

The Count: The Goon Patrol: Rating Hockey's Fighters

Desjardins, Gabriel . Wall Street Journal , Eastern edition; New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y.]26 Jan 2010: D.8.

[ProQuest document link](#)

ABSTRACT

The Elo algorithm, which adjusts a team's or player's record based on the strength of competition, is used to rank everything from chess players to BCS college-football teams.

FULL TEXT

The Elo algorithm, which adjusts a team's or player's record based on the strength of competition, is used to rank everything from chess players to BCS college-football teams. Now it can also be used to determine who are the best -- wait for it -- hockey fighters.

These days, fans who cherish a little pugilism with their hockey can go online and watch video of the fights and vote for who won and lost each one, or if it ended in a tie. By using these fans' decisions to drive the Elo algorithm, which was developed by Hungarian physicist Arpad Elo 50 years ago, we can see who the best hockey fighters truly are -- and eliminate anyone who embellishes their record by never mixing it up with a top heavyweight.

There are no surprises at the top of our ranking list: Georges Laraque, who most recently played for the Montreal Canadiens and just had his contract bought out by the club, had a 19-fight unbeaten streak over two seasons, according to the fans' voting, and has beaten No. 2 Derek Boogaard, of the Minnesota Wild, four times. The algorithm really helps the Pittsburgh Penguins' Eric Godard, who has a .500 record in his fights but tends to fight only the toughest players in the league.

The system also identifies the best infrequent or up-and-coming fighters: Zdeno Chara of the Boston Bruins and Minnesota's John Scott (both undefeated), and 5-foot-11 Rick Rypien of the Vancouver Canucks, who uses technical skills to best much larger fighters.

Credit: By Gabriel Desjardins

DETAILS

Subject:	Athletes; Statistics; Professional hockey
Publication title:	Wall Street Journal, Eastern edition; New York, N.Y.
Pages:	D.8

Publication year:	2010
Publication date:	Jan 26, 2010
Section:	Sports
Publisher:	Dow Jones & Company Inc
Place of publication:	New York, N.Y.
Country of publication:	United States, New York, N.Y.
Publication subject:	Business And Economics--Banking And Finance
ISSN:	00999660
Source type:	Newspapers
Language of publication:	English
Document type:	Feature
ProQuest document ID:	399092780
Document URL:	https://search.proquest.com/docview/399092780?accountid=13552
Copyright:	(c) 2010 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. Reproduced with permission of copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.
Last updated:	2017-11-02
Database:	ProQuest Central

LINKS

[Linking Service](#)

Database copyright © 2019 ProQuest LLC. All rights reserved.

[Terms and Conditions](#) [Contact ProQuest](#)