

TSS EXCLUSIVE: The Wisdom of Dundee Pt. 2

Written by Raymond Markarian
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The Marksman digs in with Dundee in Part 2. The Wiseman, The Guru talks about why it's not a good idea for a dad to train his kid, and how SRL bettered Hagler. Dig in, TSS Universe, and soak up the wit and wisdom of the man who was with the magical Ali from the start...

RM: So what is the most important part about training a fighter?

AD: You have to get along with the fighter. I don't mean live with the fighter because that is the wrong way to go about it. Just be his trainer. You know there has been a big question about fathers training their sons. I think it is an extra special situation because outside of the ring you're a loving father but inside the gym you're a mean rat. Fathers that train their sons constantly have to change their stripes and you can't do that. It is very difficult for a father to be a trainer and be a father to his son.

RM: Please tell me about your time working with Sugar Ray Leonard.

AD: Oh, we had a ball. Ray was beautiful. He had so much talent and that made it a joy. Let's face it, you're only as good as the guy on the stool. He is the one that is putting it out. I had a great time with Ray Leonard. We grew together from the Hearn's fights to the Hagler fight, which were all tremendous fights.

RM: What about the Duran fights?

AD: Well there you go. Duran psychologically psyched my guy out by abusing him in front of his wife. Ray and I were walking down the street in Montreal, Canada and Duran walked up to Leonard's wife, saying: "I am going to get him. And when I am through with him, I am going to get you." Ray wanted to beat him up right then and there but I said, "Hey if you hit him here we ain't going to get paid." So the mental part of the fight pretty much started right there. We were very well prepared for the first Duran fight. You see, I had an insider on Duran that people didn't realize. He used to train in my gym. There was a little lightweight there named Doug Vaillant. Vaillant used to lick Duran everyday in the gym by out boxing him. Vaillant wasn't a superior boxer to Leonard. So all Ray had to do was outbox him in that first fight. Duran was completely baffled in the second fight. I prepared Leonard to box him that way. We used the same plan in both fights. Another thing about the first fight was that we were in Montreal, Canada. I learned a great lesson that Canadians love tough guys. There is a great history of them in Canada; Yvon Durelle, and Johnny Greco, all of those tough guys up there. Duran was a tough guy and every fan in that arena was rooting for him. It was amazing how the entire crowd turned on Ray because he is such a good kid. You know, you learn something new everyday of your life.

RM: So, you used the same strategy to train Leonard in both fights. But Leonard lost the first Duran fight because he got emotional.

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AD: Yeah, he got emotional because of the way Duran insulted his wife. Let me tell you, if Duran spoke English, he was as big a psych job as Muhammad, the guy psyched Leonard out.

RM: Sugar Ray returned the favor in the second fight.

AD: Oh yeah, the second fight was a different ballgame because Ray knew what he had to do. He just beat him the way he was supposed to beat him in the first fight. So, one fight makes another fight, right.

RM: Exactly, let's talk about the Hagler fight. What were your feelings going into the Leonard vs. Hagler fight?

AD: I was always sure Ray could beat Hagler. The reason being, as great a fighter as Hagler was, he had a thing about him where he would step forward with his right foot and then punch. So I told Ray, every time he steps forward, hit him or move away. So Ray would hit him with a jab before Hagler's punch was coming. Leonard beat him to the punch or he would move over. If you view the tape of the fight, I had a guy yelling "watch the step" so Leonard would be aware of Hagler's right hand. You see, Hagler was a right-handed fighter turned southpaw. I knew Hagler was right handed before the fight because I had a kid go get an autograph from him and Hagler signed it with his right hand. So I knew right there, that Hagler's strength was from the right side not from his left hand. I told people before the fight that this would happen.

RM: I didn't know that about Hagler.

AD: Well, a lot of people didn't know. That is the job of the trainer, you have to find these things out. You have to give yourself an edge.

RM: So, you would do things like that? You would ask young kids get autographs from the other fighters to find out their strong hands?

AD: Well, I've got friends all over the world, thank God. You find these things out by traveling and meeting people. I just like what I do as a trainer and that was a part of it.

RM: Beautiful, and you still have a desire to keep training fighters?

AD: That's right man, it's all about having fun. You have to have fun doing what you do. I have fun everyday of my life.

RM: Well, what fights are you looking forward to this year?

AD: I am looking forward to Cotto vs. Margarito and Calzaghe vs. Jones.

RM: What do you think of the proposed Kelly Pavlik vs. Paul Williams fight?

AD: That is a great fight. Williams is usually much taller than his opponents so I think that will be interesting to see how he reacts. Pavlik is a wonderful fighter he will do nothing but get

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better.

RM: Enzo Calzaghe made a few statements about Pavlik recently. He said that Pavlik is easy to expose because all he does is come forward and throw the jab followed by the cross.

AD: Yeah, but that is just his opinion. What if Pavlik comes out throwing the one, two, three, four, five, six? Pavlik throws a lot of punches and he is beautiful to watch. He is a credit to boxing because he excites people. We need the Calzaghes, we need the Pavliks, we need the Cottos, and Margaritos, we need those guys because they excite people.

RM: Cotto and Margarito is going to be a great fight.

AD: Tremendous fight! This is going to prove to me how good Cotto is. But I don't know if he could beat Margarito. Margarito is a tough guy that keeps coming forward.

RM: Who do you like in Calzaghe vs. Jones?

AD: I like Calzaghe because he throws a lot of shots. Do you remember that Glenn Johnson fight against Jones? This is going to be the same type of fight. I think Calzaghe is a little better boxer than that guy Johnson. But, you never know, fighters make fights.