Exclusive with George Groves: Anthony Joshua must recruit Mike Tyson to avoid three round demolition, Jake Paul beats a ‘finished’ Chris Eubank Jr and Jai Opetaia vs. Deontay Wilder is a mismatch

Speaking exclusively to Grosvenor Sport, former super middleweight world champion George Groves backs Fury to stop AJ inside three rounds, claims Jake Paul could beat Chris Eubank Jr, and predicts Daniel Dubois vs. Fabio Wardley.

Q. Should Anthony Joshua bring Mike Tyson into camp to help him prepare for Tyson Fury?

I think Anthony Joshua should bring Mike Tyson in to come up with the plan to beat Tyson Fury. What Joshua could also do is have a bit more of a Mike Tyson-esque style. Joshua could be a little bit more peekaboo, crouching, slipping, sliding, dipping, momentum going forward, bringing those big hooks and uppercuts off those dips, legs loaded. That would be the key to success because even though Joshua is a big, tall man, he gives away a bit of height against Tyson Fury. Getting some advice from a man who carved out a fantastic career always being on the shorter side of things makes perfect sense to me.

Q. What is your official prediction for Tyson Fury vs Anthony Joshua?

You’ve got to pick Fury as a solid favourite. Once he lands on Joshua, I think he knocks him out. It’s too much of a big-pressure fight for them to pull one another around and get rounds. The second Joshua gets clipped on the chin, I think he’s going to go over. Fury is too big. He’s not necessarily heavy-handed, but if he’s coming in the ring at 19-plus stone and throws a couple of solid shots, and starts finding his range, I think he hurts Joshua. I think he stops him. It might be really early. I think there’s a strong possibility that this fight is over in the first three rounds.

Q. Do you think Dubois beats Wardley again?

Daniel Dubois can blow hot and cold, and usually after a good win he can sometimes not perform. He had that mega win against Joshua and then didn’t show up against Usyk. So how has his camp gone? If you’re a fly on the wall in Don Charles’ gym and everything is going correctly, then you’re thinking, “I’ll make Daniel Dubois a solid favourite for this.” But if something ain’t right, because I think a lot of chaos goes on there, maybe he’s not. Maybe Wardley is going to win.

And Dubois does switch off. We’ve seen it time and time again where he looks like he’s on it, he’s on it, he’s on it, and then he’s gone. You can hear his dad at ringside screaming, “Get your head back in the game,” and Don Charles slapping him in the corner. I think it’s a struggle for Daniel Dubois to stay focused.

Q. Who is the best British heavyweight?

Even if Dubois wins, I still favour Moses Itauma as the best British heavyweight we’ve got right now. Of course, he lost against Hrgović and Dubois beat Hrgović, but Itauma showed a lot of

inexperience that night. I still think he's the best one we've got. There is an argument for Dubois - I think he beats Joshua, he beats Fury if they fought right now. But he's got to get through Fabio Wardley. Wardley is not an easy night's work for anyone. He's so tough, strong, powerful and stubborn. Dubois can't take him lightly. He's got to be on it. If he is, he's the better boxer and I think he wins again comfortably, as long as he's on it.

Q. Johnny Nelson says Jake Paul beats Deontay Wilder. What do you make of that?

If Wilder lands one on the button on Jake Paul, I can't see him surviving that. But fair enough. If you ask Johnny Nelson whether he'd be able to beat Jake Paul, he'd probably say absolutely, so you can't always take what Johnny says as gospel. I think that's a slight on Wilder. Me as a fighter, as an ex-fighter now at my age, thinking, "Who would I rather fight, Jake Paul or Wilder? Who would I stand a better chance against?" Probably Jake Paul. I think Wilder chins him.

Q. Tony Sims says Conor McGregor could be a feasible opponent for Conor Benn. Does that crossover route make sense?

It would be wise for Conor Benn to concentrate on crossover fights. They can put him in with other marquee names in boxing, but he might end up with the same result he got against Garcia. He will become accustomed to the purses he's been paid, so he's got to find opponents that meet that criteria and there aren't a lot of them. Conor McGregor, maybe. That would be much more logical than him fighting Shakur Stevenson, Devin Haney or even Teofimo Lopez, any of those good, top, solid fighters around those weight divisions. He says he's not going to do 147 again, so he's going to be looking to come up. There just aren't really the names there. They're probably looking at influencer fights and crossover fights. Conor McGregor against Conor Benn, two Conors. It makes sense.

Q. Who do you think actually ends up being the named promoter of Joshua-Fury?

You've got Spencer Brown, who does a lot of stuff with Fury. Frank Warren has done stuff with Fury. It might just have a consortium of promoters there, taking up the front row in Cardiff, and we'll see who sits in the middle. It might be a couple of faces we've never seen before. The promoter of the show might be Conor Benn, I reckon. It could be Conor Benn with Turki Alalshikh.

Q. Who would win in a fight between Eddie Hearn and Dana White?

I couldn't give a s*** about Eddie Hearn and Dana White. I just think it's bizarre how the people who have never taken a punch before, maybe Dana White has had a fight or something, are now being spoken about as interesting to watch.

Both those guys do not need to fight for money. They've got plenty of money. I'm not interested in that at all. And of course they're not interested in that at all because they don't want to pretend to be boxers. They're better off just with the illusion that they know a lot about boxing.

Q. What do you make of the power struggle between Eddie Hearn and Dana White, and should Dana be involved in Joshua-Fury?

The most important thing we should all ask is, “Eddie, why are you not promoting the fight?” If you’re a promoter and you’ve got Joshua but you’re not promoting the fight, why? Eddie will talk about the contract being signed, but whose contracts? Because it can’t be your contract. The truth is, you’re not paying for it. Turki Alalshikh is paying for it, and then he’ll decide everything as and when he wants to.

Dana White, I don’t know, is he keeping his cards close to his chest? He keeps saying stuff that is yet to be backed up, but it’s left as, “We’ll just see on fight night.” They’re going to make this into a huge event, a huge fight that, if you are a legitimate promoter, you have to be part of. I think Dana White wants to be part of it because of that. Part of him probably wants to upset Eddie Hearn, and vice versa. They’re in the promotion business. They’re promoting themselves right now.

Q. Is the Ben Davison angle insignificant in Joshua-Fury?

I think Ben Davison is insignificant. It’s just something else, another line to create a bit of media interest. The first time I was made aware of Ben Davison was when he was working with Fury. Fury has called him a traitor now, but it’s all tongue-in-cheek. Fury left him. What’s he supposed to do, say, “Okay, I’m never going to work with another heavyweight again”? You ain’t going to teach Joshua anything new at this point. You just need someone who’s going to keep you on point, get you nice and fit and then on fight night give you the instructions you’ve probably heard before. Ben Davison is a solid shout for that because they’ve worked together before enough times to trust what he’s saying.

Q. What do you make of the rumoured Jai Opetaia vs Deontay Wilder fight on the Joshua-Fury undercard?

I think it’s a mismatch right now. We saw Wilder’s fight with Chisora. They both gave a good account of themselves to make it a fan-friendly fight, but Chisora was way past his best and I think Wilder is the same. Opetaia is not. He’s on it. I’ve stood next to him. He’s a big, solid man, but he’s nowhere near the height and length of Wilder. The talk around town is that he’s really struggling to make that cruiserweight limit now. This could just be a fun fight. Who would not want to fight Wilder? He’s probably going to get paid really good money. Take this fight, win this fight on the big stage, people should keep talking about Benavidez, and it’s a bridging fight if he does have ambitions to move up to heavyweight in the near future. I make Opetaia a solid favourite. I think if he lands on Wilder, he gets rid of him. It’s a clever move from those guys.

Q. Does Chris Eubank Jr signing with Eddie Hearn make sense after their history?

Maybe Eubank Jr, at this stage, when he is, in my opinion, a completely finished, shot fighter, would just like some experienced boxing heads on his side. Maybe he also thinks it will upset Conor Benn. Conor Benn is the guy who talks about loyalty and things like that, but then left with a better deal. It’s poor form from Eddie Hearn, to be honest. He should have risen above

that, been better than that. But again, it feeds into his ego and what's going on with him and Dana White.

I've seen footage of Eubank now, 90-plus kilos, he reckons. He's a father, living out in Dubai. He's bought a six-wheel truck. He's been paid. He's got nothing left to give. There's nothing left to give apart from showing up and collecting his money now. For a fighter who has probably never got heavy in his life, if he has got heavy for the first time, where he's a heavyweight, above the cruiserweight limit, he ain't going to be able to get down to 168 sensibly.

Q. Does Jake Paul beat Chris Eubank Jr?

I think Chris Eubank is absolutely finished. If Jake Paul isn't, then possibly. He's a lot bigger. Possibly. Yeah, maybe actually. I think Jake Paul beats Chris Eubank Jr. I think Chris Eubank Jr is finished.

Q. Is Tyson Fury better off without John Fury in camp, and should John Fury finally fight Carl Froch?

I don't think John Fury brings anything to the table. He definitely doesn't bring anything in terms of the promotion. Usually he's just trying to steal the attention off the fighters for himself, and not in a way where sometimes fathers deviate the pressure from their fighters. It's more just, "Look at me."

Him and Froch should have a little scrap. Froch should be doing the Netflix commentary, so maybe he can ask them for a quick break, nip downstairs, have a bit of fisticuffs with John and then get back up to his table to call the shots on the last thing.

Froch might need to watch his back in Cardiff a little bit. But I think he's well in with His Excellency and Netflix, and he gets some exclusive access, so I'm sure he's fine. Sometimes he does love enemies, so maybe that's just him revelling in his element.

Q. What are your initial thoughts on Callum Smith vs Dmitry Bivol?

Smith's got to travel out to Russia for it, so I'd imagine he's going to have to knock him out to get a draw in that case as well. He knows he's going to be up against it. He had to travel away to fight Beterbiev. A couple of losses on his record now, but Smith is a solid, solid fighter, a good operator and a big, strong lad at the weight if he still is strong at the weight. He might land and hurt Bivol. Bivol is getting on as well.

I wish Smith well. He's going to be a pretty big underdog, but he's got a chance. But Bivol is a much better boxer than Smith. Smith is a solid operator and he's got good power, but Bivol is very in sync, has great timing, punches in combinations and punches in waves. His hands and feet work really well together. Maybe fighting in Russia as well, he might want to make a little bit more of a statement, so he might go through the gears a little bit more than he does sometimes when you see him just coasting.

Smith is head and shoulders above the other light-heavyweights in Britain right now. I think he's better than Anthony Yarde, Joshua Buatsi, Willy Hutchinson and Ben Whittaker. I think he beats all of them comfortably on his day. But on the big world scene, he got beat comfortably by Canelo and got stopped by Beterbiev. There's no disrespect in losing to those guys, but you'd want him to have been a bit more competitive against them.

Q. If Oleksandr Usyk has only one fight left, who should he face in his final fight?

I think Usyk should fight Itauma. If it's one more, fight Itauma. Itauma needs a win back. If that was going to be the case, it's passing over the mantle. If Itauma had won against Hrgović, then Itauma versus Usyk would have been the fight to prove, "Okay, Usyk, where are you in terms of the greatest of all time?" If he beat Itauma and then Itauma goes on to do something incredible, a bit like Mayweather against Canelo, you're like, "Oh yeah, I got you early. I got you at the right time." If not that, then it's tough. He had the fun fight last time and fought the kickboxer and nearly came unstuck, so I don't trust him not to train properly if it's not a real fight.

Q. Derek Chisora is continuing beyond his 50th fight. Why can't he hang them up and what is left for him?

I think he just loves being the boxer. He loves the money, the fame and fortune, and coming into the boxing world. I saw him online at the IBA function out in Istanbul. Chisora is their type of guy. They had Joe Joyce for a bit. Maybe those two can fight one another. It's up to Chisora, really. As long as he can be proved medically fit enough to box, then he's going to box, and people are going to put him out because they want to get paid. Maybe on those IBA cards they're slightly different, shorter, quicker. If the money is right for him, then he'll go for it.

Q. Could Christian Mbilli be the man who catches Canelo Alvarez at the right time?

When there's stuff going on outside the ring, it can be really off-putting. Fights get delayed, postponed, venues get changed. It's no one's fault in the boxing world, but it happens. Experienced fighters, it doesn't really bother them, but experienced fighters who are kind of in the twilight of their career, it might really upset them. It's not like a young prospect who has never had to deal with something like this before. You imagine guys at Canelo's stage thinking, "I can't be bothered with all this nonsense. I just want to fight. I just want to get it done." Fed up. It might be a factor for him. I think Canelo is the favourite for this fight. I haven't quite seen it yet where I think he falters. I make him the favourite. But if Mbilli beats him, that might be the trigger for Canelo to say, "Okay, right, I'm done now. I'm done now." The loss to Crawford, he sort of just took it. Crawford is an exceptional fighter, but considering the size advantages he had to give away, you thought Canelo would be able to put a dent in him. He couldn't. Back-to-back losses are probably going to be too much for him. I still make him the favourite against Mbilli.

Q. Your fighter Lucas Roehrig has signed with Zuffa Boxing. Why did you choose them and do you see Dana White's company as the future?

My fighter Lucas Roehrig, who I manage and train, has just done a long-term deal with Zuffa Boxing. Zuffa is fronted by Dana White. Dana White must have significant involvement, and

definitely on fight night he comes in and wants to run the production side of things because he's had success in UFC.

The finished product we see on TV is looking really good and these matches are really good to watch. Hopefully it starts to produce future champions. Their format is a little bit more survival of the fittest. You will be matched hard. They're not just going to get you in with guys who look good on paper. You're in there with tough, tough guys. If you don't come through, it's okay because you can have another run out. But if you don't come through that, then maybe you're out the door because someone else new is coming in.