

Do The Judges Have The Best View ?

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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Do fight judges really have the best view of the fight? Over the years, I have often thought about what was better, sitting ringside watching a fight or watching it on TV. It seems this is more than a trivial debate due to the aftermath and controversy of the De La Hoya-Mosley rematch. It's been reported that those sitting ringside saw a different fight than those who watched it on TV.

Those sitting ringside, with the exclusion of the HBO broadcast team, scored the fight in favor of Mosley. Those who watched the fight on TV, saw De La Hoya getting the better of it. How can this be? Most times when I saw a fight live at ringside, and then went and watched the tape of it, I usually saw the fight the same (not always, but a majority of the time).

I'm sure most boxing fans have heard many judges say that the fight is much different at ringside than it appears on TV. This is often said after a fight in which a controversial decision has been rendered. I usually didn't give it much credence. I've always felt that if you knew what you were watching, and weren't influenced or swayed by the crowd or commentators, it didn't matter where you saw the fight. But as of late, and due to the split views on the De La Hoya-Mosley outcome, I think I can see the point made by the judges!

And the point is, maybe they don't have the best seat in the house to view the fight. In my experience I have found that sitting beneath the ring on one side distorts the perception of what's happening when the action is on the other side. I think to have the best view of the fight, you need to be above the ring looking down on the action instead of looking up at it. If you have ever attended fights live, you can see that sitting halfway up in the stands (as long as you're not too far away), provides a full view of the fighters and what's happening, regardless of where the action is taking place.

In my opinion, I think in some ways a fight can be better viewed on TV than it can be by the judges who sit below the ring, only because the television broadcast pans above the ring from every possible angle. Television provides a better view on accuracy, but the impact of the punches can't be realized as well as seeing the fight live. Maybe it would be better to have the three judges sit elevated above the ring like the officials do during a tennis match. They don't have to be as high as the tennis judges, but definitely above the ring. I have no doubt being above the ring provides a better picture as to who's doing what and who's controlling the fight overall.

The key here is that to see the fight from the best angle, you must be above the ring. Not way above it, just elevated enough so you are peering down slightly on the ring. When you are looking down at the ring, you can see everything that's going on in it. Maybe this is a good alternative, instead of revamping everything and accusing the judges of being stupid and corrupt. Perhaps the judges don't have the best view from where they sit.

Most assume because the judges have the closest view that it's the best view. I really believe by looking up at the fight hinders their view, opposed to looking at it from a slightly elevated

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level. By sitting slightly higher than the ring, it's easy to see who's dictating the tempo of the fight. It's also easier to decipher who is landing more solidly and who's just playing tag.

No doubt being ringside gives you a better feel for the action in regards to the impact and sound of the fighters' punches, as opposed to watching it on television. I'm just not sure a fight can be seen better sitting ringside while looking up at the action. When you are watching the fight from below the ring, there are just too many blind spots when one fighter has his back to you and you cannot see the hands of the other fighter. This also makes it almost impossible to see who's getting the better of the infighting. How can the judges see this clearly if they're staring at a fighters back?

This is where being at an elevated level above the ring can provide a much better overall all view of the fight. It's the fight judges sitting ringside beneath the ring.