

There Certainly Wasnt Any Floyd Mayweather In Muhammad Ali

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Wednesday, 19 May 2010 15:00

One of the reasons Muhammad Ali is the real heavyweight GOAT--greatest of all time--was because he was willing to fight the biggest and the baddest heavyweights circa 1960-81. As a green fighter on the way up or an aging champ on the way down, it didnt matter, Ali constantly sought to face whoever was thought to be the fighter who represented his biggest threat. He also never ran from a tough opponent in trying to get out of a rematch. Just examine his record.

After a 43-month forced exile Ali fought top five contenders Jerry Quarry and Oscar Bonavena in a span of six weeks during 1970. On December 30th, three weeks after a tough 15-rounds with Bonavena, Ali signed to meet undefeated heavyweight champ Smokin Joe Frazier on March 8th 1971. Ali lost conclusively to Frazier that night and Sports Illustrated plastered the picture of Joe knocking him down in the 15th round with the caption End Of The Ali Legend on its cover, dated March 15th 1971. Frazier said after the fight that he doubted Ali would want a rematch after the beating he took during their bout. When that was relayed to Ali, he responded, Oh, how wrong he is! And those words sum up Muhammad Alis confidence and courage.

When Ali couldnt get a rematch with Frazier immediately after their first fight, he set out to fight every top contender in the division, trying to eliminate the field so Frazier would have no one left to fight but him. Twenty-one months after winning the Fight Of The Century, Frazier was demolished by George Foreman in two rounds and lost his undisputed title. Two months later Ali lost a split decision to Ken Norton. Later the same year (1973) Ali won a decision over Norton in a rematch and then four months later won a decision over Frazier to even their series at 1-1. Two months after Ali beat Frazier, Foreman crushed the other Ali conquerer, Ken Norton, in two rounds.

After Foreman beat Norton, the path was clear for Ali to try and reclaim the title he was stripped of seven years earlier. Only hed have to do it against a fighter who mutilated the only two opponents that Ali had to fight twice (at that time) before he could claim a victory over either one of them. In twenty-seven rounds with Frazier, Ali was only able to hurt Joe twice, once in each fight. On the other hand, Frazier lasted just two minutes with Foreman before going down three times in the final minute of the first round, and then three more times in the first minute and a half of the second. When comparing how Ali and Foreman fared versus Norton, the gap was just as pronounced. Ali hurt Norton twice during their rematch and in twenty-four rounds forced him back three or four times but never put him down or was close to stopping him. Yet, Foreman needed just five minutes to knock Norton all over the ring enroute to stopping him in two short rounds.

No fighter in history ever looked more unbeatable and like a human wrecking machine at any weight than did former heavyweight champ George Foreman circa 1973-74. Foreman was 40-0 (37) and was just 25-years old. At the time both Jack Dempsey and Joe Louis said on The Wide World of Sports that Foreman was the most devastating and hardest puncher in boxing history. At that time Ali was months away from turning 33 and was thought to have no legs - as evidenced by him only dancing and fighting on his toes for the first four rounds of the Frazier

There Certainly Wasnt Any Floyd Mayweather In Muhammad Ali

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Wednesday, 19 May 2010 15:00

rematch and the first five of the Norton rematch.

If ever there was a fighter who couldve demanded some kind of test for HGH or steroids or anything else before a fight, it was Ali before he fought Foreman. Muhammad couldve easily said how come 2-3 years ago light heavyweight Gregorio Peralta could last ten rounds with Foreman twice, but Frazier and Norton couldnt make it out of the second against him? But we never heard that kind of talk from Ali. In fact, if the thought even existed that Foreman was on some type of HGH or PEDs, Ali wouldve said something like - good, I hope hes on them the night I fight him because Im still gonna whip his behind. And then he wouldve demanded Foreman take or inject whatever he thought he needed to make himself feel invincible and unbeatable.

As of this writing the biggest welterweight fight since De La Hoya-Trinidad is in limbo because Floyd Mayweather cant grasp Manny Pacquias ascension as a fighter. Pound for pound Pacquiao doesnt look anywhere near as dangerous at 147 as did Foreman look as a heavyweight. And remember both Ali and Mayweather are virtually the same age going into the negotiations for the bout.

The only evidence that Pacquiao has ever used PEDs are Mayweathers insecurity and accusations. And thats enough to make Floyd think he needs to control the terms of the fight to once again have an edge before it starts. Mayweather is no doubt a great fighter, but his resume has too many holes in it to be compared to the greatest of the greats at 135 and 147. However, if he went on to fight and beat a prime Pacquiao in a straight up fight without trying to mickey the terms of it, we could say he did beat one great fighter who, though he was smaller, was still at the top of his game.

Mayweather has looked really muscled up in his last two bouts. Being bigger than Marquez is one thing, but he looked like Mosleys father when they were in the ring earlier this month. Luckily there was no Floyd Mayweather in Muhammad Ali - or we wouldve never seen Foreman-Ali in 1974, a fight that Muhammad actually fought in a small 17 foot ring (the reason the ropes were loose), which everyone reading this knows was advantage Foreman. Can anyone fathom Ali making demands (testing for PEDs or anything else) on a smaller opponent before they fought because he looked too good in his last three or four fights?

Mayweather-Pacquiao or Pacquiao-Mayweather has to happen. And if it does within the next 12-months, as of this writing Id favor Mayweather because he looks too big and physically strong for Manny, something that was confirmed even more so after observing Mayweathers physicality during his last bout against Shane Mosley.

Frank Lotierzo can be contacted at GlovedFist@Gmail.com