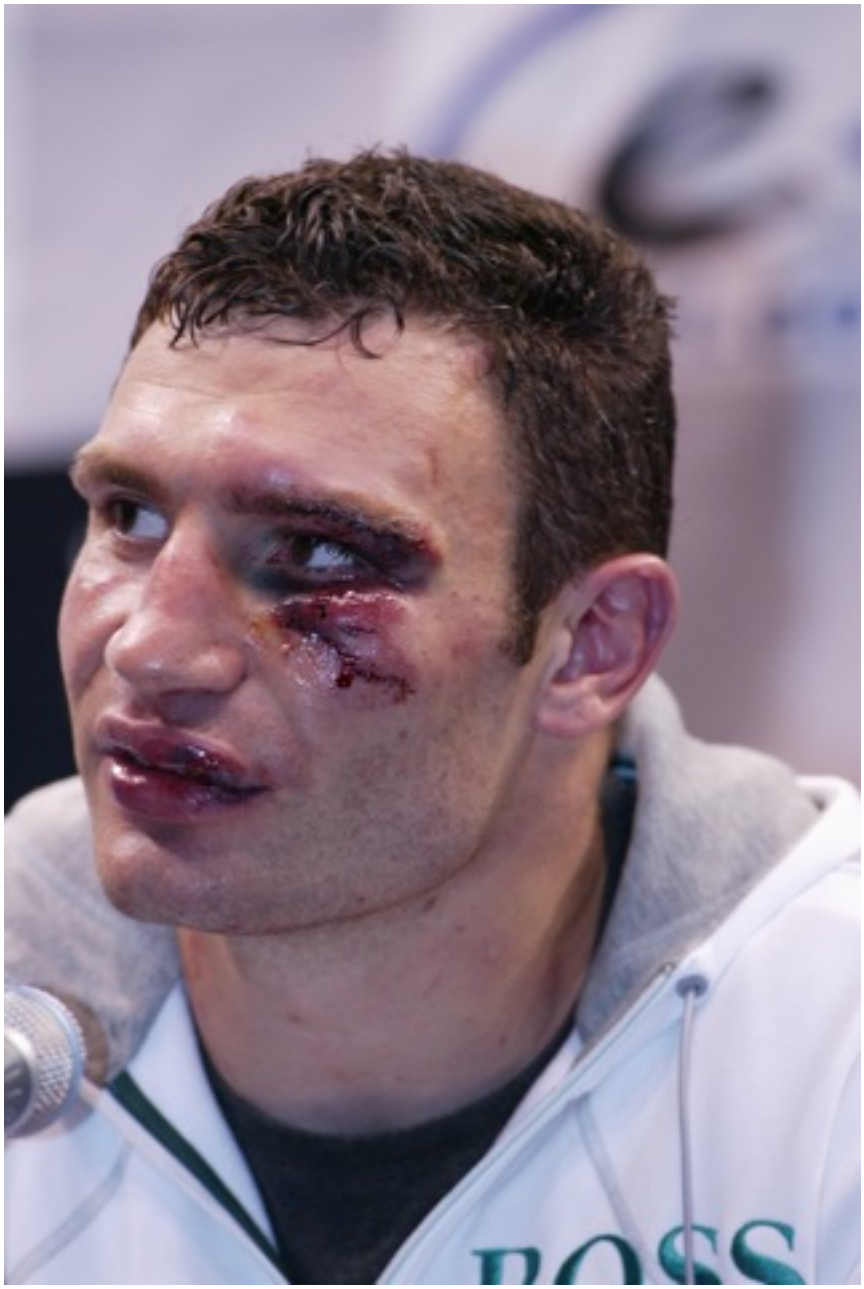

Souza gave boxers, like Vitali, seen here following his 2003 clash with Lennox Lewis, the chance to fight on, as long as possible. (Hogan)

He was one of the very best at the art and science of closing cuts. TSS bids adieu to ace cutman Joe Souza, who died on Monday evening, at age 77, from cancer.

A story on Fight Saga by Joseph Herron relays the sad news that the boxing bloodstopper was set to celebrate his 50th wedding anniversary, with wife Virginia, in two weeks.

He did his thing for Pernell Whitaker, Fernando Vargas, Jessie James Leija, Andrew Golota, Vernon Forrest and Arturo Gatti, among many, many others. If you secured Souza's services, you could rest easy knowing that if you got sliced, it would get closed, and you'd be able to fight on.

Souza ran a gym in San Antonio, but most fight fans knew him as the guy with the glasses who usually had a couple cotton swabs with some salve or another on them dangling from his mouth. He needed every sort of salve to keep Vitali Klitschko's brains from emptying out through the slices on and under his left eye opened up by Lennox Lewis in their 2003 clash.

As writer Chris Jones related in a 2008 ESPN The Magazine piece, Virginia would be horrified when she'd go into their kitchen, and he'd be at the kitchen table, slicing into his arm, and dabbing various chemicals into the wound, to gauge what solution worked best.

Our condolences go out to his family, friends and those he touched, with his heart, and those medicated swabs.

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

My deepest condolences. Holla!

dino da vinci says:

A classy guy. If you started naming the truly great closers, it wouldn't take long to mention ALL of them. The only way you could mention five or six names without mentioning Joe Souza, is to go in alphabetical order. RIP, Joe.