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Toughness and legitimate punching power are attributes that every fighter wishes they were blessed with and possessed. Neither characteristic can be learned or taught. However, possessing a great chin and one punch fight-altering power can be a curse for some fighters who become intoxicated by it.

Having trained with and being exposed to world ranked fighters from flyweight through heavyweight who either had a concrete chin or authentic one punch fight-altering power in either hand was very enlightening as to the mindset some of those fighters approach boxing or a particular bout with.

Fighters who know that their last line of defense is their cast-iron chin never think they can be hurt by any opponent - regardless of his resume or reputation. When preparing for a fight that's always in the back of their mind. They'll push themselves in training and work on whatever it is that they have to for the particular opponent they'll soon be facing, but inside they believe so implicitly that they can't be hurt and because of that their opponent will at some point break mentally and/or physically. And when that happens they will take control of the fight and therefore will have not been hurt by the few corners they may have cut during training. That said, it didn't always bail them out and there were nights that they thought during the fight that they'd wished they hadn't cut a corner here or there.

Sometimes when fighters are truly great punchers or inhumanly tough they can fall prey to the voice in their head that says, "you don't have to run as far today or spar that many rounds today." Or perhaps getting low takes a little too much effort and it's really difficult to concentrate on making the guy miss and then making him pay. My chin is so hard I'll sacrifice and take a few on the way in because I can take it. And the puncher always thinks he can get by with a little less and regardless of a rough going during a patch or two during the fight their power will bail them out and always will be the difference. Again, on that night they can't deliver that punch or their opponent takes it, they regret not pushing a little more during their preparation for the bout, the only thing they have complete control over.

It was something out of this world to have been in the gym with and spar/train with fighters who were off the chart tough. I'm talking about middleweights who really believed they could've walked through heavyweight life-takers like George Foreman and Earnie Shavers. However, there was one small problem with that type mindset with some of the fighters blessed with so much power or who could take such a great punch. And that was it sometimes led to them training lazy.

The mindset that they're so sure that their opponent can't hurt or stop them, sometimes leads them into having a false sense of security. And in turn they'll not refine their defense because subconsciously they think they can out-tough the opponent when the fight is on the line and defense isn't as important to them as it is other fighters.

In boxing little things make all the difference in the world. Therefore that super tough middleweight because of his "I'm impervious to whatever my opponent does" mindset traps him into thinking that defense and trying to make the other guy miss isn't as important to him as much as it is to other fighters.

The same type of mindset hurts fighters who can really punch. How many fighters in history have there been who can really punch - but they don't throw non-stop punches in bunches even though they're told every day in the gym how important it is for them to do it.

Unless you've been around it or experienced that mindset yourself it's hard to pick it up watching a fighter in the ring during his bout. Often the fighter himself doesn't even realize he's of that mindset. When training really gets intense and a fighter who was a born puncher or blessed with a cast-iron chin has to push they'll sometimes lie to themselves because inside they're saying I can turn it on during the heat of battle and my power or toughness will make up for the little things I didn't do all the way in training.

There's been a plethora of fighters who never reached their full potential because they had such an over-load of power and or toughness to the point in which they invariably cheated themselves because of their unyielding belief that their toughness and power would always carry the day. Some of the fighters I'm talking about made it as far as fighting for a world title and others never became more than a journeyman.

A fighter born with one-punch altering power or off the chart toughness can often be hindered by it because they think that's all they need. Sadly some fighters because they don't all look at the big picture and think beyond one fight at a time never make the money or achieve the type success that their toughness and power should have reaped them.

There's never been a fighter who stopped every opponent he ever fought. And every fighter is prone to being stopped and/or knocked out. Toughness and power aren't enough - but they are one helluva start if the fighter incorporates a little defense and learns how to deliver his power.

The fighters who blend it all are the fighters we know of and make up boxing's rich history. And the fighters who aren't capable of that end up as journeymen or less.

The reason I didn't mention the boxers who are naturally talented is because they know when the pressure is on they know they can fight defensively and protect themselves, something the tough guys and punchers don't have to fall back on.

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