

09 March 2012

The Inverness Courier

Published: 09/03/2012 08:30 - Updated: 07/03/2012 11:12

Munro reaches Senior final

Graham Linton

GRAEME Munro stands on the verge of claiming the most significant title to date for the fledgling Highland Boxing Academy.

The bantamweight dominated his Senior Scottish Open Championship semi-final against Lewis McFarlane, of the Noble Art Boxing Club, winning 14-7 at the Garioch Sports Centre, Inverurie, to set up a final against Scottish internationalist Joe Ham. Having previously dispatched of Anthony O'Neill 22-8 on points in the quarter-finals, Munro is growing in confidence the more this competition progresses, according to academy head coach Liam Foy.

The Highland Capital club already have a Scottish Novice champion in their ranks following Donald Macphee's success in October last year, but if Munro can triumph against Ham at Meadowbank Sports Centre, Edinburgh, on Friday 23rd March, it would rank as one of their most notable achievements so far.

"Graeme had the measure of Lewis right from the start of the fight," said Foy. "He was catching him with some beautiful overhand shots, while being able to slip inside and use his jab to good effect.

"He really controlled the bout from start to finish and he's know deservedly through to the final against Joe Ham. "That's Graeme's third win in a row and he's doing really well just now. You can see the confidence just increasing in him with every fight that passes.

"His boxing is just getting better and better, and with every bout his fitness and sharpness in the ring is improving greatly as well.

"Joe Ham is a Scottish internationalist, who has been around the block a few times and is very experienced, but he's been beaten before.

"It's going to be a real step up in class for Graeme, but myself and the other coaches at the academy believe he has the skills and the ability to overcome Joe.

"Graeme is in this final on merit and no one deserves this opportunity more than he does. He is the first in the gym for training and the last one out.

"He's a real pleasure to work with and it certainly makes the life of a coach easier when you work with a fighter as committed as he is."

Munro's amateur boxing career is finally flourishing having flitted around a few clubs in and around Inverness previously without ever enjoying much success.

The 24-year-old, however, has quickly settled in to life at the academy and that passion he has rediscovered for the sport again is certainly being shown in his efforts, both in and out of the ring.

"I think Graeme feels part of a family at the academy," he said. "When he heard the club was opening, he was there in a heartbeat because he wanted to be involved.

"There are no individuals at the academy. Everyone knows we are part of a team, but there's no doubt that Graeme is looked up to and respected by us all.

"Graeme reaching this final is massive, not only for him, but the club as a whole.

"There isn't a bigger title to be won in amateur boxing in this country and for the academy to have a senior champion would just be unbelievable."

