



**JEONG  
SOOK  
LEE**

**UNCONVENTIONAL  
TANG SOO DO  
MASTER  
TEACHES  
WORLD-RANKED  
BOXER**





Lee, Thomas threw 150 to 170 punches per round; now the heavyweight is working at a pace between 300-400 punches per round. The level of endurance Thomas is building toward "exceeds anything any other boxer is doing," says Jankelson. "Traditional boxing style dictates that punches be thrown in groups of four to seven. Lee's method breaks away from these limitations."

"My boxing style was hampered by irrelevant, unnecessary movement before training with Lee," says Thomas. Now the boxer's motion is coordinated with his punches, helping him to maintain proper balance.

Learning kicks is one thing, but when we heard a highly-ranked tang soo do master was teaching a pro boxer how to punch we had to see it to believe it. We did. In Thomas' last fight in April, in Seattle, we sat at ringside as the heavyweight absolutely destroyed his opponent by a first-round knockout. The performance was more like a demolition derby. Thomas' opponent never once hit him, and the fight was lucky to last past the national anthem.

Pinklon Thomas radiates a maturity that belies his age. That maturity, no doubt, comes from a Pontiac, Michigan youth filled with problems, particularly drugs, an obstacle over which he won a unanimous victory. But most importantly it reflects a single-minded purpose to be the best in the world at what he does.

Thomas' goal is to become the world heavyweight boxing champion and many boxing experts believe he is the best young heavyweight on the world boxing scene. He has climbed to lofty heights in the world ratings after only 14 professional fights and a three-year boxing tenure. Thomas was featured in *Sports Illustrated* last year as one of the world's four top heavyweight prospects.

Thomas made his pro debut on August 29, 1978, having had just three amateur bouts and winning the 1978 Seattle Golden Gloves Heavyweight Championship. Thomas then went on to win his next 12 bouts by KO, before winning a unanimous decision, in August 1980, to compile his current undefeated record. The August bout, against Jerry Williams in Las Vegas in a nationally televised ESPN card, was a testing ground for Thomas' sheer determination. He fought the greatest part of the 10-round match with both hands fractured! He has since undergone surgery, and the hands appeared to have had no problems pounding his Seattle foe into oblivion last April.

The unconventional tang soo do master, Jeong Sook Lee, is no stage prop in the Thomas entourage, but a bona fide trainer. "I have a boxing contract, and just like any other trainer, I get a percentage of Pinklon's purses," he explains.

As 1981 unfolds, perhaps Thomas, the Northwest's great boxing hope, will be challenging champions Larry Holmes or Mike Weaver on network television. Look to the corner of Thomas and there you will find the unorthodox Jeong Sook Lee, the man who helped take the Asian martial arts to Western boxing.

