

## Klitschko's Talent Will Not Be Denied

Written by Phil Woolever

Sunday, 12 September 2010 19:00

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Had you swum the length and breadth of the ocean

And seen the boundlessness out there

Still youd have seen the waves come on and on,

Even in the dread that you might disappear

-----Faust/Goethe (b 1749 Frankfurt)

FRANKFURT AM MAIN - Believe it or not, Samuel Peter was ready on Saturday night.

He just wasn't ready for Wladimir Klitschko, who looked extremely formidable in chipping away at the sturdy, repeat challenger until pulverization time arrived for a TKO at 1:22 of the 10th round.

Peter may not have been completely rock solid, but he did hang tough a while and he showed up ready to make the Commerzbank Arena ring a very hard place. For a handful of minutes at least, Peter was a very dangerous fighter.

Maybe VKO is a better way to list the victory.

In Klitschkos case, maybe the T should stand for typical, although the champion has also consistently demonstrated an excellent technical foundation for years now. Tonight once again, the conclusion came after the apparently still improving Klitschko ground Peter down, fried him up, then slapped on the finishing mustard.

Klitschko showed again that he can finish fights with plenty of explosive drama and left brave Peter flat on the floor to prove it. In this rematch Klitschko looked much stronger, slicker and maybe most important, he looked more confident than in their 2005 encounter.

I felt really great and showed all my great fans that the Klitschkos are the best heavyweight boxers in the world, said the basically unmarked Klitschko with brotherly love while a jovial Vitali was already at the victory party. Stopping Samuel required me to land a lot of good punches, and still he fought back. I delivered so many rights, which is what we worked on. And pushing and punching in clinches. I dedicate this fight to my fans, who always make me feel like trying to get stronger and to learn more.

Peter came out winging, and while it wasn't the most artful attack, he connected with hard thump all over Klitschkos arms and torso. Peter ducked low and leapt in with a pounding purpose, and a good left put some bright pink in Klitschkos slightly swollen lip. Klitschko landed cleaner shots, but only a couple. Peter was much busier, and probably earned the round.

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Klitschko was a bit rattled, and looked chagrined as he started round two. You could clearly hear each mans thudding connections over the noise of the crowd, and for a few fine moments it looked like we might have a real two-way battle. Then Klitschko made Peter stumble with a telephone pole straight right and the challenger looked more and more gassed from the end of the second session on.

Klitschko waited at mid-ring for the third to begin, like a coyote at dinner time. Peters right eye looked tenderized, and he reached in with much less behind his punches. By the fourth the fans were restless as the big men waltzed. Peter kept trying but the only damage he caused came from lunging his head and shoulders.

In the sixth, Klitschko found the range with an uppercut he'd been trying all night. It almost did the knockdown trick, but so did plenty of other blasts. Peter bobbed, weaved, heaved for the heavens and missed by a meter. The puffy-faced Peter hung on. Then he hung on some more.

Peter managed to maul his way inside the danger zone of Klitschkos most damaging crosses, until a point in the ninth round when Klitschkos left had Peter ready to go, not gently.

In round ten, Klitschko scored with short, sweeping hooks from each side. When Peter was sent reeling backward Klitschko came over the top with rare ferocity. Various grazing leather initiated a highlight reel series of five pitch-perfect Klitschko rights. By now Peter couldn't defy the imposed gravity and was sprawled flat on his back as referee Robert Byrd started a count, considered the damage, then waved it off instead.

Klitschko had his arms raised by the time Peter slammed into the canvas.

I didn't want to back up like in the first fight, said Klitschko. This fight went exactly as I trained for, except Samuel was even stronger than I thought. I want to thank everyone on my team, who have all helped me get better year after year.

I don't know what comes next, but I hope to have another fight this year in early December. I'm tired of talk about David Haye because he offended my family, then wouldn't fight. Now he's fighting for the title of London or something like that. If a Haye fight actually happens I could make it short, but I will make it last and I will enjoy it, then I will knock him out in the 12th round. I hope a fight with either he or (Alexander) Povetkin happens this year, otherwise, whatever. I'm not worried about it.

There's the Klitschkos and then there's everybody else, added trainer Emanuel Steward, who seems to be enjoying the European tour, retirement padding ride.

I'm not even going to say the names of people who won't fight. This will never happen in boxing again, where there are brothers who no top contender wants to fight even for championships and big paydays. It doesn't matter who's next, they're all the same as far as I'm concerned. The most logical fight next would be Tomasz Adamek, if possible, so we might aim for him. He'd be a good opponent for (a fight in) the US because he can fill arenas on the east coast. He beat Chris Arreola, which I didn't think he'd do, and at least he really wants to fight.

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Klitschko closed the show early enough for the crowd to make the final trains for Frankfurt's vibrant riverfront pubs and clubs. The arena, which had been evacuated earlier for some sort of undisclosed emergency, seemingly emptied like a fast forward time lapse immediately after post fight fireworks and Klitschkos brief speech to the swarm.

That may have been helped by the security team, as soon the only people left in the place were technicians and a few hundred partiers in the sweet, makeshift VIP section on the arena floor. Time for Klitschko Promotions version of the walk out bout. Re-que the buffets, refill the glass. Try a little Peach Melba with that Sherry-basted slab. Stadium lights became part of the DJ set. At first, Vitalis wife and son were the only ones on the dance floor.

With various high-end liquor stations staffed by formally festive troops happy hosts and hostesses, folks got loose quicker than Peter lost two-armed ammo. It was Ukrainian vodka hangover prep time for some who aimed to drink their euros worth, but still a family type scene with no visible fools.

For now, it seems like the Klitschkos private party in the heavyweight division could go on indefinitely. There are a lot of football stadiums in Germany, and the K2 fight night road show is a proven success. The biggest question could be how long even minimally qualified opponents will be available.

Cuff time critics will minimize the victory and those critics will be wrong.

Sometimes the energy from a heavyweight fight seems so strong you get a tangible sense of awesome power, like watching early morning stars above a deserted Hoover Dam outside Vegas and listening to the crackling buzz of electric lines.

There was that kind of juice for some of the Larry Holmes, Mike Tyson, or Evander Holyfield fights I saw in the 80s-90s. And yes, for a couple rounds there was that kind of aura emitting from the ring in Frankfurt.

For historical perspective, think Holmes TKO 10 David Bey in 1985. Holmes arguably reached a performance peak that was the highest of the modern era, if not in the history of the sport. Bey took on a near prime Holmes with approximately the success Peter had. Peter would probably beat David Bey 10 times out of ten, and that's no insult to Bey.

Such chronological comparisons will always be unproven, but at times Klitschko looked incomparable to all but the very best in history.

Just because Klitschko made beating Peter look easy doesn't mean it would have been for anyone else. Peter was in much better shape here than against Vitali in 08.

Peter looked dejected in his corner after the contest, but he had nothing to be ashamed of. He had fought hard, if ineffectively, against the best big boxer on the planet in what might have been Klitschkos best overall showing.

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Tonights pre-entrance video extravaganza featured a series of clips in which Klitschko was seamlessly inserted into old frames with Muhammad Ali in iconic footage that presented them as contemporary equals. Though Ali was given proper prestige, it was still a bit of a presumptive stretch. Conscientiously classy Klitschko should continue to let his actions speak louder than his words.

Well give Klitschko, who acted more cocky than usual during the promotion, a pass for getting a little foot loose on some holy boxing ground.

Frankfurt's favorite son is probably Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, whose two-part take on the Faust saga covered many of the same philosophical issues of truth, love and perception that come up when discussing the heavyweight landscape and Klitschkos all-time place in it.

During Klitschkos early run through contention he showed flaws and paid for them.

Now hes improving on excellence ala the great Manny Pacquiao.

Klitschko isnt Ali, but in what probably amounts to this second stage of Klitschkos championship status, it looks like someone will have to deal with quite a devil if anybodys going to beat the worthy champ.

Go on, say it. If only for Saturday in Frankfurt with around 40,000 witnesses.

Klitschko.

Great.