

LOTIERZO'S LOWDOWN: Physicality Too Much For Dawson

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Monday, 10 September 2012 13:57



Chad Dawson 31-2 (17) is a very good outside boxer and technician, Andre Ward 26-0 (14) is a terrific inside-outside counter-puncher. Chad Dawson, who is the WBC light heavyweight title holder, may not have been hurt by dropping down to 168 in order to challenge Ward for his WBC/WBA super-middleweight titles this past Saturday night, but he certainly didn't benefit by moving down either.

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Most observers expected a tactical fight between the two young guns, but when all was said and done, the fight turned after Dawson was dropped for the second time in the fight by a Ward lead left hook early in the fourth round. From that point on Dawson fought with little or no initiative and Ward asserted himself more. See, even when you have two technicians facing each other, fighting/boxing still boils down to the physicality of the two fighters. Sure, after the fight it's easy to say that Ward is the better technical and fundamentally grounded fighter, and he is. However, the fight turned more so because Ward had the strength and power advantage and once he delivered it, Dawson had two problems.

For starters, he needed to compose himself enough to where Ward didn't take total liberties with him and second, he faced the uphill climb in that he didn't possess the needed physical strength and power to keep Ward off of him and make him fight the fight he needed Andre to in order for him to have a chance to win. Once Dawson realized Ward could hurt him and that he couldn't make him do anything he didn't want to, he slowly began to accept that this was going to be Ward's night.

It's great for one fighter to enter the ring with the perfect X's and O's battle plan, but if he's not physical enough to execute his X's and O's, the plan goes out the window. On this night Andre Ward was the fighter who had the right game plan and the physical means to carry it out. For the first two rounds Ward was happy stepping off and back thus letting Dawson push the fight. After two rounds Dawson and his corner felt confident that they had Ward sort of on the run and thinking he was just going to look for the counter without trying to impose himself on Chad. The only problem was Ward's fighting in retreat was more so of his own volition than it was the case of Dawson forcing him to do it. Once Ward had Dawson starting to push the fight and stepping to him it was easier for Andre to time Chad with his lead right to the body followed by the left hook up to the chin.

After Ward dropped Dawson with the follow up hook in the third round, Chad went on high alert and was more concerned about Andre getting off with the hook than he was in executing his own offense. Early in the fourth round, Dawson was still paralyzed psychologically by being dropped by Ward's left hook so much so that he became a sitting duck for it when Ward tricked him and cut loose with it as a lead shot. After Dawson was dropped for the second time by Ward's hook, Chad only fought enough to keep Ward from really walking him down.

Ward is so smart and such a thinking fighter. After basically throwing twos and threes during the first couple rounds, he started throwing combination's of fours and fives once he sensed Dawson doubted himself and he knew nothing with any bad intentions was going to come his way either before or after he got off. Another thing that Ward is great at is -- mixing up his

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punches. You just can't guess or try to anticipate what punch or combo he's throwing next because he constantly changes it up....actually, it's something to behold watching Ward diversify his offense during the course of his bouts.

Some may try and point to Dawson dropping down to 168 as to why he lost, and as I said earlier, I don't think it helped him. But based on the fight and Ward's underrated physicality, I don't think Ward would've been derailed by seven pounds. Andre just turned out to be the better technician and physically stronger fighter and that's all there was to it.

Based on the stoppage win for Ward and the way Dawson submitted in the 10th round, Andre Ward has ascended to perhaps being the most complete and best pound-for-pound fighter in professional boxing. Sadly, on the other hand, some will question Dawson's character. It must have been disheartening for Dawson's trainer John Scully to try and light a fire under Chad to no avail.

Ward is a terrific fighter. All substance, no flash, thinking every second. Speed may give him trouble, but other than that, he's going to be nearly impossible to beat. He can do everything, and once he finds his opponents weakness, he forces them to fight from it for the duration of the fight or however long it lasts. He's also very tough and determined mentally and isn't above fighting a little Hopkins-like. In other words he'll do whatever is necessary stylistically to gain the advantage in the fight.

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dino da vinci says:

Haven't read the article yet but I agree with Frank.

deepwater says:

Well I read the article and I disagree. this fight was won with the mind. Ward used his kill or be killed mentality and punished dawson because he has the stronger will power. Hunter and ward were very happy calling dawson the bigger fighter and the better boxer. they wanted chad to believe he was bigger then ward and physically he is but his heart doenst compare to ward.

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dawson went into the fight believing ward, he was the bigger and better fighter, well after round 1 chad just wanted to survive. it was a total mind job. good work team ward. scully please tell chad to retire. he dont got the killer in him.

Radam G says:

Nice copy, Super Puglistic Scribe F-Lo. I READ you LOUD and CLEAR. And I Roger DAT. Holla!

ali says:

deepwater I was with u until u said Chad should retire your overreacting. He is still the champ at 175 and maybe making 168 affected him more then we know. Let see how he looks at 175 first before u start to make crazy comments. Hopefully he'll fights Pascal again or maybe he Froch and looks good beating them if so he may get a rematch with Ward @175 (he probably still is going to get his *** whoop) but let give him a fair shake he deserves that.

deepwater says:

He won't be the same after this fight. He never got beat like that before. He also quit. His last few fights he hasn't looked good. He has taken big shots going back to adamak. I don't see him making any adjustments to his style even though he as had 5 trainers. , scully begs him every fight to fight but he doesn't. Of course he will defend his belt again but I don't see him fighting past another 2/3 fights

Matthew says:

Great analogy at the end of the article. Ward IS very Hopkins-like in that he knows how to fight inside, is physically strong, knows how to use his head to mark his territory(without being overtly dirty), and has the ability take away your best weapon. There is nothing flashy about Ward, but he is very smart and technically sound. He is also humble (which Hopkins isn't), grounded, and speaks thoughtfully. This kid is good for boxing. There isn't anyone at 168 or 175 that I would pick to beat him. Now that his hand has healed, let's hope he stays active and doesn't fall into the trap of fighting only once or twice a year.

Real Talk says:

Hey F-Lo, I said it a while back maybe over a year ago. Andre S.O.G. Ward is like a young executioner. The same executioner who broke the record for middleweight title defenses an is an all time great who would've been champion in any era. Hopkins was one of the most complete fighters I've ever seen and Andre Ward is cut from the same cloth. I'm going to keep on watching an enjoying his fights. Blessings