

Klitschko brothers mourn father



Family mourns: The father of boxing champions Wladimir Klitschko, right, and brother Vitali, left, has died after a long illness in their native Ukraine. Picture: AP Source: AP

HEAVYWEIGHT boxing champions Wladimir and Vitali Klitschko were in mourning after the death of their father.

Wladimir Klitschko Rodionovic passed away on Wednesday, aged 64, after a long battle with cancer.

A statement from the family yesterday confirmed his death and paid tribute to his role in the cleanup of Ukraine's Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986, while serving in the Soviet Air Force.

"Wednesday, July 13, after a long and severe illness Wladimir Klitschko Rodionovich, father of boxing world champions Wladimir and Vitali Klitschko, died," the statement, reported by Eurosport, read.

"Wladimir Rodionovich ... raised two sons and three grandchildren," it added.

"Colonel of the Air Force, he was a lifelong devoted [servant] in the army, [and] took an active part in the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant."