



RICHARD DREW Associated Press

GENNADY GOLOVKIN, left, will have a slight height and reach advantage against **Sergiy Derevyanchenko**.

Golovkin eyes belt and Alvarez

He calls out the Mexican fighter prior to title bout with Derevyanchenko.

By **MANOUK AKOPYAN**

At 36 years old, Gennady Golovkin was spoiled with a three-year, six-fight contract paying him more than \$100 million with global sports streaming platform DAZN.

The deal was designed to create a clear collision course for a third fight with Canelo Alvarez, who also fights on DAZN. But Alvarez instead opted to move up two weight divisions to face light-heavyweight Sergey Kovalev rather than give a rematch to the Kazakh KO artist after two highly disputed decisions — one a draw in 2017, the other a majority decision win for Alvarez in 2018.

Alvarez was so adamant on not fighting Golovkin again throughout the summer that he missed out on his customary Mexican Independence Day weekend fight, and in the process, failed to secure a deal with his IBF middleweight title mandatory in Sergiy Derevyanchenko.

The Mexican fighter was promptly stripped of the sanctioning body's title in August, and now, Golovkin (39-11, 35 KOs) will take on the Brooklyn-based Ukrainian challenger Derevyanchenko (13-1, 10 KOs) for the vacant 160-pound title Saturday at Madison Square Garden in New York.

The fight will stream on

DAZN and will be Golovkin's seventh appearance at the venue.

"Canelo just looks like he didn't want to box with me or couldn't box with me, so the only choice he had was to go fight Kovalev," Golovkin said. "The only thing that I see is that he must have had some sort of problem because he was given the option to fight me and for some reason he didn't. It means that he did this on purpose, to not fight me, and instead to move to Kovalev."

"I don't know if he's going to win, but I know that Kovalev is gaining more from that fight than Canelo."

Golovkin, who lives in Santa Monica and trains in Big Bear, is coming off an easy fourth round knockout win against the unheralded Steve Rolls in June.

It was his first fight since splitting with longtime trainer Abel Sanchez due to financial reasons. Golovkin bestowed coaching duties to former heavyweight challenger-turned-coach Johnathon Banks so he can improve rhythm, movement and timing, all while paying him less than Sanchez.

The former fighter is a student of late Hall of Famer Emmanuel Stewart, and a one-time trainer to Wladimir Klitschko.

"We had more time this camp than previously," Golovkin said. "We have a lot of understanding of each other, we tried a lot of different things. Of course we always need more time than we're allowed, the more time we have, the more we can try, the better

we'll be. We've come a long way."

Golovkin, who once sported a streak of 23 consecutive knockouts from 2008 to 2017, also brought on board a nutritionist and strength and conditioning coach in addition to Banks as he tries to fend off Father Time.

"We get along great. Only time is going to draw us closer and closer," Banks said. "He loves what he does and I love what I do, so it's a pleasure to be there working with a like-minded individual and to perfect the craft.... I think it's going to be a very competitive, tooth-and-nail type of fight."

Golovkin was quick to squash doubts if Derevyanchenko was deserving of his contender status considering that he lost to Daniel Jacobs, a fighter Alvarez and Golovkin have beaten.

"Let's be honest. At this level, every contender is serious. Sergiy has a lot of experience," said Golovkin, who will fight with a slight height and reach advantage. "We are approaching this as serious as we can ... I'll never underestimate my opponent. No matter what, you still have to prepare."

Derevyanchenko is looking to put himself in a life-changing position by outworking the heavy favorite Golovkin.

At 33, he doesn't have a hallmark win, but he does sport an impressive amateur record of 390-20 and was a 2008 Olympian.

"I've got a lot of confidence in myself. I'm ready to rock and roll," said Derevyanchenko. "I'm not

betting on the fact that Golovkin is getting older, he's still a very dangerous fighter. Golovkin is still very motivated.

"To be a true star in boxing you have to fight the best people, and this is the next step ... The thing that's left is the world championship title."

Both boxers will be battling for a crown that Alvarez had little interest owning. It wasn't the first time Alvarez sidestepped Golovkin, either. He vacated his WBC middleweight belt in 2016 to avoid "artificial deadlines" for a GGG fight.

In the process, Golovkin shed interim champion status, and claimed the title — one of which Alvarez ripped right back from Golovkin last year.

"Gennady Golovkin does not represent anything for me right now," Alvarez said two weeks ago in Los Angeles. "He comes from practically fighting a nobody. He doesn't represent a challenge that I haven't had already in our two fights.... For me, yes, we are finished."

If he wins Saturday, Golovkin will turn to DAZN and Golden Boy head Oscar De La Hoya, both of which have said a 2020 clash with Alvarez will happen, and seek closure if he'll fight his loathed foe a third time.

"Life is unpredictable and I do my work," said Golovkin. "My biggest opponent is not a specific person. My biggest opponent is my age and my desire to continue boxing. All those other names that are being thrown out, that's not as important as my love for the sport of boxing."

Healthy Whittaker is ready to rumble

After ailments, the middleweight champion ends a 16-month layoff.

By **MANOUK AKOPYAN**

Since June 2018, UFC middleweight champion Robert Whittaker has suffered a staph infection that spread to his stomach and endured chickenpox as a result; he's broken his right hand, had ligament damage in his left hand and undergone surgery for a collapsed bowel and hernia one day before a fight.

As a result of the litany of ailments, the luckless Whittaker (21-4) was forced to sit on the sidelines as UFC head Dana White reshuffled the deck in the division in search of an interim champion.

In stepped Israel Adesanya (17-0), who joined the UFC last February and has promptly gone 6-0 to earn star status with five performance bonuses. He's beaten Derek Brunson, Anderson Silva and Kelvin Gastelum, the last of which was a fight of the year candidate that yielded the interim middleweight title he currently owns.

Whittaker will end a 16-month layoff Saturday at UFC 243, looking to restore order in his career, and the division's title picture, when he takes on Adesanya in Melbourne, Australia.

The all-Oceania showdown will be a battle between two Trans-Tasmanians and take place in front of more than 50,000 people. Whittaker was born in Auckland but lives in Sydney, and Adesanya was born in Nigeria but moved to New Zealand when he was 11 years old and has lived there since.

"This isn't my first rodeo. I'm very good at what I do. The fight is going to be a cracker," said Whittaker, 28. "Every time I step in the octagon, there are always fireworks. I want to go in there, touch gloves, put one on his chin and he goes away. One and done."

The confident Whittaker was riding a wave of momentum before he was forced to step away.

He hasn't lost since 2014, is undefeated at middleweight (8-0) and has 11 first-round finishes with wins over Yoel Romero (twice), Jacare Souza and Brunson.

A malfunctioning body made him battle depression during his absence, but he found some sanity by keeping busy in less rigorous jujitsu and wrestling competitions. He also found therapy by opening his own gym, and honed in on his storytelling skills with a podcast.

"I look forward to laying hands on him and exploiting



DANIEL POKETT Getty Images

ROBERT Whittaker will take on the interim champion in UFC 243.

his holes to see how he deals with it. I've been working and plugging away. I haven't been paying attention to others. The big thing for me is doing the work and getting back in there," said Whittaker.

"I think he's a phenomenal fighter," Whittaker said of Adesanya. "He's got great standup and his timing is impeccable. But in his last fight he got hit by a guy who was not as fast or as tall as me."

Adesanya's last outing in the cage was in February against Gastelum in a five-round war that is the front-runner for the best fight of 2019. Although it was far from simple, the arduous, title-clinching performance continued his meteoric climb in the cage.

"I needed that fight. It was a spiritual fight. It was a growth fight for myself, just to know that when the going gets tough, I get going fast," said Adesanya, 30. "I learned in the Gastelum fight that there are no limits. I realized I had another reserve tank I hadn't tapped into yet. I'm so confident going into this fight that I can escape any dark place, I'll survive and thrive and he'll drown."

Adesanya will look to take Whittaker down under by leveraging his 6-foot-4 frame and 80-inch reach; Whittaker will stand 4 inches shorter and give away 6½ inches in reach.

"Look at my skills and tale of the tape. This is why we fight, though. Paper can't fight paper," Adesanya said. "He's got a little awkwardness in his rhythm, but it won't take long to take care of it. I know with [my] skill set, I can pick him apart with distance, close range and wherever the fight leads."

Adesanya is lanky and has lightning-quick speed and power in both fists — 13 of his wins have come via knockout. "I'm just soaking up everything and enjoying the ride. It's been a crazy roller coaster," said Adesanya. "I'm trying to become a better overall fighter."

The co-main event for UFC 243 will feature Al Iaquinta (14-5-1) taking on Dan Hooker (19-8) in a lightweight fight.

NHL STANDINGS

WESTERN CONFERENCE							EASTERN CONFERENCE						
Pacific	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA	Metropolitan	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Ducks	1	0	0	2	2	1	Carolina	1	0	0	2	4	3
Edmonton	1	0	0	2	3	2	N.Y. Rangers	1	0	0	2	6	4
Vegas	1	0	0	2	4	1	Washington	1	0	0	2	3	2
KINGS	0	0	0	0	0	0	Columbus	0	0	0	0	0	0
San Jose	0	1	0	0	1	4	New Jersey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vancouver	0	1	0	0	2	3	N.Y. Islanders	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arizona	0	1	0	0	1	2	Philadelphia	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calgary	0	1	0	0	3	5	Pittsburgh	0	1	0	0	1	3
Central	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA	Atlantic	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	1	0	0	2	5	3	Tampa Bay	1	0	0	2	5	2
Nashville	1	0	0	2	5	2	Toronto	1	0	0	2	5	3
St. Louis	0	0	1	1	2	3	Buffalo	1	0	0	2	3	1
Chicago	0	0	0	0	0	0	Boston	1	0	0	2	2	1
Winnipeg	0	1	0	0	4	6	Montreal	0	0	1	1	3	4
Dallas	0	1	0	0	1	2	Detroit	0	0	0	0	0	0
Minnesota	0	1	0	0	2	5	Florida	0	1	0	0	2	5
Note: Overtime or shootout losses worth one point.							Ottawa	0	1	0	0	3	5

RESULTS

AT DUCKS 2	Cam Fowler scored the game-winning goal in the second period to lift the Ducks in coach Dallas Eakins' debut.
ARIZONA 1	
BUFFALO 3	Conor Sheary scored twice against his old team and Ralph Krueger won in his Sabres coaching debut.
AT PITTSBURGH 1	
AT TAMPA BAY 5	Kevin Shattenkirk and Pat Maroon scored to help spoil goalie Sergei Bobrovsky's first game with the Panthers.
FLORIDA 2	
AT CAROLINA 4	Dougie Hamilton scored and Petr Mrazek stopped three shots in the shootout for the Hurricanes.
MONTREAL 3 (SO)	
AT NY RANGERS 6	Brett Howden broke a tie with 4:09 remaining and new Rangers winger Artemi Panarin had a goal and an assist.
WINNIPEG 4	
AT NASHVILLE 5	The Predators scored four goals in the third period and Matt Duchene had three assists in his Nashville debut.
MINNESOTA 2	
BOSTON 2	Brett Ritchie and Danton Heinen scored on Boston's first two shots. The Stars lost three players to injuries.
AT DALLAS 1	
AT COLORADO 5	Mikko Rantanen had two goals less than a week after agreeing to a six-year contract with the Avalanche.
CALGARY 3	

For complete NHL summaries, go to latimes.com/sports/scores

TODAY'S GAMES

Chicago vs. Phila. at Prague, Czech., 11 a.m.	Washington at NY Islanders, 4 p.m.
Toronto at Columbus, 4 p.m.	Winnipeg at New Jersey, 4 p.m.
Vegas at San Jose, 7:30 p.m.	

SATURDAY'S GAMES

KINGS at Edmonton, 7 p.m.	San Jose at DUCKS, 7 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Florida, 4 p.m.	Montreal at Toronto, 4 p.m.
Columbus at Pittsburgh, 4 p.m.	New Jersey at Buffalo, 4 p.m.
Carolina at Washington, 4 p.m.	NY Rangers at Ottawa, 4 p.m.
Dallas at St. Louis, 5 p.m.	Detroit at Nashville, 5 p.m.
Minnesota at Colorado, 6 p.m.	Boston at Arizona, 6 p.m.
Vancouver at Calgary, 7 p.m.	

Eakins gets the game puck from Getzlaf

[Elliott, from D3] people might not necessarily see at the moment," captain Ryan Getzlaf said Thursday morning. "But we're going to have to keep our head down and focus on what we need to do and make sure that we play with energy and up-tempo hockey."

The Ducks brought energy and young legs to face the Coyotes, dressing 16 players who haven't yet celebrated their 30th birthday. Two of the 20-somethings who are among the Ducks' most experienced players provided their offense and supported goaltender John Gibson's 32-save performance in a 2-1 victory before an announced sellout crowd at Honda Center.

"We need to be a team that's going to score by committee," said defenseman Cam Fowler, who will be 28 in December and began his 10th NHL season by making a slick move and whipping a shot into the upper-right corner of the net to put the Ducks ahead for good late in the second period. "With all the skill we have, with our elite goalscorers, we're going to have to rely on goals to come from different people at different times."

Their first goal came from 29-year-old Derek Grant, their fourth-line center. As so often happens, the play began with a good save at the other end, in this case a right pad stop by Gibson on a shot by Alex Goligoski. Defenseman Hampus Lindholm moved the puck up quickly, and Grant skated into the offensive zone on the right wing. He passed to Devin Shore, on the left. Arizona goalie Darcy



KYUSUNG GONG Associated Press

DUCKS goalie John Gibson made 32 saves, including this one on Arizona right wing Christian Fischer.

Kuemper stopped Shore's shot but the rebound ended up on the right side of the slot, and Grant poked the puck into the net at 14:32 of the first period.

"Everyone played well today," said Grant, who scored two goals in 31 games with the Ducks last season after they acquired him from Pittsburgh. "We have good depth throughout our lineup. We need everyone chipping in, in different ways, every night. If I can chip in with a goal that's great, but there's a lot of other things we're worrying about out there. I thought the guys played pretty well overall."

The Coyotes, touted as a potential playoff team based on their accumulation of young talent, pulled even at 9:03 of the second period on a one-timer by Derek Stepan, who was set up nicely by Phil Kessel. The Coyotes acquired the prolific Kessel, a two-time Stanley Cup winner, from the Penguins in June. He played in his 997th career game on Thursday and is one of only

three American players to score 20 goals in 11 consecutive seasons, along with Patrick Kane and Keith Tkachuk.

But Fowler gave the Ducks a morale boost and the lead by scoring with 32 seconds left in the second period. The players the Coyotes had on the ice were nearing the end of a shift and were collapsing defensively, and Fowler read the play well.

"A lot of times I'd probably put my head down and try and blast that one," Fowler said after his club-record ninth career game-winning goal by a defenseman, "but I saw the forward kind of cheating in my lane and I saw a little bit of open ice to the middle and I was able to create a little bit of separation there and just tried to get the puck on net. I didn't have a whole lot of space. I was trying mainly to get it there and create some kind of havoc but I heard the crowd and I was happy to see that one go in."

So was Eakins, who has

encouraged his defensemen to move the puck up quickly to the forwards and to capitalize on their mobility by joining the rush. Fowler's superb skating makes him well suited to do that. "Any time you can get one of those late in the period like that, it's such a great feeling walking in the room," Eakins said. "I thought we played much better in the second period and to get rewarded like that is big."

Eakins got another reward later, in the locker room, when Getzlaf presented him with the puck as a souvenir of his first victory as the team's coach. "I think it really shows how thoughtful not only our captain is, but our leadership group," Eakins said. "I never expected that, and to be handed that after the game was truly an honor."

It was Game 1 of 82 but was, in many ways, more than that. As optimistic as the Ducks were during training camp, as sure as they were that they're on the right path, proving it on the ice was crucial. "I think if you come out on the other side of this, on the bad side, it could easily creep in to, 'Oh, no, is this happening again?'" Eakins said. "So we certainly don't want that, and so we're able to build on some positivity here."

DUCKS 2, COYOTES 1

Arizona	0	1	0	1
DUCKS	1	1	0	2

FIRST PERIOD: 1. DUCKS, Grant 1 (Lindholm, Shore), 14:32. Penalties—None. SECOND PERIOD: 2. Arizona, Stepan 1 (Kessel, Kellier), 9:03. 3. DUCKS, Fowler 1 (Rowley, Jones), 19:28. Penalties—None. THIRD PERIOD: Scoring—None. Pen.—Soderberg, ARI. (interference), 9:06. Rowley, DUCKS, (hooking), 12:34. SHOTS ON GOAL: Arizona 64-61-23. DUCKS 6-44-9-29. Power-play conversions—Arizona 0 of 1. DUCKS 0 of 1. GOALS: Arizona, Kuemper 0-1-0 (29 shots-27 saves). DUCKS, Gibson 1-0-0 (33-32), Att-17,174 (17,174), 1-2-25.