

Early Rounds: Acceleration

Written by Robert Cassidy Jr.
Sunday, 11 February 2007 19:00

Here is what the record book will state in perpetuity.

January 20, 2007: Tommy Rainone W4 Jerry Kelly, Bushkill, PA

January 25, 2007: Tommy Rainone W4 John Lipcomb, Bronx, NY

February 9, 2007: Tommy Rainone KO 2 Ronny Glover, Seldon, LI

Three fights. Three wins. One knockout. All in span of 21 days. That makes Rainone 5-0 and itching for another fight.

Before we get to the next one, let's look at the last one.

The setting was Suffolk Community College way out in Seldon, Long Island. ESPN was in town and a horde of national boxing media followed. The two main bouts featured some good heavyweight prospects and Derric Rossy, the former standout football player at Boston College, was the reason ESPN turned up the lights on Long Island's otherwise anonymous boxing scene.

This was a night for Rainone to impress. And he knew it. At the opening bell, the two fighters moved to the center of the ring for combat. Glover, 2-3 and 146 ³/₄ pounds, extended his left glove for a sportsmanlike tap and Rainone, 147 pounds, shook his head. "No." The message was clear. This is business, we'll shake hands later.

The wait wouldn't be long.

"This is the way I look at it, you touch gloves for the final round, that's it," said Rainone. "This isn't a sparring session. I saw him at the weigh-in, he seemed like a nice guy. But if I touched his gloves, I think I would have put him into a comfort zone. I thought he was already intimidated so I thought this would intimidate him more. No hard feelings but this is a fight."

After an uneventful first round during which Rainone did the stalking and Glover the countering, Tommy pounced in the second stanza. He is generally a smooth-boxing southpaw but at this moment Rainone wanted to make a statement to the big shots at ringside. It basically read: "I can box, but tonight I'll fight."

"He was the kind of guy I have to knockout," said Rainone. "He had been knocked out before. His three losses were all by knockout. As soon as I got him in trouble in the corner I wasn't going to let him out."

Coming in strong behind a right jab, the southpaw continued to back Glover up. One hard left hand-right hook combination later and Glover was stuck in a neutral corner. It was a body shot that finally forced Glover to sag.

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"Once I backed him up I saw that he would fall apart," said Rainone. "He got stunned a little then he backed into the corner and I started to unload. I just kept throwing punches and he covered up. Once he did that, he really gave me his ribs. When you hit someone with the right body shot, you feel his body in our glove. Someone told me I broke his ribs."

Rainone pounded away as his opponent sunk further into defeat. He finally took the 10-count while sitting on the bottom rope.

Rainone's work was done and already, after a hectic and exhilarating three weeks, he was looking for his next fight. Right now he's scheduled to go again on March 23 on Long Island and then right back April 6 at the Blue Horizon in Philadelphia.

"Fighting at the Blue Horizon would be a dream come true for me," he said.

Tommy Rainone is now 5-0 and he can't wait to reach 7-0. It's all been like a dream for the 27-year-old kid who got a late start on his pro career.

"Believe me," he said. "It was a great 21 days."

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