

Big, Bad Wlad

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Friday, 06 July 2012 19:19



Klitschko does not campaign in the most robust of heavyweight eras. But, as seen here against Saturday's foe, Tony Thompson, Wladimir would be an ace in any era.

He's six foot seven inches tall and two hundred forty-five pounds of chiseled athleticism. He possesses one of the most effective jabs in the history of the sport, and he's arguably one of the most powerful punchers of all-time.

His combinations are fast and fierce, and he can end fights in the blink of an eye.

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He's been heavyweight champion of the world for over six years, and he's won fifteen fights in a row since his last defeat (way back in 2004 to former titlist Lamon Brewster) which he avenged three years later by knockout. He holds every legitimate heavyweight title he can, the lone exception being the one he will not fight for against elder brother, Vitali.

He's big. He's bad. He's Wladimir Klitschko – ruler of the heavyweight universe.

It's a shame he isn't more appreciated.

Sure, he's got Eastern Europe as a dominion of adulation, but American fight fans have been far less receptive to him.

Could it be his sheer size? Is it ingrained into American consciousness to *never* root for Goliath?

Surely not. Mike Tyson was the biggest, baddest bully on the planet in the early 1980s and he is well loved to this day for it. Similarly, Muhammad Ali would verbally abuse his opponents before shellacking them to submission, and we build museums for the guy.

While not physical giants like Wladimir Klitschko, Ali and Tyson sure fought like giants in the ring. Would either of those guys be considered underdog-types? Besides, big fellows like George Foreman, Lennox Lewis and Riddick Bowe weren't ignored by the public the way the Klitschkos seem to be either.

Maybe it's just the era.

Is this heavyweight division one of the best ever? Clearly not. Is it one of the worst? Maybe. Is it easy to dominate and destroy the way Wladimir Klitschko has done over the past six years? Absolutely not. Contenders come and go and not one of them seems to be able to sustain

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success the way Klitschko has. If the division was that bad, surely someone would have made themselves the clear number three guy by now behind the Klitschkos.

This era is no different than just about any other.

Look back through heavyweight history and you'll see the same story over and over again. The current crop of heavyweights is *never* as good as the one from the past. You can dig up Ring Magazine articles of from the 1950s of boxing writers opining for Jack Dempsey while Rocky Marciano was around...and articles in the 1920s of Dempsey's contemporaries opining for Jack Johnson...whose fans undoubtedly missed people like James J. Corbett and John L. Sullivan.

The heavyweight division is never really dead; it's just that people always think it is. It's silly, really.

By most accounts, there have really only been two historically deep decades: the 1970s of Ali, Forman and Joe Frazier, and the 1990s of Tyson, Evander Holyfield, Lennox Lewis and Riddick Bowe. Would Wladimir Klitschko be a champion in either of those eras?

More than likely (and despite the uproar of ill will this sentence may elicit from some of our fine TSS readers) the answer is probably yes.

That's not so say that Klitschko is necessarily better than those guys. Maybe he's not, but tell me which one of those seven fighters went undefeated. Any of them?

All of them lost (more than once I might add), and all of them were champion at one time or another. Klitschko, who has experienced three losses himself, would likely be the same in any era he fought in. He might not keep the title for six years in those eras, but he'd damn well win it at least once.

Maybe it doesn't really matter, though. Joe Louis' "bum of the month club" didn't keep him out of

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Canastota, and Wladimir Klitschko's slim pickings won't keep him out either. In fact, he'll likely be remembered, should the 36-year-old champion finish his career out the way most people believe he will, celebrated alongside the likes of The Brown Bomber as one of the greatest heavyweight champions of all-time.

The key for fight fans like you then is to appreciate him while you can.

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the Roast says:

I like Wlad as a fighter and respect his skills but I see no need for this rematch. The heavyweight division is unfortunately at an all time low. No worthy challengers for the K-Bros. Seth Mitchell is not ready nor is Deontay Wilder. I read Adamek is going to fight James Toney next. Why? Why?? Why??? Is there ANYBODY out there to seriously challenge the K-Bros???

deepwater says:

this article is right out of a gay mans magazine. this fight isnt even worth my bad joke.nuf said.

Radam G says:

@the Roast. NO! NO and NO! The K-bros/docs got it made in the shade. Holla!