

Taylor-Wright Compubox Tale

On the heels of the middleweight championship contest between Jermain Taylor and Winky Wright that ended in a draw, one reader sent an e-mail in defense of the challenger Wright.

His reasoning: Compubox stats. He felt Wright was robbed because of the numbers told by punch stats.

For more than a decade Compubox, the company that provides punch stats for HBO, has been sending the punch numbers to television viewers with most accepting the numbers as fact. They're not always right. In some cases, they're ridiculously wrong.

Let's take Saturday's battle between Taylor and Wright. Early in that fight, around the second or third round, according to Compubox Wright had landed somewhere around 25 punches. Taylor had landed eight. But at the end of the round Taylor fired and landed five punches alone in the final 10 seconds. The punch counting company was basically saying Taylor had landed only three punches prior to that outburst. They weren't even close to being accurate.

What most people fail to realize are the people hired to count the punches may not have a good angle, the referee could be blocking the view, or the counter may not be any good. Look at the Olympics where they use a system similar to counting. If three people do not punch their button within the same several seconds, the punch does not register.

Americans were getting the short end of the stick in numerous bouts despite snapping their opponent's head back on several occasions. I can still recall Vicente Escobedo nailing his opponent and none of the punches getting recognized by the chosen counters. One of my favorite examples took place several years ago between Erik "El Terrible" Morales and Paulie Ayala of Texas. It was a fight between a featherweight champion and a junior featherweight champion and took place in Las Vegas. Those attending the fight scored it a close victory for Morales. While those watching television and listening to the announcers quote punch stats had it a blowout for Morales.

I can't remember the actual punch stats given for that fight but what I do recall is Morales having somewhere between 200 punches connecting and Ayala less than 80. It was far from the truth.

Later that week, I spoke to Ayala and he was mortified that the Compubox numbers had his connect totals so dismally low. He couldn't understand it.

That week I decided to count the punches by watching the fight in slow motion. What I found was a drastically different result and a tally that saw Morales landing fewer than given credit, and Ayala much more than Compubox attributed to him. Morales still had an edge in connected blows, but not more than 30 punches separated him from Ayala.

Boxing Chatter

Written by David A. Avila
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There have been many other instances, too many to go through.

Fans, the only thing Compubox is good for is getting a rough idea on who is winning the fight. But don't count on it.

Two Female Bouts on June 23 in Monterey, Calif.

Though female boxing has taken a nosedive in the last year, a fight card in Monterey will feature two female contests including Moreno Valley, California's Kaliesha West.

West only has three pro fights at this point, but the speedy female fighter has not had an easy fight nor does she want a "gimme" as she hurtles toward a world championship bout some time in the future.

Fighting West at 116 pounds will be Maria Contreras, who recently lost to Vanessa Juarez in Texas last month. The fight went the distance. Ironically West and Juarez met a couple of times as amateurs and should be destined to meet again.

In a lightweight bout, Jenny Houts (1-0) meets Dyana Ornalez who is making her pro debut.

The main event at the Monterey Conference Center features Jesus Rodriguez (8-2) and Sergio De La Torre (10-8-2) in a junior welterweight bout. For tickets and information call (831) 688-1604.

Melinda Cooper Wins in France

Last week Melinda Cooper of Las Vegas won by unanimous decision over Daniela David of Romania. The match took place at Luce, France and at the lightweight level, but Cooper was still too strong and too fast. She dropped David in the middle of the fight.

"They really treated her good in France," said James Pena, who trains and manages the talented Cooper. "They appreciated her ring skills."

Cooper is considered by many to be one of the top female fighters pound-for-pound. Pena said his protégé may be matched against Fontana, California's Heather Percival in San Bernardino.

Vernon Forrest and Ike Quartey Finally Meet

Former welterweight world titleholders Vernon Forrest and Ike Quartey will meet on Aug. 5 in New York City at Madison Square Garden. Both fighters are now junior middleweights and eager to get back in the ring despite recent setbacks. Forrest (37-2, 28 KOs) has suffered from injuries recently and realizes the future is now. Quartey (37-2-1, 33 KOs) disappeared from the fight scene after suffering back-to-back losses to Oscar de la Hoya followed by Fernando Vargas. The boxer from Ghana finally returned last year and won three bouts. It should be an interesting contest.

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Marquez Brothers on Showtime

Mexico City's Juan Manuel Marquez and his younger brother Rafael Marquez will be featured in separate bouts on Aug. 5, at the Montbleu Resort Casino and Spa in Lake Tahoe. Juan Manuel Marquez (44-3-1, 33 KOs) opposes Terdsak Jandarnng (24-1, 15 KOs) in a featherweight contest. Rafael Marquez, the IBF bantamweight titleholder meets Africa's Silence Mabuza (19-1, 15 KOs) in a rematch. The first meeting resulted in a technical knockout win for Marquez (35-3, 31 KOs). The two fights will be televised on Showtime and promoted by Gary Shaw Promotions.

New Boxing Book

IBF lightweight titleholder Jesus "El Matador" Chavez's new book "Standing Eight" is on the shelves at most bookstores. Now fighting out of Austin, Texas, the boxer's story of fighting out of the slums of Chicago and recent tragedies in the ring should be a riveting story.

Bad Refereeing

Hector Camacho Jr. lost his match this weekend when referee Randy Neumann decided to stop the fight as Andrey Tsurkan fired combinations. The problem was that none of the blows were landing. Camacho deflected, slipped and blocked the dozen or so punches but Neumann stopped the fight without warning. Most referees in California or Nevada will shout out a warning to punch back or the fight will be stopped. Nothing came out of Neumann who was pretty bad throughout the fight. Tsurkan continually fired blows below the belt including dozens off of Camacho's thighs. All of the punches were illegal but the referee did not see them. But thousands of viewers saw them including the HBO television commentators.

Upcoming Las Vegas Fight Card

An American heavyweight Calvin Brock (28-0, 22 KOs) attempts to stop the tide of former Soviet block heavyweights when he faces Timor Ibragimov (21-0-1, 13 KOs) at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas on June 25. Both heavyweights are age 31. Also, on the same fight card, will be a pair of undefeated welterweights Joel Julio (27-0, 24 KOs) and Carlos Quintana (22-0, 18 KOs) hoping to gain a shot at the WBA welterweight world title if they win.