Mostly because of Floyd Mayweather's virtuosic performance, and partly because Juan Manuel Marquez was in over his head wearing a lead life jacket, Saturday's pay per view boxing contest featured less drama--faaar less drama--than an episode of Keeping Up With The Kardashians. That's not to equate it with reality show dreck--Floyd's skills, we saw, are intact, and his layoff did nothing to lessen his light as the premier pugilist currently practicing. I thought we'd see at least some competitive rounds, if for no other reason that Floyd tends to take long portions of rounds of as he scouts his man and assesses weakness, but that was not to be. It was not until the post-fight postmortem, with Floyd talking to HBO's Max Kellerman, that we saw Mayweather truly tested, and in fact, tagged.

If you didn't see the bout then, or flipped off the tube before Mayweather vs. Kellerman, here's what went down.

Max started off in complimentary fashion, asking, "Better than that, how?" after Floyd said that he could've performed better in the scrap. Then things took a turn. No surprise, as Mayweather had almost guaranteed things wouldn't go smoothly with the HBO announce crew when during fight week he publicly blasted Larry Merchant and Manny Steward as being clueless about boxing and an Uncle Tom, respectively, and then chose to not participate in sit-downs with the team prior to the bout. Mayweather thanked one sponsor, Reebok and "all the sponsors that sponsored the fight," and Kellerman then tried to curtail a plugfest.

"Let's not do any commercials," he said. Floyd said he had to, because "that's seven figures."

The dynamic had shifted, from tainted to toxic, but the interview was still salvageable. And Kellerman tried. He asked about Mayweather's purchase of a weight advantage, the 11th hour contract switcheroo which saw Mayweather refuse to weigh in at the pre-arranged 144 or under limit and instead set a 146 pound limit for himself, in exchange for a settlement to Marquez, for $600,000. Lord knows, the question needed to be asked, as fight fans were abuzz about the weight issue which popped up the day before the fight, when Mayweather stepped on the scale, weighed 146 pounds, and we all wondered about the regulations for the fight, wondered if what we'd been told about a 144 pound catchweight was BS. Floyd didn't think so. "I'm not here to talk about money," the boxer said, 60 seconds after he talked about money. "What about weight?" Kellerman asked, re-phrasing the query. The fighter offered a bland "I'm happy with the victory" and a shoutout to the fans. Then Kellerman's patience, seemingly, wore thinner. "It seems that you perceive questions like that as being negative when in fact we just really want to know. It was a spectacular performance," Max said, "and people are curious about the weight, you don't want to address it all?"

"I'm here to talk about my victory, that's in the past, I'm ready to move on to bigger and better things," Floyd said, and Max answered, "I'll take that as a no." This may have been Floyd's

breaking point. Kellerman veered towards the sarcastic there, and in no way can I blame him for that show of frustration, considering the state of the Mayweather/HBO production team relationship. The sparring continued, and then escalated, when Shane Mosley came into the ring. He was part of one of the promotional parties, Golden Boy, and thus had a reason for being present, if not injecting himself so forcefully into the proceedings. Mosley came towards Mayweather, and Floyd waved him closer. Floyd said that he'd let his management team figure out if it made sense to make a fight with Mosley. Mosley asked for a shot, and then his boy Bernard Hopkins, also part of the Golden Boy crew, chimed in. All parties were now bunched together, and Kellerman looked a tad nervous. For good reason--who knew if Floyd's pal Triple H would go all WWE on Hopkins, or a Riddick Bowe possemember would club someone with a cell phone? Max tried to play peacemaker, and brokered a handshake between Floyd and Shane. Floyd was clearly miffed that his spotlight was being stolen and jawed at Mosley not to disrespect him. Max tried to change the subject. A good move, one that works when you have a screaming two year old amid a meltdown, or squawking pugilists jockeying for position on a money train down the line. "Manny Pacquiao, I thought that would get your attention.." Max began, to get Floyd's gaze off Mosley and Hopkins. It worked, and why wouldn't it; that's why Floyd took the Marquez fight, to offer a contrast to Pacquiao, who was life and death with Marquez twice. Kellerman started to go into that school of thought, and brought up the selection of Marquez as a foe. But Mayweather, perhaps still flustered because Mosley and Hopkins were in his space, took the microphone from Kellerman. "I'm going to do the talking because you do too much talking," Mayweather said, irked. Max, not willing to get into a tug o war with the fighter, threw it back to Lampley.

At the time, I was disappointed. Why'd Max do it? Here, finally, after 12 rounds of technical wizardry but a severe lack of risk-taking and drama, was the collision we'd been promised. Two titans were trading, and just like that, the plug was pulled.

I took Max to task at the time, chiding him for cancelling the compelling faceoff prematurely. But the next day I realized I hadn't considered all the angles. What it, for instance, a producer was talking in Max's ear, telling him to wrap it up, because of time constraints. So I reached out to the announcer, and got his recollection of the fight after the fight, and his analysis of where things went awry, and why.

In a phoner, Kellerman offered his take.

When Mosley came over, and then Hopkins started talking, was when "I felt it started to get out of control," he told TSS.

HBO was ready for such an eventuality, as Kellerman and producers were aware that with Floyd's fightweek barbs and refusal to step on HBO's unofficial scale, the fighter was not feeling a great deal of fondness for Team HBO. "There was a sensitivity to it getting out of control in the ring," he allowed.

Kellerman, in talking to me, was surprisingly self-critical of his handling of the interview. "Floyd's perception is 'This guy won't let me talk' and on replay I can see what he means," he said. "It's not like he wasn't justified."

But, Max said, once Mayweather took the mike from him, he felt he had no choice but to push the auto-eject button. "What am I supposed to do? The announcer has to at least have the mike."

In a different time, under a different circumstance, he said, perhaps he'd try and pull the mike back. But not then, with a rumble threatening to explode. "But Floyd was agitated, and watching the tape (the day after) I see his point,"Kellerman said.

So, then. What did Kellerman, who frankly--and refreshingly--presents himself as a work in progress, take from this butting-of-heads? He said he'll tighten up in his interviewing, not lob yes and no questions, ask shorter queries and help the fighter feel respected, a wise element considering they've just engaged in life or death combat for 36 minutes.

I've been a fan of Mayweather postfight, always really. He's typically humble, and gentlemanly. But on this night, the fans deserved to get some questions answered. Hell, they still do. Floyd hasn't sufficiently explained why he wanted/needed to weigh two pounds over the agreed-upon catchweight. If I had laid a bet down on the fight two weeks ago, I think I deserved to know why he bought those two pound, and when he decided he was going to get the contract amended. I think Max is bending over backwards to see his culpability in this skirmish, and I think he's taking too much blame. Floyd was non responsive and slippery from the start, and Max was well within his bounds to be more aggressive in his questioning. Mayweather fumbled on his handling of his rib injury, and his purchase of a poundage advantage, not to mention those problems with the IRS he denied to the heavens existed, which we know now did indeed exist. Advisor Leonard Ellerbe in no uncertain terms denied, as did Mayweather, that the fighter and the Taxman were beefing. "Floyd Mayweather does not have a problem with the IRS," Ellerbe told the AP in July. "He doesn't owe the IRS $6.1 million ... I don't (care) what a lien says. When you have a problem with them, you ain't hard to find -- ask Wesley Snipes. You go to jail, they come take your (stuff). He doesn't have a problem." Mayweather himself was adhering to that story last week. No one has been able to pin Mayweather down on these unanswered situations, and Kellerman was in the mode of hard-nosed journalist. It would've been easier to gloss over the weight issue, or frame the question in a softball fashion so Floyd could smack it out of the park, and in this day and age, we see too many examples of broadcasters going this route. Kellerman didn't. And I would have liked to see more of it.

LAST WORD ON MAYWEATHER WIN In retrospect, should we all have made more of Floyd's dismantling of the a boxer that was regarded as the third-best pugilist on the planet? It may well be that Mayweather is of such rarified talent, that he is too skilled for his opposition, and thus he makes it all look too easy, causing critics to overlook his true worth. Roy Jones at his apex also made it look so easy, and removed any element of drama from his bouts, so that it was easy to dismiss the validity of his foes. Of course, we will know more about this Mayweather win as we assess Marquez in his next outing. We'll know then if some of the holes in JMM's game that some saw widening in his February bout against Juan Diaz made it that much easier for Mayweather to have his way with the Mexican from bell to bell.

Now, it must be mentioned that with Floyd's track record of signing on against foes with notable

deficiencies in their game, rather than the acknowledged best and brightest of the day, lobbying for him as an all-time bright light is that much harder. Why didn't he seek out Kostya Tszyu, and Miguel Cotto when they were at or near their peak? Sure enough, he did take on Jose Luis Castillo at his peak, in April 2002, Floyd-as-an-alltime-great boosters will say, and we know how that went. Floyd won an ultra-controversial decision. Why, though, didn't he take on Hatton before the Hitman's marksmanship skills slipped? If Floyd truly believes in his heart that he is all that, why wasn't he throwing the gauntlet into the 147 pound ring, and challenging a "bigger" man, Antonio Margarito, in the midst of his ascent? Floyd and his team remind us now and again that they see the sport as a business, that pride is immaterial, that bragging rights are the stuff of a journeyman, not an artiste. All well and good. But could he not have made the moolah and spoke to his desired legacy by gloving up against the more-feared Margarito (someone who might press him in the way Castillo did) instead of the game but limited Baldomir? The Argentine was fortunate to meet and beat a distracted Zab Judah and playing-out-the-string Arturo Gatti, and burnish his reputation more than his talent really deserved, so Floyd's choice of him as an opponent wasn't as universally and vehemently derided as perhaps it could have been.

To kick back into the "Floyd doesn't get maybe as much credit as he deserves" gear, even if he had called out Shane Mosley in say 2006, and downed Mosley, he quite likely would have handled "Sugar" in such a fashion that people would have decided Mosley had declined decidedly from his peak. And if Floyd had set upon Paul Williams before Williams was caught on an off night against Carlos Quintana, if Floyd had dissected LTP, wouldn't the default reaction have been, "Williams ain't all that?"

Still, if Floyd had sought out and taken down several of those fighters, he could more plausibly make his claim to rightful inclusion into the "Sugar Rays" pantheon. There is still time for him to seek out foes who will help him build his case as a legend destined to be remembered 50-75-100 years from now. Fight Mosley, then the Pacman/Cotto winner, then Paul Williams, and then hop up to middleweight, and call out the most celebrated 160 pounder. In the next 18 months. It's doable...if he wants to actually work towards shoring up his rep re: his status all-time among the majority of fight fans. Floyd fanatics think moving to 160 is asking too much? Really? Of a man who insists he should be a pound for pound top fiver, or better? A guy who walks around at 160? A guy who does actually have a helluva chin, that he ever has to really use it, and could handle a middleweight punch? But I suspect that because he fights in a manner which ensures that his opponent has less than a handful of chances when he is out of position, and hittable, Mayweather will continue to fight drama-free bouts, twice a year, one-sided affairs which leave the loser looking less competent than they actually are.