

## The Aftershock

Written by Robert Cassidy Jr.  
Tuesday, 10 January 2006 19:00

---

There are those still ducking from the fallout at the Theater at Madison Square Garden last Saturday. When three of Don King's champions lose and a multi-million dollar purse gets snatched from the jaws of victory, the aftershock goes a long way. This evening of boxing posed more questions than it answered.

This is what I am left to ponder.

1. Will Zab Judah ever fight Floyd Mayweather Jr.?
2. After a very good unification bout in which O'Neil Bell upset WBC-WBA champion Jean-Marc Mormeck, will anyone care about the cruiserweight division?
3. Does it really matter if Carlos Baldomir won all three belts?
4. Who is Amílcar Brusa and why isn't he in the hall of fame?
5. Since the WBA declared the WBA welterweight title vacant, did anyone happen to tell Luis Collazzo, the man the WBA declared as champion when it designated Zab Judah, "super champion," or undisputed champion to the rest of the world?
6. Will Zab finally focus on his career?
7. And did Don King actually cause the Johnstown flood?

I am not a rocket scientist, merely a man among sweet scientists. However, I shall do my best to provide some answers.

1. Yes. Because it makes cents, if not sense. Just as Erik Morales will fight Manny Pacquiao after losing to Zahir Raheem in a tune-up fight, these two speedsters will meet sooner rather than later. Certainly not in April, but before the year is out. Aside from Ricky Hatton, Zab Judah remains the most intriguing opponent left for Mayweather. There are not too many opponents out there who are going to afford Mayweather a \$5 million payday. Miguel Cotto isn't there yet and Sugar Shane Mosley still has to beat Fernando Vargas. At this point, Pretty Boy Floyd can fight for any of the welterweight belts and give Judah the chance to challenge for the title and gain some redemption. The biggest hurdle may be the damage done by Judah – not in the ring – but with his mouth after the fight. Don King, though, has never let hard feelings stand in the way a payday.

2. No. As good a fight as this was, Bell and Mormeck where still known only to hardcore boxing fans. The only time this division has flourished was when Evander Holyfield reigned as undisputed champion. Holyfield was a crossover star and came into the pros as a member of the much ballyhooed 1984 U.S. Olympic team. Want the proof? Is anyone outside of France

## The Aftershock

Written by Robert Cassidy Jr.  
Tuesday, 10 January 2006 19:00

---

clamoring to see this one again?

**3.** No. In my book, he's the undisputed welterweight champion of the world. It doesn't matter if he paid extortion fees, um, sorry, sanctioning fees, to the WBA or IBF. As they used to say in the old days, he beat the man who beat the man ... and so on. Give Baldomir his due. My guess is that returns to Argentina for a gimme title defense at Luna Park and then returns to the States to meet the highest bidder. That could be Judah, or Arturo Gatti or Ricky Hatton or Miguel Cotto or even Mayweather. He's earned the right to choose.

**4.** Amílcar Brusa is the man who trained Baldomir and is to Argentina what Eddie Futch was to the United States. You could see it as soon as he stepped into the ring. Brusa exuded confidence, even if Baldomir did not. The trainer may now be in his 80s, but the man who guided the career of Carlos Monzon has resurrected himself. He's working with the stable of fighters at Sycuan Ringside Promotions (Baldomir's team) as well as Golden Boy Promotions. In all, he's trained 13 world champions, including Miguel Angel Cuello, Francisco Quiroz, Antonio Esparragoza, Rafael Pineda, Jorge Rodrigo Barrios, Carlos Hernandez, Miguel Lora, Sugar Baby Rojas. And yes, he deserves a plaque in Canastota. Immediately.

**5.** Here is where the WBA's ridiculous rule gets exposed. In its wisdom – or perhaps in its greed to charge more sanctioning fees – the WBA elevates undisputed champions to the status of “super champion.” Once that is achieved, they open up the WBA title again; even though Zab Judah was recognized by the universe as the undisputed welterweight champion of the world, Luis Collazzo fought and beat Jose Rivera for the WBA title. So, in the WBA's universe, there are two welterweight champions. (The same thing happened during Bernard Hopkins' reign as middleweight when William Joppy won the WBA title by defeating Howard Eastman). But wait, it gets better. When Judah fought Baldomir, it was a WBC mandatory and thus only that belt was on the line. Now, this is real intelligence at work. The WBA, which already has a champion in Collazzo, has declared the title vacant. Has anyone informed Collazzo of this? And what exactly was Collazzo paying those sanctioning fees for in the first place?

**6.** Yes. I know you've heard it before, but Judah is a super talent. I think his trainer, who also happens to be his father, is serious enough and smart enough, not to get burned again. This one cost them \$5 million. That is motivation enough to get focused. The camp can make all the excuses it wants about the fight week schedule, the bottom line is that Judah should beat Baldomir 10 out of 10 times. After the loss to Cory Spinks, father and son Judah told me that I would see a new fighter in the Spinks rematch. They were right. The talent and determination are there. They've put it together before and I believe they will do it again.

**7.** After the loss to Baldomir, Team Judah blamed promoter Don King for a hectic promotional schedule the week of the fight. That's nonsense. Promoting the fight is part of the contractual obligation and this may be the first fighter in history to use that as an excuse. Press conferences, appearances and talk radio spots are part of the package and, if nothing else, an incredible ego boost. It wasn't an hour after the fight that the rumor mill was churning out stories of Judah partying the week of the bout. Who knows what is really true. But during his post-fight interview on Showtime, Zab blamed King. Later, at the live post-fight press conference, reporter Wally Matthews asked Don to comment on Zab's accusations. The response was classic King:

## The Aftershock

Written by Robert Cassidy Jr.

Tuesday, 10 January 2006 19:00

---

"Let 'em blame me, everybody else does. The Johnstown flood, World War II, the Lindbergh kidnapping, they all blame me. It was a great night of boxing, so blame me for that, too."

By the way, when Judah made his way to the press conference, he was already singing a different tune. He said he had no excuses and gave credit to Baldomir.

Hope that answered your questions. I'll get back to you on that flood thing.