

Watch Hearn Vs. McCallum, Toney Vs. McClellan

Written by Zach Levin

Wednesday, 07 November 2012 00:00



Courtesy of the late Emanuel Steward's personal collection, please enjoy this rare footage of Kronk legends sparring. First up, Thomas Hearn vs. Mike McCallum. This work most likely took place around 1983-1984. Fast forward to 58:35 for Toney-McClellan, which took place on June 5, 1990. Toney was 8-0 and being kept busy in his first year pro. The G-Man was 16-0, a few years away from his destruction of Julian Jackson.

For those of us who grew up watching these guys, it's humbling to realize just how long ago this was. The next thing that comes to mind: In what other sport (perhaps collegiate wrestling?) does the question arise of not whether the better practitioners of 30, 40, 50, even 60 years ago could hang with today's best, but, rather, could today's best hang with the top fighters of yore?

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When we witness Floyd Mayweather or Andre Ward, it's not really their speed, reflexes, conditioning, and athleticism that separates them from the rest (although they both have these attributes in spades, and they are necessary) but their "old school" skills; vestiges of a lost art that have somehow been passed on to them but not the other 99.9%, even among those considered elite. It makes you wonder if boxing is more akin to jazz than a mere sport or game.

{youtube}7IHe_UqZF0I{/youtube}

<http://www.kronkfightnight.com/inside-the-kronk/>

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gibola says:

Possibly the best two lightmiddles ever in my view (SRL didn't stay at 154 for long and PBF not a LM in my view). Had the fight taken place I think Tommy could have won on points if he'd fought a disciplined fight and used his speed to box from range. However, if he'd got too aggressive the Bodysnatcher would have made him pay. A gun to my head I'd say McCallum and Hearn in 1985/6 the winner McCallum by late stoppage in a great fight - but Tommy could have won it on points too. Remember the late, great Manny Steward allowed Kronk's David Braxton to challenge McCallum and then Kronk's Milton McCrory - both were KO'd. The fact that Manny never sanctioned Hearn-McCallum may suggest he had a view on what a tough fight it would be for relatively little reward.

Two great fighters though - I love the 80s, my favourite era. In 86 you could match Buster Drayton, Matthew Hilton, Julian Jackson, John Mugabi with Hearn and McCallum or each other and there are no bad fights. It may just be nostalgia, but things seemed better, all the fighters styles seemed more entertaining, more risk-taking than today. Having said that Angulo-Kirkland destroys that theory!