

Tyrone Spong is a name that has jumped up in value over the past few years after cutting his teeth on the international muay that and kickboxing circuit in a dizzying amount of weight classes. Spong has fought not only some of the best in the world in one or two weight classes, but in just about every weight class between 70kg and Super Heavyweight in the span of his career, with one fight against Nathan "Carnage" Corbett standing out as the one that fans wanted to see happen again. GLORY is making precisely this happen at GLORY 11 Chicago this weekend, live on Spike TV.

LiverKick.com caught up with Tyrone Spong earlier this week to discuss the fight with Carnage and he has a very mature way of viewing the first bout with Carnage, when asked if he considers it a draw or a loss; "Oh no, no man, for me personally it's a loss. You know, according to the rules and the commission they call it a no contest. That's not on me, you know, I don't make the rules, I just fight according to them. To me personally though, I consider that a loss and now I have the chance to avenge that loss, so we'll see."

LiverKick.com Talks GLORY 11 with Tyrone Spong

Written by Dave Walsh Tuesday, 08 October 2013 18:12 -

The landscape of professional Kickboxing has changed a lot since 2009, as has Tyrone Spong. Spong has arguably been facing the top competition in the world since the fight with Corbett in Montego Bay, Jamaica. That isn't all that Spong has been doing, though, according to him, as the past few years have been a valuable learning experience.

"Yeah, you know, the most important thing for me is that back then I wasn't taking the sport as seriously as I do now," Spong admitted. "I was just a young kid fighting back then and I did a lot of growing up in my life and in my career, which I think is one of the big differences right now, it's a whole different animal.

"You know, I'm not the type of guy that is the smack talker or whatever," he admits, usually a statement like this would be followed by smack talking, but Spong instead looks at the landscape and how their positions have changed since that first fight. "One thing that I want to get out there is that people are talking about how this is such a big fight for me and this and that, but you know, for me this is just another fight. Of course we have a little bit of a history as this is a rematch, but who was talking about Corbett before this fight? Nobody was, he's fighting me now and I'm the top guy now. I'm not saying that to trash talk or whatever, but now he's getting an opportunity to fight me. I'm the champion, not the other way around. I've been out there, fighting the top names and I bet that he is really happy that he has this fight as it puts him out there a little more."

Spong sees his career now, where he is and what he's achieved for what it is, though, and doesn't try to grasp too hard onto individual fights or moments. "You know, for me it's a whole different story, I've fought in several weight classes and I've fought the best of the best in every weight class -- and I've beaten the best of the best in every weight class -- so I'm just happy that I'm building up my legacy.

"I'll probably compete at both Light Heavyweight and Heavyweight, you know, whatever," he admits when asked if he'll stick to Light Heavyweight or give Heavyweight another shot. "I was fighting those big guys way up in weight and I just like challenges. Some of these guys talk about a few pounds in weight difference, I've fought guys with over 40lbs weight difference, you know? Even 60lbs weight difference."

His focus has been on more than Kickboxing and Muay Thai, though, over the past few years, as he has stepped into the world of Mixed Martial Arts, with a few fights for World Series of Fighting under his belt now. Tyrone's focus is on more than just one sport at a time, though, as

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his focus is on being a better overall athlete, a complete package. "It's added to my overall game as an athlete with the different type of training. I do Boxing, you know wrestling, and I can say for myself that it's helped my skills as an overall combat sports athlete."

Part of this transition has involved moving himself and his family to the United States from the Netherlands, which he admits has been an interesting experience for him; "I've had to adjust a lot," he admits. "It was a big difference for me, a big change. The States are something else, but now I consider this home. I feel very comfortable here in the States and I just enjoy it, my training facility is one of the best in the world, it's one of the best gyms possible. I enjoy training here and living here. Everything is here, my family, the dogs, this is just where I am."

Coming with this has been the inevitable media attention and fame, as he first came into the public eye here by being a training partner with Rashad Evans. "Now when I go grocery shopping in public people recognize me, it's a cool thing to be recognized like that," he concedes. It isn't always that easy for him, though, as he is now part of an online documentary series, The King of the Ring, which follows his exploits in and out of the ring.

"I have a camera crew following me around at most times and sometimes it really does bug me, but it is something that the fans really enjoy and they get a glimpse of not only the athlete Tyrone but the person and I think it's something good. It's also something that has brought me to the mainstream here in the States a lot," he looks at the upside of having a camera crew follow his every move. "A lot of American fans are watching it and they really seem to enjoy it."

This weekend at GLORY 11 Chicago Spong has a big opportunity presented to him, as he will be headlining the promotion's debut on Spike TV here in the United States, their biggest platform yet. "You know, GLORY is the biggest organization in Kickboxing and they have this contract with Spike TV now, I see big things happening for the sport and the fans here." He is very quick to point out just how lucky he is to have this weight placed upon his shoulders, though; "I just feel blessed that I'm featured in such a way for such an important event for them, you know, I'm the main event on their debut on Spike TV."

GLORY 11 Chicago will air live on Spike TV here in the United States at 9PM Eastern/8 Central, featuring Tyrone Spong vs. Nathan Corbett in the main event, with a stacked undercard featuring the GLORY Heavyweight Tournament. The Heavyweight tournament features Gokhan Saki vs. Rico Verhoeven and Daniel Ghita vs. Anderson Silva.

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