

Next For Williams: Rematch? Cotto? Kermit?

Written by Michael Woods
Sunday, 15 July 2007 19:00

It's time for a new nickname for Paul Williams. After what we saw on Saturday night against Antonio Margarito in California, we can't very well call him "The Punisher."

Kermit Cintron is trying that moniker on for size, we hear, and I think it may fit him as snugly as a pair of Reyes. For Williams, the genetic freak from Georgia with a no-name trainer and a workrate that chews up CompuBox counters, may we suggest a nom de guerre that is far less sexy, but far more descriptively accurate---"The Strategist."

OK, it doesn't roll off the tongue as smoothly "The Punisher."

But Williams must get props for tossing his hands, repeatedly if not with tremendous destructive intent, in Margarito's face on Saturday, and snagging the Tijuana Tornado's WBO strap. He was on message like a Fox News analyst, and his talking points, a pesky jab, a quick straight right and sneaky hooks to keep Margarito from setting his feet, won the eyes of the judges.

Williams didn't deviate from his strategy, didn't try to load up, and get greedy, and finish the rugged Mexican.

OK, so he didn't exactly mop the floor with Margarito, as he promised a few weeks back in his first-person piece on TSS. Could that be a problem down the line? Will fight fans respect his skills, and his singularity of purpose, but refuse to join his fan club, because his game doesn't really match his nickname? Or will he be able to tweak his style a touch, and learn (or choose) to stay in the pocket for a split second longer, dig his feet in, transfer his weight in a fashion intended to produce concussions?

Promoter Dan Goossen told TSS that Williams changed his style in this fight, and didn't set down on his shots as much as he has in the past or will in the future, because of who his opponent was. He respected the Mexican's firepower, and knew that he couldn't engage in a bomb-trading festival of folly.

"There were moments when Paul went toe to toe," Goossen said Monday afternoon. "But he utilized his skills, and he threw bombs when the opportunity presented itself, not just singles, he went for homers. There are different styles for different fights."

So, what's next for "The Strategist," Goose?

"If Plan A, Cotto against Mosley, doesn't happen, and Cotto tries to fight someone of a lesser ilk, and not Paul, we'd be reverting back to the old days, when promoters weren't working together," Goossen said. "The fans and the media must demand it, and Cotto can't say Paul hasn't beaten anyone, or that the money isn't there. There was lots of money in this promotion, over \$3 million, and Paul was a main ingredient."

Next For Williams: Rematch? Cotto? Kermit?

Written by Michael Woods
Sunday, 15 July 2007 19:00

Goossen thinks he has the best welterweight in the game, and thinks the 6-2 hitter can add beef, and move seamlessly up to 154 and then 160. He may, however, have a hard time finding compelling fights for the new stud in his stable after Saturday's showing. Would you want to put your guy in with Williams, a guy who throws tosses his hands for a full three minutes of every round, moves well enough to avoid punishment, and has a teflon beard, to boot?

I'd like to offer to offer my matchmaking skills now, and suggest, while Mosley is busy grabbing his last mega payday on a career-closing suicide mission against Cotto, that Williams glove up with Kermit Cintron.

Kermit's craving KOs, has Steward in his corner and his confidence is at an apex. He closes on a foe quicker than Margarito, so I'd expect him to test Williams' wiring more than Margarito did. The IBF champ against the WBO champ, so we get a little title integration action, too.

Readers, play matchmaker. What would you like to see Williams do next? Maybe Margarito demands another crack at his lost property, the WBO belt. Maybe you'd like to see if he can solve Williams' style...

Goossen will read this, so fire away. What should "The Punisher," er, "The Strategist" do next, after switching nicknames?