I do think Emanuel Steward has finally gotten to Wladimir Klitchko. He threw with nasty intent against Jean-Marc Mormeck from the Esprit Arena in Dusseldorf, Germany on Saturday, and while it must be said Mormeck's effort was sub-pathetic, closed the show with a fearsome combo in round four of a severe mismatch. Steward had begged and pleaded with Wlad for years to look to close the show in a timely fashion, and not take so long to take minor league chances against foes who are just about out on their feet. From the get go, basically, Wlad on this night, tried to give the people what they wanted. The end came at 1:12 of the fourth.

The punchcounters had the loser landing three, count them three punches on this night. I said before that he needed to employ the Corrie Sanders method, and look to land everything in the first or second round on Wlad. He did the opposite, looking to land nothing. I suppose he could have done himself more of a disservice, if he looked for a place to lay down in round two, but all in all, nobody would be up in arms if he went away with his pile of money and did something else with his life.

While your assessment of Wlad must be tempered by the understanding that Mormeck's effort

was pretty embarassing, little brother's shots looked crisp and clean, and on this night, he finally showed me that he'd be favored to beat his big brother Vitali if and when they ever clashed, in an alternate universe.

Wladimir talked to Chris Mannix after. He said he clinched in the first, because Mormeck led with his head. He was happy with the result, that he took care of him within a good amount of time, and he respects Mormeck for showing up, and trying. "He tried, he tried," the winner maintained. He said he defended his territory, and didn't want to back up, so that's why he clinched. He said there are plenty of foes out there, such as David Price, Tyson Fury, Alexander Povetkin, Seth Mitchell, and Mannix mentioned Cris Arreola. Wlad said he thinks Arreola deserves a fight and that should be the next clash for him. Manny Steward said that his guy is not nasty like Liston, and that he worked within Wlad's personality to get it done on this night. Steward said he'd like to fight Arreola, because he'd like a fight in the US. Steward said there are no real challenges out there, that Mitchell isn't ready, and that Povetkin has shown no interest. "It's a case where he doesn't have much of a challenge," he said.

Steward said Wlad is still improving. He said his one punch ability is maybe the best, but that he doesn't have the mindset to show that off.

Klitschko (age 35; 6-6 1-2; born in Kazahkstan, grew up in Ukraine; 56-3 entering) was 244.7, and the ex cruiserweight champion Mormeck (age 39; 5-11 1/2; from France; 3-0 as a heavyweight; 36-4 entering) was 216 on Friday. The men were supposed to clash in December, but Klitschko had to have surgery for a kidney stone, and that postponed the event, which was seen by 50,000 fans, a sellout at Esprit.

The fight ran and streamed on EPIX in the US. This was the third consecutive heavyweight title fight EPIX presented by EPIX, on succeeding Saturdays. Bruce Beck, Freddie Roach and Dan Rafael did the call for EPIX.

The typical glitzy production, with lasers, and lights and video bits, looked swell, though the French and German spoken by the boxers wasn't translated.

Luis Pabon was the ref. He worked the Alexander Povetkin-Marco Huck bout last week.

In the first, Klitschko, looking to get 50 KOs, passing Joe Louis and Jack Dempsey for KOs by heavyweight champs, held and clinched Mormeck, who looked to get inside, but did nothing when there. Mormeck, fighting for the first time since December 2010, led with his head, and threw only a few punches. He was trained in the bob and weave style by Kevin Rooney, but Rooney couldn't be present for the first two weeks of camp, so Team Mormeck brought in another trainer. Mormeck didn't land one single blow in the first, for the record.

In the second, Mormeck dipped his head to the right, and Wlad corraled him with the left forearm. Pabon from the start warned the fighters about clinchiness. Left hooks looked heavy from Wlad. A jab-right combo sent Mormeck down at the 1:20 mark. A combo with 15 seconds left buzzed Mormeck again. Roach called Wlad, who he trained for four fights, the "best puncher I ever caught." Mormeck landed a single punch in the round. Rafael said he was battling a cold and taking antibiotics when he came to Germany.

In the third, Wlad did some pummeling, and Mormeck landed three of 15 blows. Wlad' jab was nasty. The men tumbled to the mat near the end of the round, another horrid one for the Frenchman.

In the fourth, a combo finished off the Frenchman. A jab, right follow and left hook had Mormeck out of it. The loser was already headed down from the right. He stood up neat ten, but was groggy and Pabon said no mas.

The matchmaker in me wants to set up a David Haye-Mormeck clash, because these two have so much in common. Haye beat Mormeck when they met in 2007, KO7, but the rules for this scrap would include mandaory retirement for the loser. Maybe it'd be a draw and they could both exit the stage...

Note: Rooney did himself a favor not being present. Mormeck, I must say, might have been fighting a cold or flu, and if that is the case, we can better understand his showing. But to throw about twenty punches over three plus rounds is a stain on his resume.

Comment on this article

amayseng says:

i just watched the knockout, nasty i am not so sure about...

wlad through a mid range of motion half jab and followed with a decent right hand, mormick took it then wlad landed a good left hook to finish him...

it wasnt a nasty blazing mike tyson combination..

it was a mere, out of his weight class, old, no reason to be there 39 year old mormick..

i like wlad and vitali because they are sportsman who conduct themselves professionally but if you want my respect wlad go take out psychopath chisora

DaveB says:

A testament to how great the Klitschko brother are. I'm being sarcastic. I really think their dominance is due to 30% how good they are and 70% how bad their opponents are. Tonight it was - He shows no wear and tear. When Vitali fought Chisora and Chisora took the fight to him it was - He is starting to show his age. Or he was injured or what ever else. Those age revealing fights and injuries happen when some one puts up resistance. But when the opponent is just there for a payday and doesn't do much they are world beaters. When they have a tougher opponent (and there really aren't any out there) they are exposed a little bit. So I think opposition is 70% of the battle for them. That fight was a waste of time. I think Mayweather would have beaten this guy.

rizzle says:

at least he knocked him down for the win. u cant blame Wlad or big bro Vitali for being in the wrong era of heavy weights. i guess they just have to beat up every man that steps up to the plate while it lasts.

gibola says:

Yes, Wlad threw a few punches AFTER he spent three rounds wrestling, grabbing and leaning on Mormeck while the ref stood and admired. I don't know if you guys see it or not, I don't know if I'm the only one who sees it, but Wlad seems to operate outside the normal rules of boxing I've known for 30 years. As long a Wlad is allowed to grab, push, pull and drag fighters around the ring he will not be beaten. Put the ref from Khan-Peterson into a Wlad fight and Wlad will be DQ'd in 4 rounds, but in Europe refs are so in love with the K Bros they ignore the constant fouls.
Wlad didn't go in and knock Mormeck out. In Wlad style he grabbed Mormeck 50 times and tired him out then knocked him out. In one disgraceful moment he wrestled the smaller fighter to the floor and fell on him. He should have been docked 2pts!
No-one can force Wlad to fight inside because the refs allow Wlad to do as he pleases when you get close. Watch the fight again - is that boxing? Is that boxing I repeat? It's more like

wrestling to me. Remember all of Haye's falls to the floor? They were because every time Haye went to punch Wlad's extended left arm went round Haye's neck and pulled him off balance. Last night Wlad's telescopic arm pulled Mormeck's head down every time he got near. Wlad gets away with murder, it's absolute rubbish and I've had enough of it.
Anyone who thinks Wlad is so great go and teach that style to a new generation of boxers and watch the sport disappear in ten years.
Wlad the difference between you and Ali, Holmes, Bowe Lewis is you refuse to EVER exchange punches, you grab, push and punch Wlad, the refs allow you to, no-one can beat you, now retire and spare us anymore of this nonsense and perhaps people can start boxing again because what you do isn't boxing.
That's where I stand on that!

mortcola says:

Well, Gib, while I agree he has developed a bad habit of sloppy clinching, he also controls the action in the ring with some of the sharpest jabs, quickest, best timed combinations, including lead and multiple hooks, we have ever seen from a heavyweight. I think you're exaggerating, even though its an unpleasant tactic. Its only a small part of what is happening in the ring.

amayseng says:

@gibola, i didnt see this full fight but i totally agree with you. i thought the same thing with the haye fight, people were complaining that haye was biiitching out falling to the ground but really he was doing the smart thing by going to the ground because its more tiring and harder on your back to try to hold up 260 lbs half bent over than it is to go down...
i dont think wlad would beat arreola who is tough and lets his punches go on the inside before wlad could grab him. i also think he would lose to psycho path chisora who was able to land some good punches on vitali who has a chin, unlike wlad..

brownsugar says:

This bout went about as expected... a horrid mismatch between a nigh 40 year old cruiserweight who fought at a 28 lb deficit. Even Mormeck mocked Wlad when he laughingly compared him to Mike Tyson,..."I'm not Mike" Mormeck exclaimed...

This fight reminded me of an old Looney Tunes Cartoon Featuring Elmer Fudd shooting fish in a barrell and hunting Ducks with a Bazooka. How easy is it to look impressive while hitting a human punch-bag who won't hit back?

This was another discraceful matchup that actually sold out a 50,000 Arena in Europe where the fans drink more Kbrothers flavored koolaid than anywhere else in the world.
If this fight happened anywhere else in the world,.. the audience would have torched the arena.

brownsugar says:

another no win fight scenario, damned if you do,... damned if you don't

BHarper85 says:

Wow, I can't believe the bias against the Klitschkos I've seen here. It's ridiculous. Wlad did what he was supposed to do. The clinching got old, I agree, but maybe if Mormeck had actually thrown punches when he got inside, Wlad wouldn't have been able to clinch as much. Clinching is also a strategic facet of the sport. Ali used to hit and hold all the time. Watch the first Holyfield-Tyson fight and look at how Holyfield used clinches to wear down Tyson and KO him in the 11th. It was a brilliant performance. I'm not saying Wlad is necessarily on the same level as those guys, but it's obvious to me that a lot of people go into a Klitschko fight looking for ways to detract from their performances, regardless of what happens. It's so lame. Their competition definitely hasn't been great, but they've still dominated for years, and if they were as bad as some people here think they are, that wouldn't have happened.

the Roast says:

Here we go again. Radam, can you please type about the ins and outs of clinching for the newcomers??

gibola says:

@bharper85 - Wlad is totally effective at what he does, I absolutely acknowledge that fact. It's terrifying to admit it but in the environment of last night's fight Joe Frazier wouldn't beat Wlad. He would be held and the ref would not do a thing. I think the clinching isn't a 'small' part of what Wlad does - in last night's fight and the Haye fight it was 50 per cent of what he did. If you put a stopwatch on it he spends more time clinching than punching. Ali, Lewis, Holyfield, Ray Leonard, Mouse Strauss and Buck Smith clinched - but not to the extent, or in the same blatant, non-stop, unabashed manner that Wlad does. I would just say think about why you love boxing and then watch Wlad - is that why we fell in love with the sport? Do we accept that is what the sport has become?
What are the refs seeing? Khan wasn't allowed to grab Peterson. Lennox Lewis was given a final warning for holding against Tyson in the first round (that's round one!) and he held him a fraction of the times Wlad held Mormeck last night.
I love boxing - I can't stand whatever it is Wlad does, I'll watch him again when he gets penalised for his fouls and is actually forced to try boxing instead of wrestling.

ali says:

What did Mormeck do to even get a title shot this is what I hate about boxing...I know it ain't that many good heavyweight contenders out there but damn I could name at least 20 guy who are better then Mormeck....Vlad should be ashamed of his self for even taking a like a fight like this.

mortcola says:

Gibola, APART from the clinching, which I find annoying and not the most developed part of his arsenal, Klitschko is a GREAT classic boxer, with some of the finest abilities to time and place punches at different speeds and angles, not to mention extreme cool, anticipation, and

calculation, as good in some respects as anyone we've ever seen in the division - he is NEVER caught unaware or off-guard, not since the Sanders fight - and his KO percentage has not gone down, so clearly there's some serious punching going on. It is NOT exciting the way our fan-favorites are, because it is never allowed to heat up....but, in answer to your question, for disciplined, classic, precision boxing, 90% of his game makes me look forward to his fights. If he had Larry Holmes' blood-lust - an average puncher but an ATF jab-cross ring general - Wlad would be more enjoyable for the masses. But, it is what it is, and, to be fair, most of his overwhelming wins DID NOT involve much clinching, and were so utterly one-sided that you'd have to be blind not to appreciate the discipline and sheer mastery of the style. You do say you recognize his effectiveness, so, I think you get it.

mortcola says:

Ali, it was a dog of a fight, but every champ has taken a number of fights like this, and to be fair, the K's have always fought the best available - people call them cherry pickers, but nothing could be further from the truth. They have not overlooked any contender. If he gets in the habit of more long-shot, Rocky fights, then I'll be the first one calling them out.

gibola says:

@mortcola - great response - absolutely I get his effectiveness and I see the punches, the combinations, etc. I'm also aware that I've really got a problem with Wlad's style that some others don't share. I see the talent and think he's incredibly disciplined to fight within his limitations at all times. But you must see the clinching, the pulling, the pushing, opponents going onto the floor/thru the ropes in his last two fights - if you don't lose points doing what Wlad did last night - when do you? Anyway, I've had my say and I respect a lot of people disagree. If it's any consolation much as I dislike Wlad, I don't mind Vitali!

Radam G says:

Clinching is the greatest part of the game. It is an offense and defense weapon. And everybodeee and dey momma oughta take a time out and quit bytch complaining about a beautiful part of the game that they apparently don't jack jive about and hate -- bunch of haters.

Every great fighter uses and used to set up all type of a$$ thrashing or surviving. What know nothings need to do is go to American-style football and complain about those dull, long-arse huddles. WTF! That is some weak jive when 22 grown-arse men need that much time to get a play together. [Band hudding! Real cats do the no-hudding thang [sic], babbbbeeeeeee! All those muthasuckas can get a football game plan before the jive starts and keep moving. Well, in boxing you clinch while executing the game plan or fudging up the game plan of the opponent. Now that syet is pure ART and science.

See science suppose to make thinks quicker and better. So it must not be much science needed to play A-style football. See in boxing, it is a great distinction between holding and clinching. [Holding is for ____ _____, and clinching is for the elite and super-super. They know what they are doing. You guys don't.

Anyway, a legal clinch is grabbing an opponent for about three to five seconds and/or until the referee says break. But if you don't break within three seconds after he touches you and the opponent on the shoulders, he then get between you and push you apart. However if one fighter is refusing to let go, the referee get between them then it becomes HOLDING, and tells the fighter such. All da haters of the pugilistic science of CLINCHING ought learn what's up or STFU!

Doc Wlad K did a beautiful job with what was served to him. End of discussion! Holla!

Radam G says:

BTW, SCLA Ali, a fighter can fight whomever he wants to, until the required time to face the recognized top contender.

I know that you are not that naive. You just like to be starting ____ ____! The Brown Bomber Joe Louis fought the "Bum of the Month," then when it was time, he fought the number one contender and had hell with him. But don't let me have to school you. Quit being such a lazy fudger and learn and look up syet for yourself. A person slips more by the tongue then by the foot. Yo' a$$ be slippin' by dat tongue all da time! Heheheheheheheh! Holla!

mortcola says:

All hail Radam, for the main line of boxifilia wise-ness. Remember this lesson, and your life will be better: what is good and what entertains you are not the same thing. What is bad and what displeases you are not the same thing. Know the difference.

amayseng says:

radam and mortcola make excellent points, and i understand clinching as part of the game. i am a huge bernard hopkins fan in all...

but when wlads opponent is so out matched it is not even funny he should not have to resort to excessive clinching and holding...

i think that was the point..

i can see ali clinching due to frazier landing those thudding rib crushing left hooks inside..

but for wlad to hold a near 40 past prime, old slow cruiser weight is shameful and a bit embarrassing...

he should not have to resort to such tactics...

brownsugar says:

Bharper85, it's not bias,..... I don't think I said any bad about Wlad himself,...just the horrific

mismatch the fight was, clinching or not, WK would have won anyway,..... Mormeck was simply not equipped to compete on any level. The fight sounded like an utter mismatch when they introduced it... but as is got closer to the fight,... more and more websites, promoters and publicists talked up Mormecks chances,... eventually enhancing the hype to Tysonesque proportions,.. It would have been better for WK to have fought David Haye again,... Hayes only real crime was going the distance and not being as agressive as he was capable of. Instead we get WK against the french version of Butterbean.

mortcola says:

Amayseng, when a guy is bulling in like that, and you're not ready to just load up the uppercuts, the clinch is a normal and OK thing. Espcially for a guy like Wlad who does not want nor function best in an inside game. One reason Mormeck was so pathetic was that Wlad completely controlled the distance, leaving Mormeck no chance of doing anything from the outside, and by clinching did not let Mormeck move his hands in close. It wasn't pretty, and it was too forceful, hence the ref's warning. But it was part of the game, and part of the dominance.

ali says:

@Mortcola I don't think the Klits are cherry-pickers and I know every champ has fights like this but that don't make it okay...when Roy Jones fought Frazier and I ain't talking about Smoking Joe it was pathetic not cool in anyway and Roy is in my top 3 of favorite fighters of ALL-TIME so im not bias...back in the day it wasn't that bad for a fight fan to see a fight like this cause the could or would see them again in a month...but now the fighters don't fight nearly as much so when they do fight I want to see it against someone who deserves it first and foremost...not somebody who hasn't fought in 2years and has beating at least a decent HW..

ali says:

Vlad should have gave Holyfield a chance before Mormeck...How about Valuev...**** it give James Toney a shot im just saying Mormrck ain't never did **** at heavyweight SMH!!!

DaveB says:

Hey I got a new name - The Clinchko's.

ali says:

Dave B...LMAO!!!!!

gibola says:

"a legal clinch is grabbing an opponent for about three to five seconds and/or until the referee says break. But if you don't break within three seconds after he touches you and the opponent on the shoulders, he then get between you and push you apart. However if one fighter is

refusing to let go, the referee get between them then it becomes HOLDING, and tells the fighter such..."

...so it's the refs not enforcing the rules, which is exactly my point. Let's get some refs who are brave enough to deal with him. Wlad holding on for 3-5 seconds? Sounds good, we can only dream...

Radam G says:

People always hate what they don't understand. And mock what they don't like and cannot change.

Doc Wlad is the brave one. The other option that he had against that bull-rushing softie was to inadvertently bust that bytch in the back of the head behind the ear. Then every joker and his sidekick would be calling the doc a dirty fighter, because once again, it is all about what they like, want and believe is fair and proper. Whatever! I can give it up to amayseng, because at least he is honest. Holla!

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BHarper85 says:

Gibola, you have a point about the ref not enforcing the rules. The problem in this fight was that Luis Pabon was the ref, and had gotten tons of flak (and rightfully so) for constantly stepping in and breaking up Huck and Povetkin the week before, sometimes before they even clinched. Honestly, he shouldn't have been reffing this fight or any other because of his TERRIBLE performance the week before, but he was and I'm sure he was influenced by the boxing media and public. Also, if he had acted that way again, it would've been seen as hurting Chisora, who's only chance was to get on the inside and land a bomb, a la McCall or Rahman. Granted, it didn't matter because he didn't want to fight, but I think it bears some consideration.

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deepwater says:

boring klitco beats washed up cruiserweight .boxing suffers. david hayes glass punch was so much better to watch then this farce.

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DaveB says:

Thanks Ali. Sometimes everyone gets too serious in here. Although they do make good points. The refs have been messing up a lot lately. Everyone holds and clinches and sometimes that is a very good move. Other times refs don't let a fighter fight his fight and they destroy his chances by breaking up the action before he can start to fight inside effectively. The refs get in the way of a good fight by not letting it happen. They over-referee the bout. It makes me think of giving a foul in basketball. Sometimes you have to foul. Giving a foul is a fundamental part of the game and of the strategy BUT if you give too many your butt fouls out of the game. So the way I see it, there is a line between what is acceptable and what is way out of line. Maybe the fans can't change it but the referee can. It is like when people say MMA is boring because when they are on the mat the action slows down. It can be a strategy but if it continues too long the ref stands them up. I hate to see Wlad pushing down the head so much and laying on his opponents instead of making them pay for booring in on him when he has superior talent and he is a master of distance. It wins fights so for some that is everything, for others its not.

gibola says:

Good summing up DaveB. It's good to have the debate tho and I respect everyone else's opinion totally. Let's just say Wlad divides opinion!