Wladimir Klitschko, 57-3 (50), the universally recognized heavyweight boxing champion, did what he was supposed to do this past weekend in scoring a fourth round KO over former cruiserweight title holder Jean-Marc Mormeck, 36-5 (22). Klitschko nailed a tiring Mormeck with a beautiful left jab-right hand, followed by a left-hook and right hand as he was going down. Mormeck barely made it to his feet at the count of 10 as the referee called him out.

The punch that did the damage was Wladimir's right, which basically froze a defenseless Mormeck just enough to enable Klitschko to finish him with the follow up hook and right hand. The end came pretty quick after a pedestrian beginning that saw Mormeck actually carry the fight to Klitschko and get inside. The problem for Mormeck was not that he wouldn't let his

hands go once inside, but he couldn't, because it took everything he had mentally and physically just for him to get there without having his head knocked off his shoulders by Wladimir in the process. Mormeck was also aided and baited by Klitschko during the first couple rounds because Wladimir was measuring him and wanted him to feel confident as he attempted to carry the action to him.

During the bout the commentary focused on the notion that Mormeck wouldn't open up and punch at Klitschko as he was trying to get inside. What was missed is the fact that it takes an extraordinary swarmer to make a fighter like Klitschko miss, then make him pay. Sure, swarmers like Jack Dempsey, Rocky Marciano, Joe Frazier and Mike Tyson were great at that, but how many great swarmers have there been in heavyweight history? If you're thinking I just named them, you'd be right. And even they would've had their hands full trying to get inside of Wladimir and making him pay.

Making an opponent miss and then making him pay as you're carrying the fight is one of the most difficult things that can be asked of a fighter. And if he's a swarmer, make that three fold. Sure, there are a lot of fighters who can go on the attack and overwhelm most of their opponents offensively if they're not giving up much height and reach. And there's also a lot of fighters who can use the ring and make their opponent miss, then counter. But try doing that as you're bringing the fight to a taller opponent with longer arms who can really crack and relishes the opportunity of nailing you on the way in.

At the start of the fourth round, Klitschko was just touching Mormeck with his left hand, just so he could get him to take half a step forward when he attempted to punch. What that did was enable Wladimir to sit down on his punches a little more without having to reach or lean to land cleanly, without leaving his chin exposed to a counter hook from Mormeck.

It sounds great for writers and broadcasters to watch a fight and say how Mormeck should've opened up and punched more, on paper that works everytime. Against lesser fighters Mormeck has made his way on the inside and made his opponent pay off of a miss, but not against Klitschko, just as it was the case when Lennox Lewis fought David Tua. Tua had success defending himself and keeping Lennox from really drilling him with his big right hand. The problem was he never could get close enough to plant anything meaningful on Lennox, nor was he gifted enough as a fighter to make Lewis pay for missing him or over-committing with a particular punch.

The fight between Wladimir Klitschko and Jean-Marc Mormeck was a forgone conclusion. If you had to pick the last style in the world you'd want to use to send against Wladimir Klitschko, it would be a limited swarmer, which incidentally is why Dereck Chisora would have a much tougher time against Wladimir Klitschko than he did Vitali Klitschko, with the intangible being if Chisora caught Wladimir like he did Vitali a few times, he might hurt him just enough for Wladimir to come undone or panic.

Some may conclude or write that a swarmer has a great shot to beat Wladimir because if they follow what the cookbook calls for and come in with head and upper-body movement while cutting off the ring, slipping the jab and blocking the path for the right, then they'd be in position to score -- good luck. Really, is that all Mormeck had to do?

If that's what the cookbook calls for, then I guess any swarmer who follows the recipe would beat Wladimir. Yeah, like the world is full of boxing gyms with heavyweights who fight as the attacker, who are good enough and athletic enough to follow the recipe during the speed of combat during the bout when things are happening so fast to make it work against a Wladimir Klitschko. In addition to that, the swarmer must be in tremendous condition and very strong physically. As we saw, after getting hit with a hard right in the second round, it took whatever resolve Mormeck had and he was tired by the end of the round.

During the commentary on Epix, Freddie Roach touched on the thought that Mormeck froze offensively because of the looming threat of Wladimir's power. No doubt that was part of it, but the bigger issue is the fact that at that level against a fighter like Klitschko, he's just not good enough to execute a complete fight plan without getting taken away from what he needed to do, open Klitschko up once inside as Wladimir was tying him up and leaning on him.

What made Dempsey, Marciano, Frazier and Tyson great was how they could get inside without having their head taken off and force their taller and longer opponents to trade hooks and uppercuts with them. Had former contender David Tua been able to learn how to get inside and make opponents pay for throwing at him and missing, he had the potential to be better than Dempsey, Marciano, Frazier and Tyson, because he was the single hardest one shot banger among them and had a chin on par with or better than any one of them. In order to be a great swarmer, you have to have all of the attributes listed, but you also have to have lots of heart (which Tua showed he lacked against Lewis), because you are going to get hit sometimes.

Tua was shown how to and worked in the gym on slipping punches as he was coming forward so he could make opponents either pay for jabbing at him, or be afraid to jab at him. In the gym he was a world beater. However, on fight night Tua could never apply it consistently enough to

gain a piece of the title. And that's because he wasn't a great fighter. An unbelievable talent, absolutely, but not a great fighter. If any opponent just stood against the ropes and planted their feet and traded with him one for one, he'd probably beat any heavyweight in history with the exception of George Foreman circa 1973-74. But if you moved your feet and threw straight shots on the move you could live with him. And we all know that usually didn't work against Jack, Rocky, Joe and Mike.

Mormeck had no shot against Wladimir the second the fight was made. He just isn't a good enough swarmer to succeed against Klitschko. Once he was lured into opening up a little in the fourth round, which he had to do at some point in order to have a chance to win, we saw what happened, the fight ended dramatically.

Wladimir Klitschko did what he was supposed to do and looked outstanding. That's the good. The bad is he chose not to throw a single uppercut against a fighter who was not only there to be hit with it, but was also hurt and not a threat or of the mindset to retaliate. Wladimir knows that to throw that uppercut, he's gotta turn his hand over and leave himself exposed to a counter-hook, something he was obviously concerned about. However, in this fight he didn't need the uppercut to set Mormeck up. And by the looks of who's out there in the heavyweight division for him to fight, he may not ever have to chance throwing it again.

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

Nice copy! There is nothing for me to add or bytch about, though I'm tempted to spit about why Doc Wlad is slow on the uppercut action. Just take a peep at his loses and see what happened when he threw one too many uppercuts. Hehehehe! Holla!

gibola says:

It will take a big, strong, skilled boxer who Wlad can't push and pull around the ring to expose Wlad as the one-dimensional boxer he is. Lewis and Bowe would have knocked him out but there aren't big men of that quality around at present. Someone who can jab with Wlad, wrestle with Wlad and wear Wlad down so he has to fight will beat him. The moment he has to fight on even terms and exchange punches his world will collapse - but sadly there is no-one to make that happen at the moment. Tyson Fury could develop but I think he has levelled out, Helenius is poor but at least he is big and might have a go, Chisora would get leaned on and tired out before he got knocked out. I don't see a slip and punch, come forward pressure guy beating Wlad, it will be a big heavy with decent skills and a lot of strength and heart, who Wlad can't just grab all night long and who won't weaken when he gets manhandled. No-one fits the bill at the

minute. Physically, Valuev would have been interesting 3 or 4 years ago but that is why (despite Valuev being based in the same country for a decade) the fight never happened. He couldn't match Wlad for skills but his strength, size and chin might have been a far greater challenge for Wlad than most people think.

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mortcola says:

His one dimension is bigger than the three dimensions of everyone else. And it has room for a complete punch arsenal, superb defense, timing, KO power, speed, and intelligence. The only thing he lacks is toe-to-toe resiliency. Find me the fighter, in the real world, who can do what you imagine Bowe and Lewis would do, and I'll believe you. But, till then, consider that no one in history dominated their division as thoroughly as he and his brother have dominated their's.

brownsugar says:

this is why this man should get reader of the year,... because mort believes so hard... and expresses it so well. (and I seriously mean that without any satire included) Wlad and his brother have in fact been the most dominate heavies for at least a decade. My thing is this, ...what does it mean to be the biggest fish in a small pond when his toughest competition came by way of Tony Thompson, another "big dude" who didn't start boxing untill his mid twenties and had less than 30 amateur fights. The fight wasn't that close, but at least it resembled the closest thing to competition that WK's seen in a while. That dominance comes with an askerkist which means its relative to one of the most barren heavyweight era's in history.... But things are

looking up... as more giants are entering the Pool of next melinium Big Men. I personally hope WK is around till these guys can step up... Like a true champion WK is already mentioning the names of future up-and-comers Seth Mitchell (way too green) Areola(it'll be fun while it lasts) and David Price (just needs to take it slow for a little while longer) Which illustrates his desire to get some defining wins to accentuate his reign... Believe me when I say,.. if he stays around long enough to get knocked off by another "Big Dude" I won't be the one jumping up and down in celebration,.. rather,..... I'll salute the passing of a class act, who unfortunately occupied as king of the heavyweights during a season of drought. as far as the rest of the heavies,.. Povetkin and Huck showed there's still entertaining and fun matchups left in the division.
I'm picking David Price to be the next "Big Thing"... in a couple of years,.. I don't think anybody will be able to mess with him when he reaches his prime,.. and he's vastly more entertaining than the current champs.

gibola says:

@mortcola - you're dead right there is no-one to do it and you're right I can only imagine what Lewis or Bowe would have done. Wlad wouldn't have been easy for them but I believe they would both have won, by knockout. You're also right in the real world there isn't a Bowe or Lewis around so Wlad won't be beaten in the foreseeable future. Point taken.