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## Sports Stack

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### Boxing Takes Its Hits

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Written by [kylestack](#) on 11/24/2010 12:07:35 PM

I had never seen a boxer get knocked out in the ring until last Saturday. I'm not sure I want to see it again. We're in a society conditioned to heartily celebrate any time we see a big collision in a football or hockey game, yet there's something disconcerting about witnessing a boxing knockout.

Paul Williams was on the wrong end of a knockout blow from Sergio Martinez Saturday during the second round of their world middleweight title bout in Atlantic City. Williams crashed to the mat face-first and didn't move for several seconds as trainers and medical staff ran to treat him. He looked shaken up, as he likely dealt with a concussion. And I thought at that moment that despite Williams' earnings for the fight -- reports had Williams making more than Martinez's \$1 million for the match -- most young athletes have no reason to jump to boxing.

I see so many negative factors about the sport. It's without an overarching governing body, there are a confusing number of weight divisions and most boxers, including title holders, don't make the kind of money they should for their caliber of athleticism. According to a 2008 [Yahoo! Sports story](#), the highest paid boxer on the undercard of the 2008 Bernard Hopkins-Joe Calzaghe fight made \$20,000. Examples of other undercard fighters making a relative pittance are abundant. But the nail in the coffin for the sport trying to attract young athletes is that the physical punishment isn't worth it.

In the past 25 years, the British, Canadian and Australian Medical Associations have called for bans on boxing because of its physical risks. The [British Medical Association](#) cited brain damage, acute brain hemorrhage and eye, ear and nose damage as physical threats to every boxer. Never was that more evident than in the recent Manny Pacquiao-Antonio Margarito fight. Pacquiao landed 474 punches over 12 rounds (36 minutes total in the ring) and ended up breaking Margarito's orbital bone below his right eye.

What's more worrisome are the hundreds of head shots taken in every fight. The greatest threat to boxing is young athletes watching boxers getting knocked out, falling face-first to the mat unconscious, and deciding they don't want to put themselves in that position.

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