost my second fight against the guy from Turkey. Before the Olympics, I fought the guy and won.”

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The defeat demoralized Shumenov. "I quit boxing after the Olympics," he said. "I couldn't handle the loss. Everyone was so confident I'd win the gold medal. There was so much pressure. So after returning home in 2004 I quit to concentrate on the family businesses. Even though I suffered a broken hand, I felt I'd let so many people down, including my father, mother and country. But I always maintained my condition."

In 2006, Shumenov returned to the ring with an eye on the 2008 Olympics, but after dominating his opposition he was urged by a former coach to turn pro, which he did at age 24 on Nov. 17, 2007.

Shumenov won his initial eight starts, suffered his lone defeat on a 12-round majority decision to defending WBA light heavyweight champion **Gabriel Campillo**, then reversed the result in a rematch on a controversial 12-round split decision in his tenth outing on Jan. 29, 2010.

Here's more of what the physically strong, aggressive-minded Shumenov had to say about his life, career, Golden Boy and upcoming bout against Kovacs:

On signing with Golden Boy Promotions after basically promoting all his fights with the exception of his pro debut...

"I'm very excited and really appreciate what Golden Boy is doing for me. I finally get to show the world my boxing skills and that I am the best light heavyweight in the world. Really, to get this opportunity on a big card like this, on SHOWTIME, has brought a whole new level to my training.

"I'm so thankful for Golden Boy and SHOWTIME. Since signing with Golden Boy in late September, I've felt like a weight has been lifted. I always wanted to be on a major network when I was promoting myself (he and his brother formed KZ Event Productions), but everything was coming out of my pocket. It got frustrating and very stressful for me to try and do everything and the business outside the ring. It was taking away from what I needed to do inside the ring.

"Before, I was my own manager, trainer, fighter and promoter. I'm still my own trainer but I feel

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very confident. I don't have to think about promoting, only the preparation for the fight. It is a great relief."

On his goals...

"My main goal is to unify all the titles. I've always wanted to fight for world titles against other great champions. Sure, I'd fight Bernard Hopkins. I'd feel very honored."

On what this fight means to him...

"This is by far my greatest opportunity. I'm going to try to win impressively. That's how you get popular. That's what the exposure of fighting on SHOWTIME can do. This is like starting over as far as opportunity goes on this kind of platform. I want to utilize my skills. I'm comfortable. I've trained hard and enjoyed my preparation. I feel everything's going well. There's no pressure. I'm very focused."

On this being his fifth title defense yet first fight in 18 months and only fourth since July 2010..."
The reason I've fought so little was because I only wanted big fights, and I was trying to do it on my own with no promoter. We tried a long time to make a unification with (Chad) Dawson and (Nathan) Cleverly when they were champions. I tried to reach out to their promoters. I thought I was close against Cleverly, but he disappeared on me. Dawson disappeared, too. I thought I had a unification with Juergen Braehmer when he was WBO champ but he also just disappeared."

On what he knows about Kovacs...

"To be honest, I haven't seen many of his highlights on tape but I know he's an aggressive, come forward fighter that throws a lot of punches. I'm sure he'll try and make it exciting. But I have the style and the knowledge to fight against anyone. I'm a power puncher-boxer. I have a lot of power but I like to show my skills. I feel confident against any style. I'm excited to get back in the ring and I'm really looking forward to this fight."

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On leaving the family business to return to boxing...

“Our family is very close. I’m sure I get my drive from my parents. Every business decision we make is a family decision. If my parents had their way, I wouldn’t fight. They would prefer I run our family business. They’re very proud of me, but I’m sure they’d rather me be involved in more business-related ventures than to be in this kind of sport. I only plan to fight a couple more years.”

“For me to get this far is an accomplishment. Kazakhstan was not an easy place to grow up. I broke my hand in the Olympics and a few other things on the streets.”

On coming to America...

“I chose to move to Las Vegas to live and train because it is the boxing capital of the world. When I first said I was coming by myself to the United States, my dad laughed. He thought I’d be here about a week and was just coming to party.

“The first English I learned came from watching movies. I watched all kinds of movies for about six months and then hired a tutor, who worked with me for two months. My favorite movie is ‘The Godfather.’ “

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