

Floyd Mayweather Sharp, Samuel Peter Powerful In Miami

Written by David Mayo

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MIAMI -- Between rounds, as Floyd Mayweather Jr. took a break from such tedium as setting up shots for ringside photographers and discussing the National Football League playoffs with HBO's announcers -- oh, and from walloping Henry Bruseles virtually at will -- he received a couple of stern messages from his uncle and trainer, Roger Mayweather.

"I told him he was fighting a Class C fighter, and he had to treat him like a Class C fighter," the trainer said.

That is precisely what Mayweather did Saturday night in a fight which proved just as lopsided as advertised, with Bruseles befuddled by speed and battered by body shots.

The last of those body shots, a left hook Mayweather dug to Bruseles' ribs, produced the second knockdown of both the eighth round and the fight, and brought Bruseles' cornermen to the ring apron in concession.

Referee Jorge Alonso waved off the fight at 2:55 of the eighth round in a scheduled 12.

Mayweather, 33-0 (22), of Grand Rapids, Michigan, controlled the fight at all distances. His jab was pinpoint effective and was the dominant tool of the early rounds.

But when Bruseles worked his way inside -- which wasn't difficult in a ring which measured 16 1/2 feet squared -- Mayweather also peppered him from inside.

"They tried to put me in a small ring," Mayweather said. "But nothing was going to work. It was easy work."

Mayweather led by scores of 70-62, 69-64 and 70-63 on the official scorecards through the seven completed rounds.

Bruseles, 21-3-1, of Caguas, Puerto Rico, hardly landed an effective shot. Mayweather landed more than twice as many punches according to CompuBox statistics, including a whopping 97-17 edge in jabs landed.

"He was a lot faster than I expected," Bruseles said. "I got caught with a big body shot (on the final knockdown) and just couldn't breathe."

Mayweather said he sparred 161 rounds in preparation for a fight which wasn't expected to be any closer than it was. But after a 245-day layoff, the longest of his career, Mayweather said he felt like he needed the extensive in-the-ring preparation.

"I needed a fight like this, a tune-up," Mayweather said. "I needed to fight a guy like this just because it had been so long since I had been in the ring."

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By the time he had softened Bruseles with his usual assortment of jabs and lead right hands, both from distance and from close range, Mayweather was ready for playtime.

During the seventh round, Mayweather posed along the ropes in mid-round and commanded the ringside photographers, "Take some pictures."

Also during that round, Mayweather overheard ringside announcer Jim Lampley ask colleague Roy Jones Jr. who would win Sunday's New England Patriots-Pittsburgh Steelers NFL playoff game.

"New England," Mayweather answered.

Lampley then proceeded to ask Mayweather who the fighter liked between the Atlanta Falcons and Philadelphia Eagles.

"I like Michael Vick," Mayweather replied, and never once absorbed a punch from Bruseles during the entire conversation.

After both the fifth and seventh rounds, Mayweather returned to the corner and appeared to be arguing with his trainer.

"We were having fun," Mayweather clarified. "I was telling Roger this was easy work, just like going through training camp."

The trainer had a different message to impart.

"I told him to quit messing around and get the guy out of there," Roger Mayweather said. "I told him if he would just touch him to the body, the guy was already broken down and couldn't take it anymore."

Two minutes into the eighth round, Mayweather concluded a flurry with a right uppercut which sent Bruseles down for the first knockdown. Then he did a bump-and-grind dance back to mid-ring, soft-shoed his way through a few more steps, then followed up with the left hook to the ribs which produced the fight-ending knockdown.

"I wanted to look impressive," Mayweather said. "And you know what they were saying all along, that all I would do is run. I guess they thought I was a front-runner. But I didn't get big-headed. I was out there having fun, talking. The dancing and stuff, that's part of being Floyd Mayweather. That's what separates me and makes me different."

Mayweather grossed \$2.5 million to Bruseles' \$150,000.

In the semi-main event, heavyweight Samuel Peter, 22-0 (19), scored four knockdowns against Yanqui Diaz (13-2) en route to a fifth-round technical knockout.

Peter floored Diaz in the second round, but drew a two-point deduction for landing a punch

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while Diaz was on one knee. Peter flirted with another deduction when he landed a glancing punch after the third knockdown but was not penalized.

The fourth knockdown prompted referee Brian Garry to stop the fight 54 seconds into the fifth round.