

24/7 Finale Report/We'll Like You Better When You Lose

Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 30 April 2010 15:00

The time for trashtalking has passed, it is clear. Well, maybe not for Floyd Mayweather. He still manages to lob a few wordbombs at Shane Mosley in the fourth and final installment of Mayweather-Mosley 24/7, but all in all, both boxers simply want to skip to fight night.

We see a montage of Mayweather and Mosley working out, while a new Eminem song, Not Afraid, plays. The snippet sounds good, might want to download that from iTunes.

Then Mayweather hangs with three of his kids, and Floyd makes them crack up with a silly ditty about Jheri Curl. He's mocked Mosley for an outdated, Jheri Curl style do. Floyd tells his daughter that it's good to do good in school, but hes the teacher, and hes going to teach a bad kid whos jealous of him a lesson, will let the bad kid make some money, but informs her that most of the money will flow to him and her. She looks...slightly amused, and puzzled.

Shane, then, is seen training. Trainer Naazim Richardson leads the workout, the final one in California, before they head to Vegas. Mosley says hes not worried hes the underdog and he doesnt need critics to believe in him. His belief, he says, is enough. Richardson says that he sees flaws in Floyd, and that he thinks Mosley is up to the task to carry out the mission, which is busting Floyds O. Im excited, Im ready to go out there in the ring and get it on, Mosley says. We dont get any insight into tactics or strategy, unfortunately.

We see the US Anti Doping Agency seeking a sample from Mosley, on Monday, just as hes about to drive to Vegas. Each fighter has been tested at least a half dozen times, narrator Liev Schriber informs us. Mosley admits its hard to produce a urine sample, as hes limiting food and drink to make weight, but rules are rules, so a sample must be produced.

In the Mayweather camp, Floyd and Uncle Roger do pad work. Floyd says his gameplan, hatched by Roger and Floyd Sr, is unreal. No tips on strategy from them, either. There appears to be no discord in camp. I feel good when my daddys there, Floyd says.

We see Mosley arriving in Vegas. The boxer likes the hubbub; he admits it can all get intoxicating but that he seeks to stay grounded. He goes to a gym Monday afternoon to get a light workout in. Its very important you dont overtrain the week of the fight, Mosley says. My task is to make sure I dont leave anything in the gym and give the fans 100% in the fight.

Legacy comes up. Roger says the Mayweather family name will stand out in boxing history, and this pleases him. Sometimes Floyd talks up legacy, other times he says he just does it for the moolah. The contradictions keep us on the hook, keep us focused on him, as we try to puzzle through his persona.

Pedestrian blurbs escape the fighters and trainers lips at the final press conference. They are basically talked out, ready for the main event.

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The weigh in goes smoothly, we see, on Friday afternoon.

Watchers get a peek at the Neon Graveyard, where signs from casinos dead and forgotten lay. What was once big is now forgotten, lucky to be even a footnote as the world marches on, memories fade, holders of memories die. How history views these two fighters will be in play tonight. A win for Mosley would elevate his status immensely. A win for Mayweather will likely not burnish his overwhelmingly, as critics will point out, rightly or wrongly, that Mosleys peak passed almost a decade ago. A loss would strip him of his beloved O, and though it may not be right for a journalist to hope for it, might well be the best thing that ever happened to Floyd.

His own father has talked about Floyds lack of humility. A loss would maybe force Floyd to recast his priorities, take him down a peg, allow him to feel the sting that mere mortals have to absorb, and do absorb, and muddle through. It would maybe ground him, help him rein in those tendencies which keep the masses from embracing him and his superior brand of pugilism, his fondness for bragging and showing off his fat piles of loot. Amateur psychologists speculate this stems from insecurity; its a strong theory, since we know that much of Floyds young life was lived amid stressful, chaotic and shifting authority figures. These flawed figures probably scarred Floyd, made him distrust those that are supposed to know better, and consequently he continues to lash out, and overcompensate by focusing on material riches, instead of basic, core values which was sadly too often unavailable to him, values which bond humans, kindness, loyalty, selflessness.

All in all, I want to like Floyd. I see the good in him, I know that he could be a far better ambassador for this sport of kings than he is. But for that to happen, he first, I think, has to taste defeat. Will Shane Mosley be the man to force feed Floyd? Nope; I see Floyd giving away two rounds, then getting down to business after he sees what Mosley has to offer. Floyd doesnt do barn burners. He avoids trading like Keith Richards avoids sobriety. So dont expect a classic. Expect a Floyd UD, a defensive gem, and then get ready for another tiresome round of Mayweather-Pacquiao negotiations.