# Conor Benn and fellow boxers reveal mental health battles behind the sport



On Saturday night, Conor Benn will step into the ring at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium to face Chris Eubank Jr, in a bout that carries weight beyond the physical contest. With a sold-out crowd of 65,000 spectators anticipated, Benn faces not only the challenge posed by Eubank Jr but also the confluence of historic rivalries and recent controversies. His father’s past conflicts with an Eubank namesake and the fresh tension between the fighters add layers of narrative to the event. Furthermore, Benn is likely to face scrutiny from parts of the audience who remain sceptical of his protests following an adverse drug test in 2022.

Benn’s journey has been marked by struggles both inside and outside the ring. Despite his outward appearance as a brash, tattooed athlete embodying traditional boxing masculinity, Benn has openly shared the mental health challenges he faced following his doping allegation. He revealed the depth of his distress in an interview with Piers Morgan, admitting to suicidal thoughts, panic attacks, and night terrors. “Yeah, I’d say so. It upsets me now because I don’t know how I got so bad. I was having night terrors, panic attacks. I was in a really bad way and I was coping terribly with it. I was taking it day by day. I didn't think I'd see another day,” Benn said.

Benn is not unique in wrestling with mental health issues within the boxing community. The Independent reports on other boxers who have faced similar battles. Liam Cameron, a light-heavyweight previously ranked number two in Britain and holder of the Commonwealth championship, confronted depression after a doping ban in 2019. Cameron tested positive for benzoylecgonine, a cocaine metabolite, which he denies knowingly ingesting. Choosing to contest the charge led to a four-year suspension, which brought a halt to his promising career. Cameron recounted his descent into depression, weight gain, and hospitalisations, before finding a path to recovery through returning to training. He noted the unintended exposure of his mental health struggles after a fight: “With me, I had no choice to come out with it – it weren't planned to come out, about my mental health,” he said. “It was just that bad in my life, it was obvious.”

Meanwhile, Anthony Ogogo’s trajectory exemplifies a different kind of hardship. An Olympic bronze medallist and deeply promising professional, Ogogo’s career was curtailed after a fractured eye socket in 2016 led to a series of failed surgeries and painful rehabilitation. He retired in 2019 due to injuries. Ogogo described boxing as a “dinosaur sport” where mental health was virtually invisible. He said, “Was mental health ever discussed on the GB squad? Was it bollocks. But then again, I was a 21-year-old kid, I didn't care. I wanted to be the best boxer on the planet.” Professional boxing, Ogogo continued, offered even less support, being a business with a reputation for exploiting fighters. “When I was boxing, there was nobody to talk to. Boxing is the most macho sport of all – you can’t show emotion, you can’t show pain, you want to be a tough guy.”

Despite such challenges, fights in the ring and for mental well-being continue. Benn told Ring magazine about the paradox of his persistence: “I didn’t want to fight. I was just tired, training was hard. I wasn’t me – how can you be you? How can you be you after going through what you went through, without dealing with it. Without knowing how to cope, or how to deal with it. I was training, and I didn’t even want to train. I showed more discipline, more work ethic, more ambition, more integrity than anyone would have in that stage of their career.”

Ogogo, who turned to coaching and professional wrestling following retirement, shared the impact of his injuries and the mental toll they exacted. Posting openly on social media, he gave voice to a pain that lasted years. After considering suicide, he credited his wife with helping him through the darkest times. Cameron, returning to competition recently, headlined a fight cheered by a crowd aware of his personal journey.

The Independent is reporting on this complex intersection of boxing and mental health at a time when the stories of these athletes highlight both the sport’s demands and the resilience required beyond the ring. For Benn, Eubank Jr, Cameron, and Ogogo, their experiences span physical battles and inner struggles, reflecting broader conversations within the world of boxing.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.tottenhamhotspurstadium.com/whats-on/2025/chris-eubank-jr-vs-conor-benn/> - This URL confirms the event details of the Chris Eubank Jr vs Conor Benn fight, including the date (April 26, 2025) and venue (Tottenham Hotspur Stadium), supporting the claim about the location and timing of the bout with an anticipated large crowd.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Eubank_Jr_vs_Conor_Benn> - This Wikipedia article provides comprehensive background on the rivalry between Chris Eubank Jr and Conor Benn, including the postponement due to Benn's positive test for clomifene in 2022, and the rescheduling of the fight in 2025, corroborating the history of the bout and controversies mentioned.
* <https://www.espn.com/boxing/story/_/id/44753337/chris-eubank-jr-vs-conor-benn-line-how-their-boxing-rivalry-unfolded> - The ESPN article elaborates on the rivalry and tension between Eubank Jr and Benn, including the egg-smashing incident at a press conference and related provocations, supporting the description of the fresh tensions and narrative layers in the fight.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/boxing/chris-eubank-jr-conor-benn-mental-health-b2369039.html> - This Independent article discusses Conor Benn's mental health struggles following his doping allegation, including his admissions of suicidal thoughts, panic attacks, and night terrors, directly corroborating the article's claims about Benn's personal challenges.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/boxing/liam-cameron-mental-health-doping-ban-b2369041.html> - This article from The Independent covers Liam Cameron's battle with depression after his doping ban and his journey to recovery through training, which supports the information about Cameron's experience with mental health issues in boxing.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/boxing/anthony-ogogo-retirement-mental-health-b2369050.html> - This piece details Anthony Ogogo's career-ending injuries, his views on boxing's culture regarding mental health, and his struggles with pain and depression, aligning with the article's description of Ogogo's trajectory and mental health challenges.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/boxing/conor-benn-chris-eubank-jr-mental-health-dazn-b2739376.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data