

Lamon Does A Duran, Says 'No Mas'

Written by Michael Woods
Sunday, 08 July 2007 19:00

Would've been nice if he let us know that his desire to compete had diminished to the point where he didn't know if he'd continue in the ring.

Would have been good to know that Lamon Brewster would be committing the nickname "Relentless" to the scrap heap, and would be open to quitting on his stool when things weren't going his way.

It would have been nice for Brewster to let the fans know that he wasn't the same sort of athlete who weathered a fierce storm of punishment from Wladimir Klitschko in 2004, and persevered, and battled on, until the giant Ukrainian's stamina crumbled.

It would have been good if Brewster let the suits who put up the dough for his purse know that when the going got tough, he would pursue the safe path, rather than fire every last bullet, and at least try to land a lucky shot.

It would have been good for Lamon Brewster to bark back at trainer Buddy McGirt after the sixth round of his fight with Wladimir Klitschko in Koln, Germany on Saturday, and promise that he'd show the same stubbornness he showed in 2004 and he'd go out for round seven and show Dr. Steelhammer who had the brass balls, once again.

Instead, the boxer capitulated, and faced with another three, or six, or 18 minutes of thudding jabs, shocking rights and indefensible left hooks, he folded up the tent, and waved adios.

"I'm gonna pull the plug," trainer McGirt said after the 18th minute of one-sided action. "OK? Talk to me baby. I'm gonna pull the plug. I know you're trying , you hear me? You hear me? Alright?"

The moment called for a fiery retort, and if the scene had been written by Stallone, or starred Diego Corrales, or even the Brewster of old, a fiery retort would have flown back in Buddy's face.

But this Brewster, the one who called it a career in Koln, the 34-year-old one who needed one more payday to give he and his family a little financial cushion, offered no words.

He could only nod his head, and agree to let his corner wave the white towel of surrender.

You can't argue with the trainer, who saw the writing on the wall, saw an overmatched, undermotivated shell of a fighter absorbing a considerable load of punishment from minute one.

McGirt, a family man, like Brewster, can't be faulted for offering Brewster the out.

The trainer had warned the boxer, who hadn't gloved up for real since his April 2006, and was

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looking to continue in this field even though he'd needed a surgeon to stitch together his torn retina, that he didn't like what he was seeing after the second round.

"Do what we worked on, let's not let it go out the window," McGirt said to a listless looking man who looked like he was heading out to work a double shift emptying septic tanks. "Look at me," McGirt demanded, as he gave Brewster two wake up mini-slaps. "Let's not let it go out the window, baby."

In the third, a round in which Brewster looked like he was being paid to act as a sparring partner, a round in which he looked like a clueless Toughman as he launched a left hook to close the round, McGirt warned Brewster that he needed to get into gear, quick. "I'm not going to get hurt too much more, you understand me?" Buddy said.

It was more of the same in the fourth, but the hopeful analyst Larry Merchant recalled Brewster's stirring 2004 performance.

"Let's remember, Klitschko won 14 of the the first 15 minutes of the last fight, and lost the fight," said the 76-year-old commentator, who's seen more than his share of stunning turnarounds.

McGirt still talked the talk after that fourth frame, imploring his man to not look for the walkoff launch. Brewster came out with an urgency in his stance, but his short arms, and Klitschko's brilliant command of technique (which will be overshadowed by Brewster's less than stirring mode of warfare) quickly took the spring out his step.

"Answer one question for me and you got to be honest," McGirt queried after the session. "Are you feeling it yes or no?"

"Yes, I'm feeling it," Brewster answered, with the zeal of a man on death row who'd just learned he'd won the Lotto.

"I'm gonna give you one more round, Lamon, I'm not to see you take those shots, you hear me? Give me one more round to show me you can do what we worked on, if not baby," McGirt said, "we're gonna stop it, you hear me, OK?"

The sixth was like the fifth, and the fourth, and so on, with Klitschko operating with surgical precision, with sterling ring generalship, and a sky-high level of confidence. Brewster was the home run king on his last legs, still carrying the XXL Louisville Slugger, but barely able to lift the lumber off his shoulder, let alone take a meaningful hack.

McGirt had seen enough, almost, and gave his man one last opportunity to go out guns a blazin.' "I'm gonna pull the plug," McGirt said, and he did.

Brewster, at 34, having had his fill of the savage science, the most dangerous game, showed why this is a sport best left to the young.

It was his No Mas moment, and will likely be the capper on a mediocre career which was

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highlighted by one night in 2004 when he truly lived up to his nickname, "Relentless," when he was determined and dangerous, when Lamon Brewster exemplified the resolve that fight viewers cherish and adore.

But this is 2006, and his four kids and wife are now at the forefront of Brewster's head when he contemplates going for broke, and trying to storm castle Klitschko with a meager ration of weapons. Those familial considerations, while admirable and understandable, are not the building blocks for stunning comeback victory in the boxing ring. I'm certain that decision, to throw in the white towel, will earn the boxer formerly known as "Relentless" many hugs and kisses at home, but for viewers who tune in to be entertained by the awesome deeds of sweet scientists, not so much.