



BIG RED OCTOBER

**World Boxing Association Heavyweight Championship
Allstate Arena – Chicago – Saturday, Oct. 7, 2006**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Aug. 30, 2006

Undefeated Nikolai ‘Giant Russian’ Valuev in Chicago on Oct. 7

***WBA Heavyweight Champion Meets Monte ‘Two Gunz’ Barrett at Allstate Arena;
Undefeated WBC Light Heavy Champion Tomasz Adamek in Rematch with Paul Briggs;
Matt ‘Boom Boom’ Zegan Battles Nate Campbell to Determine IBF No. 1 Lightweight***

CHICAGO—Americans will get their chance to see undefeated 7-foot, 325-pound Nikolai “Giant Russian” Valuev when he makes the second defense of his World Boxing Association title against Monte “Two Gunz” Barrett at Allstate Arena in Rosemont, Ill., on Oct. 7.

A stellar world championship co-feature has been added with undefeated World Boxing Council champion Tomasz Adamek, from Poland, facing Australian Paul “Hurricane” Briggs in a rematch. Their first meeting was a brutal display of wills, so special it was remembered as one of last year’s finest bouts.

A scheduled 12-round International Boxing Federation lightweight elimination bout will also be included with No. 5-ranked contender Matt “Boom Boom” Zegan, from Wroclaw, Poland, taking on No. 9-ranked Nate Campbell, from Jacksonville, Fla., for the No. 1 position.

Tickets priced at \$250, \$200, \$100, \$75, \$50 and \$35, with a limited number of golden circle seats available at \$500, are on sale now at the Allstate Arena box office (847-635-6601), online at Ticketmaster.com or through charge by phone by calling (312) 559-1212.

Don King, who co-promotes Valuev with German-based Sauerland Event, witnessed Valuev’s last three fights in person and has become a believer.

“Nikolai Valuev is the eighth wonder of the world,” King said. “He is within a hand-span of tying the late great Rocky Marciano’s record of 49-0. He can and will bring great excitement to the ring. Valuev has improved with every fight and is dedicated and committed to becoming the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world.”

Already the tallest and heaviest—and first Russian—world heavyweight champion in history, Valuev (44-0, 32 KOs) is so big that he steps *over* the ropes when he enters the ring. Size does matter in athletics, and Valuev seems to be bringing to boxing what Shaquille O’Neal brought to the NBA. While Valuev’s comparative skills were not as polished as O’Neal’s were when he entered the professional ranks, the question remains as to whether Valuev’s boxing abilities have reached the point where no other heavyweight can beat him. Forty four have tried to best him; nobody’s been able to do it so far.

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He grew up in the former Soviet Union sports system where he won junior championships in basketball and discus. He also threw the hammer. After discovering boxing at the late age of 20, he fell in love with the sport and started his unlikely trek to the top of the game.

The giant was promoted as more of a novelty than a contender for 10 years until coming to the attention of noted German promoter Wilfried Sauerland in 2003. Sauerland Event put together a brilliant string of progressively harder tests for Valuev that he passed with flying colors against Italian Olympian and heavyweight champion Paulo Vidoz (17-1); undefeated American contender Gerald Nobles (24-0); Swedish contender Attila “The Hun” Levin (29-2); and highly touted Clifford “The Black Rhino” Etienne (29-3-2).

This positioned Valuev to compete in a world heavyweight championship elimination bout against crafty veteran Larry Donald (42-3-3) on Oct. 1, 2005, in Oldenburg, Germany. The winner would earn the right to go on and face then WBA heavyweight champion John “The Quietman” Ruiz.

Donald was by far the slickest opponent Valuev had ever faced, so the question of whether Valuev was sufficiently adroit to get past a flashy, American-schooled heavyweight with fast hands and feet would be answered. Donald gave the best performance of his career, darting inside to throw combinations and then fearlessly standing toe to toe with the behemoth. Valuev, to his credit, maintained his composure and countered with his burgeoning boxing skills over the scheduled 12 rounds. In the end, it was the Russian who walked away with close majority decision.

Valuev made his first world championship appearance on Dec. 17 in Berlin against Ruiz, a man who was entering his 10th title match and had survived battles with warriors including Evander “The Real Deal” Holyfield, Hasim “The Rock” Rahman, Andrew Golota and James “Lights Out” Toney.

Valuev’s size often stymied Ruiz’s burrowing punch-and-grab tactics, leaving the champion on the outside and susceptible to the giant’s jab and powerful right hands. At the end of 12 grueling rounds, it was again Valuev who was awarded a majority decision in a close match.

Valuev was brilliant in his last appearance against Owen “What the Heck” Beck in Hannover on June 3. He delivered five-punch combinations and, in the second round, culminated a 12-punch barrage with a brutal right hand that floored Beck. Valuev returned in the third round with a staggering right uppercut that sent Beck back to the canvas, and the referee waved off the action seconds later.

Today, Valuev finds himself the longest-reigning heavyweight world champion, and after Hasim “The Rock” Rahman’s recent loss of his WBC heavyweight title to Oleg Maskev, all four of the heavyweight world titles (WBA, WBC, IBF and WBO) are now held by fighters born in the former U.S.S.R.

Barrett (31-4, 17 KOs), from Queens, N.Y., is another dangerous opponent for Valuev. A slick, experienced boxer-puncher, Barrett is a serious threat to any heavyweight when he brings his best game to the ring. The biggest wins in his career came in back-to-back victories over undefeated and highly touted contenders Dominick Guinn and Owen Beck in 2004 and 2005, respectively.

He has suffered only four losses in his career—all against opponents ranked at or near the top of the sport—two of which ended in controversy where the decision could have easily been scored in favor of Barrett.

His first loss came in 1999 near the peak of Lance “Mount” Whitaker’s career. The two fought the full 12 rounds, with Barrett winning on one card and Whitaker prevailing on the remaining two.

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After losing to future two-time heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko the following year, Barrett reeled off six wins before meeting the surging “Baby Joe” Mesi in 2003. Barrett suffered a knockdown but rallied to knock Mesi down for the first time in his career. By the end of the fight, Barrett had punished Mesi’s left eye shut, but Mesi slipped by with a disputed majority-decision victory.

Barrett worked his way back up to the No. 1 ranking in the International Boxing Federation, but rather than wait to try to make a fight with then champion Chris Byrd, Barrett, the No. 2-ranked contender by the World Boxing Council, opted to make his first world title appearance against former unified heavyweight champion and WBC No. 1-ranked Hasim “The Rock” Rahman. The WBC heavyweight championship was at stake when they met at the United Center in Chicago on Aug. 13, 2005.

Barrett and Rahman were friends before entering the ring, and both fighters appeared uncomfortable inflicting damage upon the other. In the end, Rahman won a unanimous decision and the championship.

Although undefeated, Adamek (30-0, 20 KOs) was little known outside of his native Poland before he squared off with Briggs for the vacant WBC 175-pound title in Chicago on May 21, 2005. That changed after the 20,126 in attendance witnessed a seesaw battle where each fighter often appeared to be on the verge of collapse, but both combatants managed to stay on their feet for the entire 12 rounds. Adamek won by a narrow majority decision (117-113, 115-113 and 114-114).

“I didn’t spar for six weeks prior to my first fight with Briggs but I wasn’t going to let anything stop me from winning my first world title,” Adamek said. “I won the decision over Briggs and then I knocked out Thomas Ulrich in Germany. This time I will knock Briggs out.”

“I am really excited about the opportunity get back from my loss with Adamek and become the new light heavyweight champion of the world,” Briggs said. “Last bout I said everything I needed to say and this time around it’s just about doing it.”

Big Red October is being promoted by Don King Productions and Sauerland Event. Valuev vs. Barrett and Adamek vs. Briggs II will be broadcast domestically on HBO beginning at 10 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT.

Don King Productions has promoted over 500 world championship fights with nearly 100 individual boxers having been paid \$1 million or more. DKP also holds the distinction of having promoted seven of the 10 largest pay-per-view events in history, as gauged by total buys, including the top four: Holyfield vs. Tyson II, 1.95 million buys, June 1997; Tyson vs. Holyfield I, 1.6 million buys, November 1996; Tyson vs. McNeeley, 1.58 million buys, August 1995; and Bruno vs. Tyson, 1.4 million buys, March 1996.

DKP has promoted or co-promoted 16 of the top 25 highest-grossing live gates in the history of the state of Nevada including the top five: Holyfield vs. Lewis II, paid attendance: 17,078, gross: \$16,860,300 (NOTE: Also highest live-gate gross for any event in the history of the world.), date: Nov. 13, 1999; Holyfield vs. Tyson II, paid attendance: 16,279, gross: \$14,277,200, date: June 28, 1997; Holyfield vs. Tyson I, paid attendance: 16,103, gross: \$14,150,700, date: Nov. 9, 1996; Tyson vs. McNeeley, paid attendance: 16,113, gross: \$113,965,600, date: Aug. 19, 1995; De La Hoya vs. Trinidad, paid attendance: 11,184, gross: \$12,949,500 (Also garnered the most pay-per-view buys for a non-heavyweight fight at 1.4 million.)

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