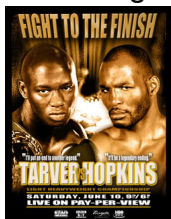


Preview: Hopkins/Tarver & Cotto/Malignaggi

Written by {ga=fightdr}

Friday, June 09 2006 7:00 PM -

Boxing fans have a dilemma tonight, and my cousin Scott "Spoon" Swerbinsky is here to help. Two great fights on pay per view. Which one to watch? Legend Bernard Hopkins takes on light heavyweight champion Antonio Tarver. And a battle of undefeateds as the up and coming Miguel Cotto takes on Paul Malignaggi. Spoon previews both fights, and tells you which one is the better investment.



It seems once every couple years boxing fans have to make a choice. Tonight is one of those nights.

Two pay-per-view events at the same time and both with pretty good reasons to watch.

Do you want to see one of the best fighters of our era in what could be his last fight? Or would you prefer to see two undefeated young up and comers go at it?

Seeing Bernard Hopkins (46-4-1) end his career versus Light Heavyweight king Antonio Tarver (24-3) will likely worth the pay-per-view price. On the other hand, so should watching one of the fastest rising stars in the sport, Miguel Cotto (26-0) taking on the also undefeated Paul Malignaggi (21-0).

Decisions, Decisions

My money is going to go to the youngsters. I am a huge fan of watching Miguel Cotto fight. He is quickly rising up the pound-for-pound lists and is exciting to watch. Malignaggi is also very intriguing to me. I have only seen him fight on two occasions and looked to have some pretty decent skills. It appears to be a very entertaining evening from Madison Square Garden when these two flashy fighters start trading leather.

Cotto in my eyes is one of the most skilled fighters in the game today. He is very well rounded. Great power, excellent hands, solid defense, and the heart of a champion.

Malignaggi is a sizable underdog in this fight (+300) and could be the talk of the town if he pulls the upset. He is more of a counter puncher without overwhelming power. He has only five KO's fighting against suspect competition. If he can hurt Cotto early he might stay in the fight. If the fight turns into a street brawl, he will

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likely be in BIG trouble. Malignaggi has very good hand speed and will look to use that as his biggest advantage tonight.

In the other big fight tonight from Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, Bernard Hopkins will finally end his Hall of Fame career. He picked a very tough guy to go out against in Antonio Tarver. Part of the reason I considered this fight tonight is that I want to see Hopkins get his ass beat.

Tarver has a chip on his shoulder. He wants to prove that he is worthy of the accolades he earned by beating Roy Jones Jr. twice. Hopkins has been calling him a one hit wonder for a month or two now. Antonio in my eyes will be just too skilled for the older Hopkins, whose skills have diminished slightly over the lasy couple of years. I was never a fan of Bernard because of his boring and dirty style. He counterpunches and never forces the action. He has nothing to lose tonight so might be more aggressive and look to go out with a bang. I hope that bang will be him hitting the canvas a few times when the Magic Man (Tarver) puts a beating on him.

If you're a fan of the future of boxing, Cotto-Malinaggi is the one to watch tonight.

Hopkins-Tarver has some good history value which makes it a good choice also.

Either way, boxing fans are the losers when these types of things happen. I for one, won't gripe about it too much, as long as the fight I choose tonight is the right one.