

Preview: Hopkins/Calzaghe

Written by {ga=fightdr}

Friday, April 18 2008 7:00 PM -

We've got another great fight tonight on HBO as Bernard Hopkins and Joe Calzaghe meet for the light heavyweight title tonight in Vegas. Calzaghe, part of the British boxing resurgence, is coming off three very impressive wins over highly regarded American fighters and is unbeaten at 44-0. He fights for the first time tonight in the US against Hopkins, and the war of words in this one has been fierce. My cuz previews tonights big scrap.



When the Bernard Hopkins (48-4-1, 32 KO) vs Joe Calzaghe (44-0 32, KO) fight was first announced I have to admit I wasn't really that excited for it. Things sure have changed.

Joe Calzaghe, age 36, is the super middleweight title holder and will be making his first ever fight at light heavyweight, where he will attempt to take Bernard Hopkins title and belts. He brings in an undefeated record and is coming off of a string of very impressive wins. We last saw Calzaghe when he beat up highly regarded Mikkel Kessler back in November. The most impressive win that Joe had before that was his destruction of Jeff Lacy in March of 2006. Lacy was supposed to be the future of the sport and Calzaghe just went out and won every single round of that fight. He will face another tough test tonight against the grizzled veteran Hopkins when he fights in the United States for the first time in his life.

Bernard Hopkins is now 43 years old and is looking for one final hurrah. He would like nothing better than to defeat Joe Calzaghe and ruin his undefeated streak. His style isn't very fan friendly as he is a defensive counter puncher. His tactics in the ring are dirty at times and can make for some boring fights. After dropping two fights in a row to Jermain Taylor, Hopkins has beaten Antonio Tarver and Winky Wright. Hopkins will be facing a totally different style of fighter than anyone he has fought recently when he steps in with Calzaghe tonight.

There has been a ton of trash talk leading up to this fight that has gotten me pretty

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excited for 9:45 to roll around this evening. Hopkins has turned the fight into a race war of sorts. He said he would never lose to a "white boy" and that if he did, he wouldn't be able to show his face back in the "neighborhood." The normally mild mannered Calzaghe has remained classy but appears to have a fire that we haven't seen from him before.

Joe Calzaghe is a terrific all around boxer. His hand speed is phenomenal and he likes to throw punches in bunches. He doesn't possess huge punching power but his shots will take their toll on his opponents and wear them down. Calzaghe likes to work the body and is very intelligent inside the squared circle. His game plan will probably be to force Hopkins to fight his fight.

Bernard Hopkins is a fighter who likes to capitalize on his opponents mistakes. Throughout his career he has made people pay with his slick defense and timely counter shots. He also doesn't possess one punch knockout power but is very crafty. There will be rounds where he hardly throws any punches and will try to take his opposition off of their game plan.

With the war of words heating up, I expect this to be a pretty entertaining fight. Joe Calzaghe will come out and be very aggressive like he always does. Bernard Hopkins is going to come ready for a battle. I have never been much of a Hopkins fan, but he is one of the most prepared fighters that we have seen in some time.

Both fighters are true champions and future hall of famers. A win tonight would only solidify their place in boxing history. The fighter that can get the other to fight their style and at their pace will have a very serious advantage. Calzaghe wants it to be an up tempo brawl while Hopkins want it to be a slowed down defensive fight.

I think that Calzaghe's overall skill level will be the difference tonight. He is the younger guy and the much faster fighter. If anyone was to get knocked out tonight I would be very surprised. I expect a unanimous decision going to Joe Calzaghe.

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He wants to prove to American fans that he is for real. What better way to do that than to shut up Bernard Hopkins and send him into retirement once and for all.

Tonight will be a very good night for boxing fans. Two great champions that will put everything they have into their fight when they climb into the ring. I think we're in for a treat this evening.