

Chisora's Lack Of Experience Cost Him, As Vitali Was Beatable

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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On a night in which 40 year-old WBC heavyweight title holder Vitali Klitschko 44-2 (40) possessed nothing more than a push jab and an arching right hand supported by legs that looked like they could go at anytime, he won a comfortable decision (on my card, 117-112) over British challenger Dereck Chisora 15-3 (9). And at the end of the day it was Klitschko's experience in big fights that was the difference in him making the eighth successful defense of his WBC title.

Not since Vitali fought Lennox Lewis back in June of 2003 has he been pushed around the ring

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and forced to back up like he was by Chisora. This is one fight where it cannot be said that Vitali's awkward style and/or size were a major factor as to why he won a boxing match. There wasn't one punch Klitschko threw or landed that unnerved Chisora or knocked him off his game. The difference was, Vitali filled the gaps of inactivity and space when nothing was happening by letting his hands go and Chisora didn't, something that innately comes with experience. Chisora only having 17 fights before tangling with Klitschko hurt him, but he had no choice but to go through with the fight.

Klitschko's shots weren't big or fight altering punches, but they had enough on them to occupy Chisora just enough so he couldn't maintain the pressure he was applying, and at the same time they allowed Vitali to get out of harms way. For rounds and spurts of the fight Chisora had Vitali on the run and fighting to keep from being overwhelmed more-so than to inflict damage.

Whenever Chisora let his hands go the second his front foot was planted, he scored well and Vitali broke off the exchange. However, he just didn't do it enough and that was the opening Vitali needed to flurry and score to pull out enough rounds to earn a unanimous decision victory, just not by the ridiculous scores of 118-110 twice and 119-111 turned in by the judges.

Prior to the fight I questioned whether or not Chisora had enough punch to make Klitschko do what he didn't want to. It turns out that he does. His only problem was delivering it with any regularity, but that'll change with experience. Fighters that have a lot of experience in big fights instinctively let their hands go when they're being pushed in a close fight.

How many times did we witness the likes of Muhammad Ali, Larry Holmes, Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis let their hands go on certain nights when they were being pushed by a young hungry challenger like Chisora? And as you saw with them, as it was with Klitschko this past Saturday night, it was the difference in them keeping their title.

It was also pointed out here before the fight that Chisora was different than other swarmers in that he looked to jab his way in. When he jabbed at Vitali during the bout he often was able to land left and right hooks to the body and head. And that's because he was forced to move his feet when he jabbed, which got him inside of Klitschko's guard and in better range to connect.

Again, he didn't stick to this strategy enough and it wasn't because Klitschko did anything to

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make him change up, he just lost focus and stopped. Actually, Vitali didn't do a thing differently at all during the fight, other than looking to shoot the jab and right hand and then slide out to avoid the incoming Chisora.

One thing Chisora did do well during the fight was he applied constant pressure, only his tendency to do it in a straight line made it easier for Klitschko nullify it. He also didn't blend it enough with letting his hands go on the way in. He left too much empty space which Vitali filled that paid dividends in that he scored points and blunted Chisora from seizing the tempo of the fight to the point where Klitschko couldn't get it back. By not staying busy, Chisora let Klitschko get away and reboot for the next surge he was about to come with.

Vitali looked tired and his legs didn't look that sturdy at the end of the fight. No doubt his age was a contributing factor to that. But Dereck Chisora made him work and forced him to use his legs defensively more than any other fighter he's ever faced. I think the signs are there that Vitali is on the decline and if he doesn't get out soon, he probably won't retire with his title.

Granted, his next likely opponent will be former title holder David Haye. No....Haye doesn't fight anything like Chisora, but you can't argue that David is not getting the fight with Vitali at the perfect time if it happens later this year.