

## Tommy Gets Z Silent Treatment: Ocho Cinco Brags, Backs Off....WOODS

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 23 March 2011 16:01

---



*Tommy Z soaking up wisdom from Hall of Fame trainer Manny Steward in NYC on Wednesday. (Chris Farina-Top Rank)* I'm guessing that the master media manipulator Ocho Cinco-Chad Johnson is just stirring the pot, looking to get some cheap pub, and he has no intention of following through on his posturing, of actually boxing fellow NFLer Tom Zbikowski.

But just in case he isn't, and his Twitter war is something more than just a brand awareness campaign, let me try and persuade Ocho to find other folly to delve into. Because he doesn't want, or shouldn't want, a piece of Tommy Z, who fights this Saturday on the Yuriorkis Gamboa-Jorge Solis Top Rank undercard which unfolds at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City.

Tommy Z had a 75-15 amateur record. This isn't some Toughman level dude just thrown on the undercard as a freak show attraction. (Not that Arum would EVER do that cough cough Butterbean.) Yes, he's 2-0 as a pro, but this kid has a solid foundation in pugilism, and that's

## Tommy Gets Z Silent Treatment: Ocho Cinco Brags, Backs Off....WOODS

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 23 March 2011 16:01

---

going to get that much more solid when he starts working with Emanuel Steward, the Hall of Fame trainer, after his Saturday clash with 0-0-1 Caleb Grummet of Michigan.

Ocho's last Tweet in his Twitter war with Z, which ran two weeks ago, was this:

"in all seriousness I'd give you the ass whooping I owe Ray Lewis so let's go, n any of your other teammates can get beat up 2"

Then, silence. He promised a whupping, and then when invited to cash the check his mouth wrote, the wide receiver clammed up.

"In all seriousness, Top Rank and I would like to extend an invitation to Chad Ocho Cinco and his agent to make this fight happen," the 25-year-old Illinois native wrote in response.

Crickets.

Z followed up. "I would like to personally invite @ochoCinco to my fight this Saturday in Vegas, ON ME...Come out and do some advanced scouting for May," Tweeted the ex Notre Dame All-American who plays safety for the Baltimore Ravens. He then sent out a shot of himself in the gym, but Ocho by then had moved on, to the myriad of topics which rush through a brain which seems like it should be overwhelmed by the sheer number of topics, spewed out with the precision and focus of material that comes out of a wood chipper.

I asked Z at a Wednesday NYC luncheon hosted by Top Rank if he'd still give the Bengals Ocho a shot in the ring if the All-Pro receiver asked for it. He would, he indicated. Zbikowski however dismissed Ocho's seriousness by saying, "But he's playing soccer, if that answers your question."

And if he gets serious, after his tryout with Sporting Kansas City of Major League Soccer, then?

"Yeah," said Zbikowski, who by the way has a level of darkness and hardness in his eyes which would send me to the soccer field if I were Ocho...

No one of course should hold their breath for an NFLer vs. NFLer showdown. Ocho is brash, and his flight of ideas can make you think he's a candidate for meds, but he's no fool. He knows damn well Z would drop him and stop him.

So, we wonder, is Z just dabbling? Is this just something to pass the time until the NFL owners and the players find enough common ground to get back to work?

Steward says no. He worked with Z for a few days in Vegas recently and was pleasantly surprised. Z showed good skills, nice footwork. And he also showed Steward a picture, taken in March 1998. Young Tommy is standing next to Steward (Funny aside: I said, "You look just the same now, Manny!" I said. "Eff you, Mike," the trainer responded, laughing.). This picture was snapped when Steward was working with Lennox Lewis before his fight with Shannon Briggs. The trainer said his nephew remembered Zbikowski, in fact, because he used to spar Kronk

## Tommy Gets Z Silent Treatment: Ocho Cinco Brags, Backs Off....WOODS

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 23 March 2011 16:01

---

kids.

Steward isn't going to promote Z as the next big thing, or even the next semi big thing. First, he wants to see him spar with top echelon guys, like Chad Dawson, and Andy Lee, then Steward said, "We'll see where he's at. He's testing the waters. We'll see his potential as a pro.

NOTE: Highlights from Zbikowski's fight on the non-televised undercard of Saturday's Yuriorkis Gamboa-Jorge Solis world featherweight championship fight, in Atlantic City, will be shown by HBO on "Boxing After Dark," beginning at 9:45 p.m. ET/PT (delayed on the West Coast). This will mark Tommy Z's first fight with Hall of Fame trainer Emanuel Steward working his corner.

### [Comment on this article](#)

#### **amayseng says:**

why ocho, why?

such a media whore it isnt even funny anymore.

chad is too old to play at a good level in the nfl let alone box Z.

hopefully Z punches him out on the field next season..

#### **dino da vinci says:**

"Crickets". Got to love EM!

Let's reserve this space for the brave guys, and ONLY the brave guys that actually fight. (Sounds like it came from "My Cousin Vinny") O isn't boxing anybody. Ever. Or playing soccer. Ever. In fact, how guys like him, TO, and Moss even get the type of money they do is mind boggling. If the three of them ever got into a championship ring humming contest with the legendary Bill Russell, (Greatest team player in the history of organized sports, or disorganized sports, for that matter) they'd get pelted. First, he could fire his rings at them either shotgun style, or individually, all depending on his mood. Of course, he wouldn't have to worry about incoming either. Ricochets and rebounds? Considering he was the greatest rebounder ever, he'd garner every last one as well. Maybe Ocho could challenge Bill to a one-on-one! Smart money says, even at his advanced age, Bill would ElectrOcute him. Tell'em to go annoy somebody else, maybe in bowling... like Johnny Petraglia. (Bet Petraglia!)

#### **brownsugar says:**

although I wouldn't go near Tommy Z in bar fight... I hope he fulfills his boxing fantasy by taking

## Tommy Gets Z Silent Treatment: Ocho Cinco Brags, Backs Off....WOODS

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 23 March 2011 16:01

---

out a few more bums and calling it quits.. football is his his proper environment, not boxing.