Being a boxing fan means putting up with a lot of garbage – corrupt rankings, horrible decisions and ill-prepared fighters who show up just for a payday. But this weekend reminded me that there are good people in boxing and athletes who are willing to lay it all on the line.

I watched the Mosley – Vargas fight with some industry people. Halfway through the bout, I questioned why Mosley would stand toe-to-toe with Vargas when he could box him instead. A trainer who was among us, didn't say a word. He just pointed to his heart. I don't think Mosley's strategy was the smartest way to fight the contest, but it did provide for a thrilling bout.

The night before, I attended the Glen Johnson – Richard Hall card. Several things that I saw sparked the idea for this column, even before viewing the Mosley – Vargas match.

Richard Hall was outclassed, plain and simple. Johnson is a better fighter and has had more activity in the past two years. Hall also had limited sparring for this fight due to a cut (that reopened) during camp. In fact, he didn't spar at all for the final two and a half weeks.

However, that allowed him to work on his conditioning. The fact that Hall went 12 rounds for the first time in his career (despite a two-year layoff) was a testament to the work he put in as well as pure determination. There were times during the fight when I remarked to the writers next to me, "He's done in another round or two." He wasn't. Not at all.

No matter how many big right hands he took – and he took many – Hall continued to look for angles and throw punches. When he was staggered, which happened a few times, he either fought his way out of trouble or was crafty enough to buy time.

His assistant trainer, Pete Brodsky, remarked to me after the fight, "There wasn't one minute in one round when Richard wasn't trying to find a way to win the fight." Brodsky's observation was dead on. Though the scores were lopsided (118-109, 119-108 and 119-107), many of the rounds were fairly close. Johnson's head thumping rights made the difference in most of them.

Johnson deserves credit too. He entered the ring in top shape for what should have been a stay busy fight. Though it was not an easy night, he appeared as if he could have gone several more rounds without difficulty. Hall pounded Johnson's body early on, but the attack didn't seem to slow the former champ down. Richard Hall was awkward and busy, but Johnson figured him out and did what it took to win the fight. It was very entertaining as both combatants let their hands go all night.

Richard Hall may not be a champion but he proved he has the heart of one. Both boxers proved to be consummate professionals Friday night and gave fans their money's worth. That doesn't always happen in the sport we love, but when it does, it's glorious.

They're not alone in their efforts. Every weekend, four-round club fighters to superstar world

champions fight their hearts out. It's nice to be reminded of that every once in a while.

Epilogue: After the bout was over I witnessed a conversation between Brodsky and one of the ringside physicians. Brodsky asked the doctor if he had taken a good look at Hall. The doctor replied that he had and Richard seemed fine. Brodsky strongly recommended that the doctor go back into the dressing room and examine him again. The doc asked if there was a problem. Brodsky replied, "No, but he took a lot of head shots. I'd really like you to take a close look at him." Fortunately, Hall checked out OK and my faith in boxing's humanity was restored. Brodsky doesn't have a long or especially close relationship with Hall. But the veteran trainer was concerned enough about his charge to make sure that he was properly cared for. There are plenty of guys in this sport that would have been happy to wish their fighter well, take their check and go home. I know that Brodsky is not the only cornerman to feel a sense of responsibility and compassion. But it's nice to be reminded of that every once in a while too.

Jabs

• Great job by Jay Nady halting the Calvin Brock – Zuri Lawrence fight as soon as Lawrence hit the canvas. That was a scary knockout and Nady ensured that medical attention could be provided as soon as possible.

• I'm not seeing much women's boxing on local shows here in South Florida anymore. I don't know if that's a nationwide trend. I seem to meet a lot of female boxers but don't see them fight.

• I'd love to see Ike Quartey accept Kassim Ouma's challenge. That's a great test for both men.

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