

TSS Trainer of the Year: Jack Loew

Written by Michael Woods
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The trainer of the year award, when given by the Boxing Writers Association, has always been bestowed to a “name” guy.

The Futch-Condon Award, which came in to existence in 1990, has gone to George Benton, Eddie Futch and Manny Steward two times apiece. Dan Birmingham, basically an unknown before Winky Wright came to widespread prominence, has also taken the title twice.

This year, TSS is pumped to name Kelly Pavlik’s trainer, Jack Loew, as TSS Trainer of the Year.

We are jazzed to see Loew get the nod, over Joe Calzaghe’s trainer (his dad Enzo) and Roger Mayweather (who trains a fighter with so much fighting acumen, he could work his own corner on fight night), because before this year, just about the only people who knew who Jack Loew was, outside of his family, were the folks who had their driveway paved by the man.

That’s right, a full-time driveway paver is the 2007 Trainer of the Year. Ain’t that a kick?

On Sept. 29, no-name Loew stood behind his fighter, the 25-year-old who he’d crafted as a pugilist since he came into Loew’s gym 16 years ago, and across from Jermain Taylor, and his trainer, Hall of Famer Emanuel Steward.

No-name Loew...except to Pavlik, and the other kids who train in his Southside Boxing Club on Eerie St. in Youngstown... and the people who have contracted to use Loew’s company, Driveway Kings, to seal their driveway.

For the last 10 years, Loew has been sealing driveways, and then heading to his little gym, the one in which the ring takes up 50% of the floor space.

So, you had the driveway paver taking on the Hall of Famer, the trainer of Thomas Hearn, Lennox Lewis and Wladimir Klitschko, and two handfuls of Kronk stalwarts, in AC.

You had the paver, the one without the showy credentials, win.

Kind of cheers you up, when you’re feeling like the underdog, like fortune is conspiring to hold you down, that you will not ever make it over the hump, doesn’t it?

Only in boxing, baby.

Loew told TSS that he will continue to pave driveways, just maybe downsize from 10 a day to 5 or 6.

It’s safe to say that you’ll be the only millionaire driveway paver in the world, huh Jack?

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"Yes," he said, laughing. "But I'll enjoy each one more. Now I know I don't have to do it for the money. I can talk to people now. The only way I won't be doing it is if I add more fighters."

It can happen, every now and again, in the NCAA hoops tourney, when you get a legend against a man heading up a bunch of Cinderellas. Remember lil' George Mason in 2006? GM was led by coach Jim Larranaga, and they toppled top seed Connecticut, overseen by the marquee name, Jim Calhoun, to enter the Final Four.

But usually, in sports, by the time Stairway To Heaven comes on, at the Big Dance, the upstart, the no-name, has been sent packing.

In AC, Loew, the part-timer, didn't fold. He didn't sweat bullets, and let Steward's trash talking before the fight knock him or his guy off message.

"Really, I think this will be a competitive fight," said Steward before the title scrap. "For one round. Pavlik's never been at the level Jermain's been at. You can't compare the fighters Jermain has fought to the ones he has fought. Who has he fought?"

We know the answer now.

A well school hitter, with physical and mental fortitude.

And while we all know that boxing isn't all that much of a team sport when it's man against man in center ring, without Jack Loew's caring and perseverance and charity because he worked for a loooooong time for no compensation, Kelly Pavlik would not have had the opportunity, most likely, to fight for the middleweight championship of the world.

A paver, a part-time trainer, is TSS Trainer of the Year.

Only in boxing, baby.