

We Will Soon Know If Ward Stole Something From Chad Dawson

Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 07 June 2013 14:50



I am curious to know if something was taken from Chad Dawson on Sept. 8, 2012, which he cannot, no matter how hard he trains, or how hard he wishes it to be so, regain. Did Andre Ward, while sending Dawson to the canvas in round three, four and ten, rewire the Connecticut native, leave him compromised physically, or mentally, or perhaps, a bit of both?

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"I can't say sure for sure, it's a possibility, certainly," said trainer John Scully (*seen, right, with Dawson after second Hopkins fight*)

, who worked with Dawson (31-2, with 17 KOs) for his last three fights, two against Bernard Hopkins, and one disastrous foray from light heavy to super middleweight against Ward.

Scully and the 30-year-old Dawson didn't have the smoothest of exit interviews; Scully didn't appreciate the way Dawson relied on a separate coach, a strength and conditioning coach, to cut weight for the Ward fight, and felt that the type of outing he had reflected poorly on him. Dawson later busted on Scully for not being on the same level as, say, the man who will work his corner Saturday night, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, against Adonis Stevenson, a former Emanuel Steward protege.

Scully told me that the case of Roy Jones sticks in his head when he ponders the case of Dawson. You'll recall Jones leapt from light heavy to heavy to take care of John Ruiz and found himself diminished when he tried to move back down to 175. A little over a year after he dominated Ruiz, and won the WBA heavyweight crown, Jones started a three-fight slide, with a TKO2 loss to Antonio Tarver. Was his chin re-wired? Were some nerve endings weakened from that KO? Or was his mental armor permanently and irrevocably dented, never to be restored? Impossible to say; but a KO9 loss to Glen Johnson followed, and Jones then fought scared in a rematch UD12 loss to Tarver. Danny Green and Denis Lebedev have also stopped Jones since then. "When a fighter gets abused, as Dawson did against Ward, is he compromised more mentally, or physically? You don't know," Scully said. "I think it's chin, and confidence, combined."

Scully cited Simon Brown, who got stashed by Vincent Pettway in 1995. He'd entered 43-3 (0 KO by), and went 4-8 (3 KO by) thereafter. He seemed to be touched by the KO, whereas Terry Norris, Scully noted, got stopped by Julian Jackson (TKO2) in 1989, and shrugged it off, and won 15 straight. Simon Brown dropped and stopped Norris 1994, and Norris didn't seem unduly affected, going on a 9-2 run. "It comes down to the individual," Scully said. "It's nothing against the fighter, it's in his DNA." But, I countered at Scully, what if the issue is more mental than physical, if a fighter is reacting differently to being stopped not because his chin has cracks in it, not because a damaged brain now is quicker to become concussed or badly buzzed, but because his confidence has cracks in it? That's not DNA, per se, is it? "It might be, it might not be," he said.

Yes, there is ample mystery attached to this topic.

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Scully said he thinks Dawson doesn't get enough credit for his mental strength. He could be helped, the trainer says, because in his mind he can take a write off. He can tell himself the loss to Ward was a mere aberration, because he was so weight-drained. That's no feat of self hypnosis, either, Scully says, as it must be noted that Dawson's chin held him in good stead against Tomasz Adamek, and Antonio Tarver. "They couldn't drop him and then Andre Ward, who hadn't had a kayo in three years, does it? That's no diss to Ward but..."

Scully says rather than in the very first round, as you might assume, we should know by round three or four if Dawson is all the way back, or has lost a vital piece of himself. "I agree with you, Woodsy, I think Chad is miles ahead of Adonis in every area other than power and he's beaten big punchers before, but the fight can boil down to one thing: how does Chad react after what happened with Ward. He could look spectacular, that right hook against another southpaw. If he's himself, I can see him not even getting touched. We all love a surprise, if Adonis wins, it's great, he has that bomber mentality. If Chad wins he's back to the elite talent level at the top. I'd have to assume a fight with Jean Pascal (in a rematch from their 2010 fight, a TD11 loss for Dawson) is still on the table. If either guy wins, there's a ready-made superfight in Montreal."

Readers, what say you? Do you think something was stolen from Dawson that he can't get back? Or was the Ward foray a one-off disaster, and you expect him to get back on track versus Stevenson, who is moving up from 168 to 175 tomorrow? Weigh in!

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Radam G says:

SuperHad -- I mean SuperBad -- Chad is the same fighter. SOG Ward simply exposed the man. What he could do before Ward, he still can. Chad is just that type of fighter who will quit. He's full of syet. He won't go out on his shield. He much rather yield. And blame it on the playing field. Holla!

Carmine Cas says:

Dawson doesn't have it up there, or he becomes disinterested quickly

Spinach Chin says:

Chad Dawson needs a new nickname because "Bad" he is not. If Chad won we'd have never heard about the weight being a problem. Chad lacks identity.

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amayseng says:

Spinach is correct.

I've said it for years. "Bad". !??? Who?

Not chad for sure.

Tyson, Ali, Duran. Those guys had that killer instinct.

Chad has always lacked that killer instinct.

That is something that can't be taught.