Why didn't he go to Plan B? Most of the time when you hear the infamous quote, "Plan B," it refers to a fighter who is a puncher and who was just beaten by a boxer. The list is endless of fights in which the talk the next day is why didn't he adjust. Why didn't Trinidad stop pressing the fight when that tactic clearly wasn't working against Hopkins? Trinidad can only fight effectively going forward; that's how he generates his power. Asking Trinidad not to push the fight is like taking Shaq out of the paint and asking him to beat you with a jump shot! It's not his game and it never will be. The same goes for Trinidad. What would happen to him if he tried to beat Hopkins or De LaHoya by waiting on them to go to him? He would get taken apart. His style is based on taking advantage of his punching power, which can only be maximized by coming forward. Why do you think when Trinidad is mentioned as a fighter the first thing that comes to your mind is how hard he hits?

Fighters whose styles are not based on going through their opponents can change and ultimately have a Plan B. They are the boxers, not the swarmers and sluggers. Sugar Ray Leonard in his first fight with Roberto Duran was lured into a flatfooted toe-to-toe style fight. This nullified Leonard's speed and boxing ability and played right into Duran's style. This resulted in Leonard enduring more punishment than in any previous fight, causing him to suffer his first defeat. In the rematch five months later, Leonard fought his fight-- using the ring and giving Duran angles and keeping the fight in ring center instead of getting caught in the corner or with his back against the ropes. This frustrated Duran and led him to say, "No mas," enabling Leonard to regain the welterweight title. Evander Holyfield showed he could change his style for one opponent. In his first fight with Riddick Bowe, Holyfield moved forward bringing the fight to Bowe. However the bigger and stronger Bowe made Holyfield eat some big shots coming in resulting in Holyfield getting worn down and almost stopped late in the fight. When Holyfield fought Bowe the second time one year later he completely changed his attack strategy. Instead of going to Bowe he moved back. In drawing Bowe to him Holyfield was able to avoid Bowe's big shots, thus enabling him to take advantage of his speed and counter Bowe with three and four punch combinations on his way to winning a close decision.

Some fighters who need to adjust their style for a certain opponent can't because they are swarming pressure fighters who are only effective moving forward. When they inevitably face that opponent who they either can't catch or who can take their punch, they are basically rendered ineffective. These are the fighters for whom Plan B does not exist. The swarmer or the puncher cannot become a boxer. Once he is forced to taper his aggression to try and win, he has no chance.

An example would be Joe Frazier's two fights with George Foreman. Frazier lost his undisputed Heavyweight Title to Foreman via a second round TKO in their first fight. In that fight he came out "Smokin," bringing the fight to Foreman like he had in his previous 29 fights in which he never tasted defeat. Carrying the fight to Foreman didn't work since Foreman was the bigger puncher, and Joe went right into Foreman's power zone, which cost him the title. When they fought a second time, Joe tried to resort to a Plan B, but instead of pressing the fight he

moved away from Foreman and tried to elude his powerful punches. All this did was prolong the inevitable. Instead of getting stopped in two rounds, it lasted five before Joe was TKO'd. By Joe moving away and trying to box instead of fighting, he nullified his own fierce punching power, changing his style for one opponent. Frazier was a fish out of water trying to box the taller and longer Foreman. There is no such thing as a Plan B for a Joe Frazier. How about Frazier's nemesis George Foreman? When Foreman defended the title he took from Joe against Ali, he fought with his typical aggressive rage.

Foreman had employed the same style on his way to a 40-0 record, only this time he met an opponent who could take his punch. Foreman punched himself out trying to knock out Ali, but the result was Ali scoring an eighth round knockout, and becoming only the second fighter to regain the undisputed Heavyweight Championship. Foreman, in trying to prepare for a rematch with Ali, fought Jimmy Young who was a crafty boxer, hoping to be better prepared for Ali's style. This resulted in Foreman trying to pace himself against Young . He performed poorly, attempting to be a boxer and basically throwing away his God-given, devastating punch. By Foreman trying to go to Plan B, he lost a decision to a fighter who should never have been in a position to defeat him. If Foreman had fought Young like he did Ali, he would have stopped Young inside of four rounds because Young could not have stood up to the fierce assault that Ali had. There is no such thing as a Plan B for a George Foreman.

Looking back at history's greatest fighters, it is impossible not to see that an overwhelming majority are the fighters who possessed the ability to change their styles for a certain opponent. Think about the names that embody that list: Robinson, the Leonards, Ray and Benny, Ali,Holmes, Moore, Holyfield, Hearns, Monzon, Hagler and too many others to mention in this space. What do these fighter share? They all have the ability to adapt to certain opponents as needed to win the fight, especially if a particular fighter's style presents difficulties for them.

In boxing, like most other sports, A+B doesn't always equal C. Greatness is defined by being able to come up with answers to the problems presented by some awkward or unorthodox fighters whose style negates what they are most comfortable with or what they do best. They can adjust and turn the fight back to where they are in control. The important thing to remember is that Plan B cannot be a blanket statement. One size doesn't fit all.