

Preview: Hatton/Castillo

Written by {ga=fightdr}

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While the heavyweight division is still mush, the sport of boxing is coming off of two of the greatest fights in recent history ... as the Pavlik/Miranda and Cotto/Judah fights were both instant classics. Tonight, we have another super fight as the undefeated Brit Ricky Hatton takes on the very dangerous Jose Luis Castillo. My cousin says this has the makings of another classic, and previews the scrap for us in his latest column.



Not too often do I look at a fight and think it has a chance to be fight of the year. This is one of those rare occasions.

Tonight, live from the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas, Ricky "The Hitman" Hatton faces off with Jose Luis Castillo.

Hatton is coming into the fight as the favorite to win and he has been on a roll. The undefeated fighter from Manchester, England brings an undefeated record of 42-0 with 30 KOs with him when he steps into the squared circle. The only thing that people can find to question about him is who he has beaten and where he has beaten them. All most all of his fights have been in his homeland and many of those matches were against suspect competition. There is no doubt Hatton has skills, it's just a matter of how good they really are.

Jose Luis Castillo on the other hand has been in the spotlight for different reasons. His first fight with the late great Diego Corrales is hands down the best boxing match I have ever witnessed. He also made headlines when he was unable to make weight in the rematch. His last time out in January, he looked as if maybe some of the wars he has been in are starting to catch up with him. His record is 55-7-1 with 47 KOs. Other fighters that have might have stayed in the

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game too long are Fernando Vargas and Erik Morales. I hope Castillo doesn't add his name to that list.

I look for this fight to be a classic. Two heavy handed guys that love to stand in and unload. I think Hatton will have the speed advantage as he is the younger fighter and usually doesn't have to make the weight cuts Castillo does. All other aspects of the fight I give to Jose Luis Castillo. His defense is very solid and the guy simply has the heart of a champion. He has been hearing the talk that he might be finished and the punishment he has taken has caught up to him.

Most of the fights I have seen of Ricky Hatton's, he looks to be a dirty fighter a la Bernard Hopkins. He will do the little things that will frustrate his opponent. The punches behind the head, a lot of holding, and even some low blows early in fights. Castillo has been there before and seen it all.

The fact that Castillo has been on the big stage before in front of a neutral crowd of even as the enemy is going to be big in my eyes. Hatton isn't going to have his home country in his corner tonight. The crowd is going to be looking for an action packed fight and I think they are going to get it. I like Castillo to hand Hatton his first loss in dramatic style. If Hatton can get to Castillo early however, he has an excellent chance to score a victory and keep his undefeated mark intact.

This could be another one of those fights to revive the sport of boxing. Miguel Cotto and Zab Judah did a great job of helping the sport get back into the spotlight, now Hatton and Castillo can make that light a lot brighter.