

The Wright Stuff

Written by Deon Potgieter
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While Ronald “Winky” Wright’s boxing style leaves some fans cold, you have to admit the man has a big heart.

Another thing he has is the aura of a true champion. I noted this the first time I met him back in 1998. He arrived in South Africa to defend his WBO junior middleweight title against Namibian, Harry Simon and what a fight that turned out to be. It was a veritable battle of attrition with neither man giving an inch in a very hard fought 12 rounds.

There was some controversy as the fight was at first declared a draw and Wright left the ring with his belt. A few minutes later, while I was interviewing Wright in his dressing room, Stan Christodoulou, who was at the time CEO of Boxing SA, rushed in and demanded Wright hand over his belt. There had been a calculation error and Simon had won the fight. What a sight, seeing a champion in one moment relieved that he had hung on to his title by the skin of his teeth, and then realizing it was taken away from him. Simon did deservedly take the belt that night, but it was one of those fights in which neither man deserved to lose.

A draw in a world title fight is the same as a loss, however. It means nothing to the loser in the bigger picture, and thus a result should always be forthcoming. While at the time I was still filled with the romantic notion that a champion should always get the benefit of the doubt, and that a challenger need unequivocally rip the title from him if he is to be crowned in his place. Although the fight was by no means a draw, had it been, I now feel that if all a champion can manage to do is get a draw, the title should pass on to the challenger with the former champion receiving the first defence.

While Wright was rightfully upset about his crown slipping from his hands that night, he had taken a brutal beating, as was illustrated in the blood present in his urine sample taken after the fight. I had no doubt that the he would be back, though. He was and still is a class act in my book and somebody who was destined to succeed, no matter the obstacles placed in his way.

It was thus with great delight I welcomed his victory over Shane Moseley in their first encounter. It’s not often boxers live up to your expectations, but Wright has done that for me. Having said that, he’s going to have his hands full defeating Sugar Shane a second time. Mosley will have learned from their first encounter and Wright doesn’t have as much versatility as does his challenger.

He does have the bigger heart of the two, however, and methinks its going to be the heart which determines the winner in this one.

Editor’s Note: Deon Potgieter [predicts Wright by Decision](#) .