

## Heavyweight History's Longest Reigning King

Written by Frank Lotierzo  
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He had a Championship tenure longer than the combined title reign's of Joe Louis, Muhammad Ali, Larry Holmes, and Mike Tyson. On top of that he's never been stopped and he is a definite Heavyweight. Oh, he's been down a few times, but never out. He is the true King of all the Heavyweight's, he is Don King.

It will be 30 years ago this coming October since King convinced an African dictator to put up 10 million dollars of his country's money for a Heavyweight Championship fight between Champion George Foreman and Challenger Muhammad Ali. More commonly known as the "Rumble In The Jungle"

That is how long Don King has been the main man in Boxing's glamor division. Think about that, a 30 year reign as the man. Not even the New York Yankees have had a 30 year run that has been virtually uninterrupted like King has. He promoted a few of Ali's title bouts, just about all of Holmes' bouts and title defenses, a majority of Tyson's title defenses, and even some of Holyfield's. In fact King currently has Holyfield under contract and there seems to be some rumbling that he's working on signing Tyson again? Despite being sued by him for 100 million dollars. The only Champion King never had a piece of was Lennox Lewis. It was only during the Lewis title reign that King was somewhat frozen out of control of the Heavyweight division, again somewhat but not totally. Now with Lewis retired, there can be no doubt that Don King is going to dictate what fights the fans will see and who fights who in the near future.

The man is cunning and shrewd. He's a tireless worker and doesn't take no for an answer. Along with having the tenacity of a Pit bull, King sometimes seems to have a Guardian Angel looking over his shoulder. Things sometimes just fall in place for him. Just in the last three weeks we've had three Heavyweight title fights and the signs pointing to how things go his way are quite evident.

This past April 10th his fighter Lamon Brewster, a significant underdog upset the fighter many thought to be on his way back to becoming one of the main forces in the division, Wladimir Klitschko. Brewster took a one sided shellacking from Klitschko for the better part of four rounds before Klitschko came undone in the fifth round and was stopped. Thus giving Brewster the lightly regarded WBO title. Although a fringe title, King now controls it and nobody else can get it without dealing with him. Only King could be fortunate enough to be in the right corner when one of the fighters who he is trying to stonewall in the division is upset, one of the Klitschko's. And if you doubt that King is not trying to make the Klitschko's a non entity in the Heavyweight division, you must be a new observer of the Sweet Science. WBC Champ Vitali Klitschko will certainly have a hard time cashing in on his new title. Especially in the World of Don King promoted and controlled Heavyweight's.

One week after Brewster's upset, King matches IBF Champ Chris Byrd against Andrew Golota. Three months ago Golota was nothing more than another pug coming back for some money hoping for a shot at a big name. Prior to fighting Byrd, Golota had only fought twice in three

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years, and now based off of his fight with Byrd he may be the hottest fighter in the division, other than newly crowned WBC Champ Vitali Klitschko. Only King could have the good fortune to be there when Golota shows up in the best shape of his life and fights Byrd to a standstill as a 3-1 underdog. Not only did Golota keep his composure throughout the fight, but he fought well and made King look like a Genius for putting him in that spot.

The Byrd-Golota fight was declared a draw. Which was a fair call on behalf of both fighters. I had it 6-6 or 7-5 Byrd. However, it could have gone either way within a point favoring either fighter. No, the fight is scored a draw and King is the biggest winner. Golota comes out as the perceived winner since he fought well and didn't implode. And Byrd fought like a Champion and shouldn't have lost his title. Golota has always been a draw and doesn't need a title to fill the arena, opposed to Byrd who despite an outstanding performance where he fought and made the fight exciting, needs a title to make the public watch him. Once again Don King was the biggest winner.

Don King presided over the end of the Ali era, the entire Holmes, Tyson, and Holyfield era's. He was in the background somewhat during the Lewis era. Remember, King survived with John Ruiz and a shot Evander Holyfield as being his main Heavyweight fighters during the height of the Lewis reign. King called the recent Heavyweight title fights in New York "The Next Era Begins." Can there even be a morsel of a doubt that with Don King owning three of the four major Heavyweight title belts that he is the major force in the Heavyweight division, despite not having a piece of it's signature fighter. Of course not, that's because he is it's signature figure. He has three titles, Klitschko only has one. Ali, Holmes, Tyson, Holyfield, Lewis, and maybe Klitschko, what do they have in common? Fighting Don King for the title.