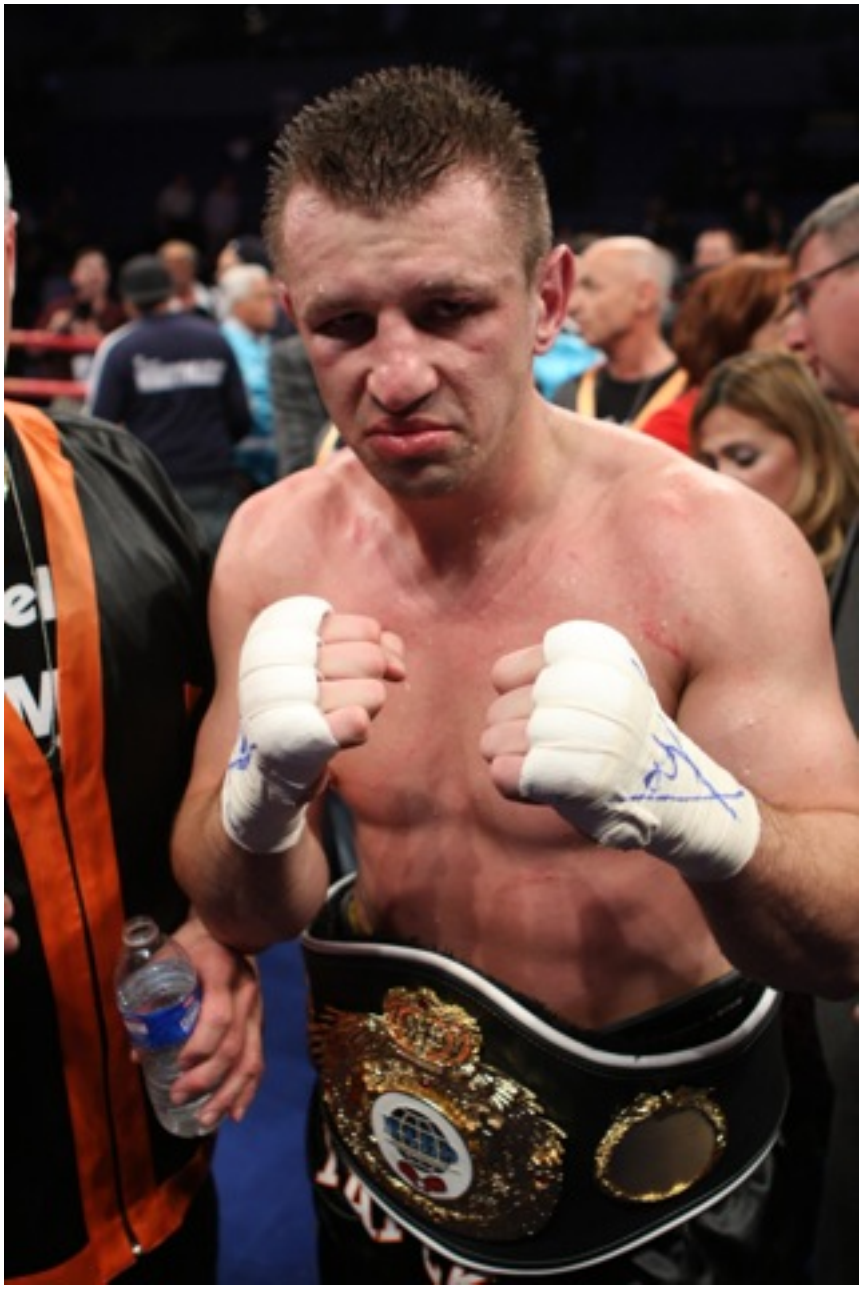

We all believe he's not going to win. We all realize it's ridiculous to even think of such a possibility. Yet something lurks in the back of the mind. Something that's hard to quantify or even to explain.

We dismiss the thought but, well, there's something there, lurking like a dark shadow down a lonely street.

It's probably nothing. Not a danger at all. Just a shadow. But something is there. We can feel it

but want to ignore it because even the thought of Tomasz Adamek finding a way to dethrone Vitali Klitschko of his share of the heavyweight title is, in a word, delusional.

Or is it?

When one first looks at Adamek one sees a smallish heavyweight with minimal power and not particularly fast hands or feet. One does not see a defensive wizard in the Willie Pep/Floyd Mayweater, Jr. mold either. One sees just a prize fighter getting by.

At 34, Adamek is no kid, so youth is not on his side. He's no giant at 6-1 ½. His 75-inch reach is nothing special, especially when compared with Klitscko's massive 80 inch wingspan. He is, at first glance, ordinary, so the gamblers and the wise guys and the old trainers who have seen it all nod in agreement when Saturday's title fight between them in Wroclaw, Poland is discussed. He's got no chance.

Then the fight starts and things look different because less people than you would expect that say he has no chance do so with the kind of conviction one would assume and the reason is simple. There's something about this guy. Something that makes you wonder. A shadow of something you can't define.

First off he knows how to fight. Secondly, he always comes to win. Those things won't change the first time Klitschko's long jab or powerful right hand slam into his face either, as surely they both will.

The question is does he have any answers for that combination because if he doesn't he'll see it until he can't see any more. Resolve alone will not defeat the 40-year-old Klitschko (42-2, 39 KO) but resilience combined with intelligence is worth something in this day and age and Adamek has both.

Add to that the fact he is fighting in his homeland, where the crowd is expected to be heavily for him and you wonder. Certainly you don't wonder enough to invest the kids' college fund in the underdog nor can you intelligently come up with a way he leaves Stadion Wroclaw as WBC

heavyweight champion…and yet there is an unease about it simply because Tomasz Adamak has always seemed to end up being more than he appears.

“I’m looking every place I can to hit him,’’ he said this week. “My heart is good. My spirit is good. Size is not so important in the ring. Heart is important.

“I believe you have to have the right frame of mind to get in the ring. I know how to beat Vitali. I know that he will be expecting somebody who will be intimidated, even scared. This will not be the case for me.

“He will not get a fighter standing in front of him, waiting for execution and a payday. He will get somebody with no fear and the will and skill to win. That will be the deciding factor on September 10.’’

Coming from many opponents those are only words, as empty as their hearts too often prove to be. In Adamek they seem like more however because he has long been through this underdog dilemma.

He was not supposed to beat Steve Cunningham but he did. He was not supposed to be big enough to get anywhere near a heavyweight title fight even in today’s watered down division but he did.

Truth be told, it’s certainly not like he’s faced down the cream of the heavyweight crop but there is no cream in the heavyweight division any more unless you like sour cream. So what does it matter who he’s beaten to get here?

He won decisions from second tier guys like Jason Estrada, Michael Grant and even journeyman Kevin McBride, plugging along to victory each time in reliable but unspectacular fashion. Then again, once there was a time when HBO’s Larry Merchant thought Chris Arreola was a legitimate heavyweight contender (which he was not) and Adamek beat him up as if he was slapping around a drum set so there you go.

Not many people gave him a chance that night, either but there is no comparison between Arreola and Klitscko except that both are limited. Klitschko, however, is Joe Louis when compared with Arreola so it is difficult to know what Adamak's five wins as a heavyweight (including his stoppage of the heartless foul Pole, Andrew Golota) really mean.

Saturday night that question will be answered and the assumption is what we'll learn is that Tomasz Adamak has no shortage of heart but simply isn't big enough or powerful enough to keep Vitali Klitschko from turning his face into goulash.

It's the logical conclusion. But then what's logical about boxing?

Nothing.

And so you wonder. Is he a shadow or something more?

Comment on this article

**Radam G says:**

Oh SH*T! I guess reader cockycola -- I mean mortcola -- is going to go after superfight scribe Ron B now for thinking. Doc VK is a GREAT BIG BUM! Probably the greatest B Class fighting heavy in the history of the game. Adamek has a chance better than any of the other marshmellows and stiffs that the doctor has put down. Holla!

**ali says:**

I really hope adamek wins im sick and tired of watching them boring klits.

**DaveB says:**

Wait a minute. I've got a weak heart. Radam G and Ali agreeing? Good Lord!!!

**ali says:**

[quote=daveb;9250]wait a minute. I've got a weak heart. Radam g and ali agreeing? Good lord!!!

lmao!!!!!!! **FighterforJC says:**

The closest possible scenario/comparison I could come up with was James Braddock vs Max Baer.