Young prospects are often identified by their hometowns. Their fans feel this sense of local pride, as if the man entering the ring is a part of their family. This familial kinship is crystal-clear when a Brooklyn fighter rises through the ranks. When super-middleweight Curtis “Showtime” Stevens entered the ring against journeyman Marcos Primera in front of his hometown fans at the Manhattan Center, he was just another guy from Brownsville, another kid from the old neighborhood.

Stevens, part of Lou DiBella’s vaunted “Chin Checkers” (along with Jaidon Codrington), had made his name knocking out overmatched foes on DiBella’s frequent “Broadway Boxing” cards. Short and squat with knockout power in both hands, Stevens reminded some of fellow Brooklyn native, Mike Tyson. Primera was just another in a long line of strategically picked opponents designed to make Stevens look spectacular. It was supposed to be a coronation, another affirmation of Stevens’ prowess. But sometimes, as a wise man once said, the best-laid plans don’t always come to pass.

Fast forward to the eighth and final round: Stevens, ahead on the scorecards, walked into a vicious uppercut and fell to the floor. He rose to his feet gingerly, but Primera, emboldened by his role as potential spoiler, charged after Stevens like Pete Rose into Ray Fosse. Stevens covered up and went into a shell, as Primera kept digging and digging until referee Randy Neumann stepped in and waved off the contest. And that is when things got ugly.

As Stevens protested Neumann’s stoppage, cups of beer and ice cubes were hoisted into the ring. Men from Stevens’ posse attempted to jump the security bars leading to the ring in order to pummel whomever and whatever. Expletive-laden chants charged with threats of violence and cries of despair clouded the arena. The scene, in short, felt like a Slayer concert and the Source Awards rolled into a potentially deadly meteor.

Luckily, for those in attendance, security did an impeccable job of weeding out the thugs, the guys who, when things go wrong, feel the need to lay the smackdown on unassuming people. For a brief moment, I – and those around me – feared for our safety.

The members of Stevens’ posse were on the precipice of causing a full-scale riot. Like the Riddick Bowe-Andrew Golota I, Bowe-Elijah Tillery, Zab Judah-Floyd Mayweather, and Allan Green-Jaidon Codrington fights, an entourage gone wild marred the Stevens-Primera fight. You can talk about the hypocrisy of the sanctioning bodies or blind-as-a-bat judges, but these unruly posses, bankrolled by the fighters and promoters, are one of the greatest dangers to our sport.

They endanger the true fans, the people who pay outrageous money to watch the fights. They endanger the integrity of boxing, which is questioned almost daily by the uninformed. They give credence to the people who see the hip-hop lifestyle as nothing more than a violent subculture. But they don’t care. They see the fighters as six feet dollar signs.

You see, these hanger-ons, many of whom have no discernible income to speak of, look at these pugilists as many of us do our stock portfolios. Stevens, with his urban marketability (hip-hop entrepreneur Damon Dash is his co-promoter), is a marketer's dream. When his posse and mass of supporters saw Neumann wave his hands, their delusions of economic grandeur were flushed down the toilet. No longer was Stevens the crowned prince of Brooklyn. He was old news in a "here today, gone tomorrow" sport.

But, as an impartial ringside observer, it did not matter who won or lost. It was just a shame that Primera's crowning moment was marred by a pack of criminals. Primera, who had been served up as cannon fodder earlier in his career to guys like Kingsley Ikeke and Jermain Taylor, had his one moment in the sun. He should have been allowed to revel in his against-the-odds triumph. Instead, he had to be escorted from the ring by police for simply knocking out the hometown kid.

Stevens, for now, will hit the comeback trail. But, in the end, he is still just another fighter from the old neighborhood looking to make it big. Now, when the lights are not as bright and the big paydays do not appear as imminent, we'll see if the neighborhood still cares.