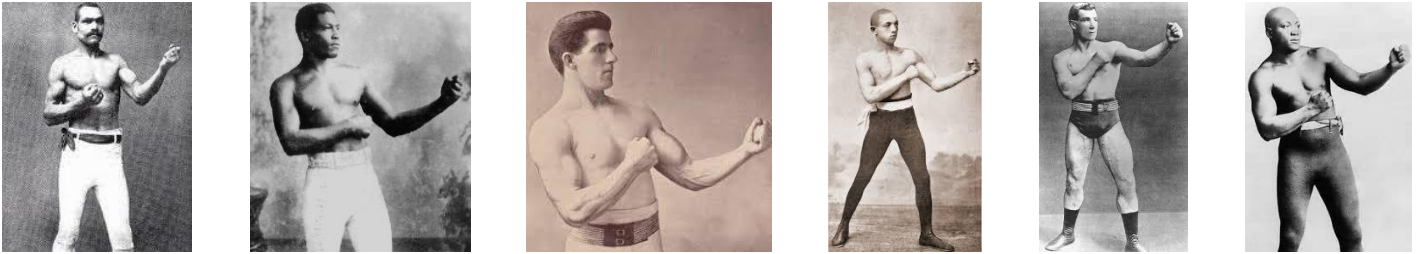


## THE SHOOTING SHOULDER: CRUCIAL TO THE ATHLETICISM OF THE JUMP SHOT

By Robert Tiltz

For a punch to be athletic and powerful, it should start from close in front of its rolled-back, same-side shoulder. The old bare-knuckle boxing stance instead extended the non-dominant arm, which negated its athleticism and power. For a jump shot to be athletic and powerful, the release should start from either close in front and above or directly above the rolled-back shooting shoulder. While the subsequent forward rotation of the rolled-back shooting shoulder is itself a source of athleticism and power, even more results when the rollback to forward rotation dynamic channels the athleticism and the power of the jumpshooter's body into the release.

Below: Old-time bare-knuckle boxers set up with the nondominant arm extended and elbow-in-strokesnap jumpshooters set up with the shooting arm extended. The extended arms of both prevent the same-side shoulders from rolling back and then rotating forward for athleticism and power.



From left: George Godfrey, Peter Jackson, Jim Corbett, George Dixon, Tom Sharkey, Jack Johnson



From left: Bill Walton, George Hill, Tobias Harris, Jordan Clarkson, Karl-Anthony Towns, Kristaps Porzingis

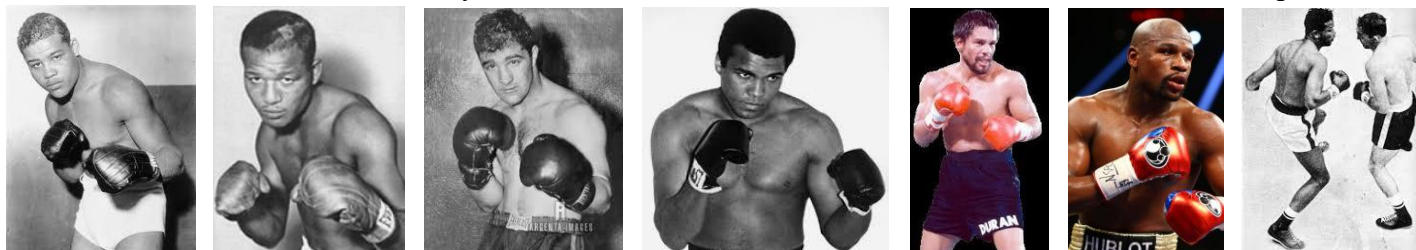
The NBA-favored elbow-in-strokesnap jump shot sets up its elbow-in shooting position for the start of the release too far out front by way of its horizontally-extended and basket-aligned shooting elbow, which disconnects the strokesnap release from the jumpshooter's body by distance. The same disconnect occurs when players replace the strokesnap release because it is weak and difficult to control with a more efficient push release. The too-far-out-front elbow-in prevents the shooting shoulder from rolling back to activate as a source of whole-body athleticism and whole-body power by way of engagement with the release mechanism and then rotating forward during the release to help power square-in-the-air rotation. Therefore, unable to cap off strongside moves or run-ups with a square-in-the-air jump to adjust the direction of the release, elbow-in-strokesnap jumpshooters usually shoot weakside jump shots that expose the basketball as it is being raised to the shooting position, which in turn leads to the currently popular weakside stepback intended to add protection through separation. For weakside jumpshooters, without body-wedge protection of the basketball during the jump of the jump shot attacking the defense and the teamwork it brings are to a great extent ruled out.

The modern crouching boxing stance locates the hands and the arms close to the body, which rolls the shoulders back to activate for athleticism and power. The whole-body jump shots similarly roll the shooting shoulder back during setup to activate for athleticism and power. The two best examples are the forward-oriented elbow-out and the laterally-oriented reachback whole-body jump shots. Both have a shooting stance that sets up forehead high or higher and back close to or above the jumpshooter's body. And both are athletic, powerful and strongside capable because of their shooting shoulder-centric techniques. The rollback of the shooting shoulder

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that engages it with the release mechanism sets the stage. The centerpiece is the forward rotation of the shooting shoulder that initiates the release and also merges the jump of the jump shot with the release of the jump shot by channeling the athleticism and the power of the jumpshooter's body into the release. The outcome is mechanical power that rotates the square-in-the-air jump essential to most strongside pull-up jump shots.

Below: Modern boxers and whole-body jumpshooters. Both roll the shoulders back by setting up with the hands and the arms close to the body. Then the action shoulder rotates forward for athleticism and power.



From left: Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson, Rocky Marciano, Muhammad Ali, Roberto Duran, Floyd Mayweather and Robinson and Carmen Basilio rolling back a punching shoulder to prepare for a power punch



Top L to R: Whole-body elbow-out jumpshooters include Earl Monroe, Bob McAdoo, Robert Parish, Bernard King, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Ja Morant. Above L to R: Whole-body reachback jumpshooters include Jerry West, Larry Bird, Michael Jordan, Tracy McGrady, DeMar DeRozan and Brandon Ingram.

To set up the whole-body jump shots' release, the shooting shoulder must roll back to activate as a source of whole-body athleticism and whole-body power by way of engagement with the release mechanism. For the elbow-out jump shot, angling the shooting elbow out rolls the shooting shoulder back. For the reachback jump shot, the reachback rolls the shooting shoulder back. The subsequent forward rotation of the shooting shoulder initiates direct whole-body release power. At the same time, the forward rotation of the shooting shoulder channels the athleticism and the power of either the elbow-out jump of the jump shot or the reachback body-leverage sequence into the all-important square-in-the-air jump that rotates/adjusts the direction of the release, which most strongside pull-up jump shots require. With respect to tactics, the whole-body jump shots' forward rotation of the shooting shoulder for power and square-in-the-air adjustability makes it possible to attack the defense with body-wedge protected strongside mid-range pull-up jump shots that spearhead the strongside game, which includes a full complement of shooting, driving and passing options.