

Zab Judah Was Simply Super

Written by Marc Lichtenfeld
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*"I'm super, thanks for asking
All things considered I couldn't be better
I must say
I'm feeling super
No, nothing bugs me
Everything is super when you're
don't you think I look cute in this hat" – Big Gay Al (South Park)*

Saturday night, my emotions and opinions were manipulated so often I thought I was back with my ex-girlfriend.

Before the Zab "Super" Judah – Cory Spinks fight, I believed firmly that a Judah win was better for boxing. Even though he has a reputation for being a bit of a thug, his explosive power and colorful personality would surely enrapture more fans than the quietly confident defensive wizard Spinks.

When Showtime ran features on both fighters, I felt guilty for thinking that way. While Zab Judah was certainly not born with a silver spoon in his mouth (although he's made up for it with a mouthful of silver or platinum or whatever that is), Spinks' childhood was downright awful. He lost his best friend, mentor and brother to the streets when he was still a kid. Add being the son of a heavyweight champ who became the butt of the nations' jokes to the already trying circumstances of growing up in one of the roughest neighborhoods in the country and you can only imagine what Cory Spinks has endured.

Yet his image, and by most accounts his reality, is of a family man who is proud of escaping the streets that have claimed so many young men just like him. Spinks' and his never-say-die attitude should serve as a role model for just about anyone, not just kids from the ghetto.

Then Cory Spinks made his Hamed-like entrance to the ring and I thought "maybe he is good for boxing." After all, Pernell Whitaker was a fan favorite and he was no mini Sonny Liston.

Boxing would get wearisome very quickly if every fighter made such a grand entrance. While some or even many people may have thought it was over the top, I don't mind a little showmanship once in a while.

By the opening bell, I was convinced that a Spinks win would not only be good for boxing, but good for all sports.

And then Zab Judah went to work.

Judah displayed the brilliance that has been expected of him since his pro debut. His vaunted punching power eventually caught up to Spinks, yet Judah also boxed masterfully. He was very

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difficult to hit and he was able to create the openings he needed to put Spinks away. He was nothing short of electrifying.

Immediately fans started thinking about this new version – Judah 2-0 against Kostya Tszyu and Shane Mosley, and all of the other big names that occupy the 140–154 pound range. A more mature, businesslike Judah appeared to be one of the best boxers in the world. Speed, defense, power – he displayed it all Saturday night. If he can continue to fight at that level, boxing fans are in for a real treat over the next few years.

Cory Spinks would have been just fine for boxing. Zab Judah is better.

JABS

- After the fight, Zab could be heard yelling that his father Yoel should be considered for Trainer, Manager, and Father of the year. While I can't speak for his paternal duties, it does appear to be a brilliant move on his part to accept short money in order to get the rematch with Spinks. Judah reportedly earned \$100,000 compared to Spinks' \$1.2 million. Zab should now be set up for a seven-figure payday in his next fight.

- Don't know if Monte Barrett can beat the top guys in the division, but he ensured that I'll be watching if he tries. His defeat of Owen Beck was a terrific victory. For all of his shortcomings, Beck hits hard. Barrett did a great job braving the storm. His cutman Jimmy Glenn more than earned his paycheck that night.

- Perhaps one of the most underrated fighters around is WBC junior featherweight champ Oscar Larios. He fights Thursday night on Fox Sports Net against Wayne McCullough. If McCullough has anything left, this should be an exciting fight. Check it out.

Until next time, obey my commands and protect yourself at all times.