

Heavyweight Stan Ward

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He crossed gloves with three world champions and did battle with several top contenders. In the mid- and late-1970s he was considered one of the best young heavyweights in the world. Stan Ward would for the better part of five years be in and out of the heavyweight top ten, but never received a title shot. For all of his hulking size, Stan lacked two important assets needed to compete with the top echelon heavyweights. He lacked the big punch and a solid chin.

Stan turned pro in 1974 and quickly established himself as a heavyweight with promise. In 1975 he fought draws with Johnny Boudreaux and Pat Duncan. In 1976 Stan entered the world ratings with a decision over Mac Foster and a stunning knock out over Jeff Merritt.

On September 14, 1977, Stan met rugged Ron Lyle in Las Vegas. After ten grueling rounds, Lyle was awarded the decision. After Stan's game showing against Lyle, he returned to California and outscored future champion Mike Weaver. In his next fight, clever Randy Stephens upset Stan. As Stan entered 1979 his record stood at 10-2-2 and it looked as if he was going to be a mainstay in the talent rich ratings. All that came crashing down in his next bout: a rematch with Mike Weaver. The murderous punching Weaver halted Stan in the ninth round and sent Ward's career reeling.

It would be over a year before Stan got back into the ring, but he quickly added three bouts to his win column. On February 7, 1981, Stan met Greg Page in Atlantic City. Page's current dilemma has been well documented. Most remember Greg as an out of shape ex-champion. At one time, though, Greg was a very good boxer. If you ever get the chance, watch a tape of Greg's bouts with Scott Ledoux and Marty Monroe. At that time Page was awesome! He would also prove to be too much for Stan halting him in the seventh round.

The loss to Page was really the beginning of the end for Stan. He would get his share of wins, but in the important matches his chin would betray him. In 1982 Gerrie Coetzee stopped him in two rounds. In 1983 Mike Weaver again halted him in nine rounds. Stan had one bout in 1984 and was inactive in 1985. In 1986 he was stopped again, this time by Larry Alexander in two rounds. Stan would take off over three years and when he returned he scored a couple of insignificant wins and faded from the scene.