Written by Michael Woods
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Yes indeed, we will miss him when hes gone, because no boxer today is close to Bernard Hopkins in the arena of oratory.

Hes part Ali, part Lombardi and part Oliver Stone when he gets going, as he did on a Tuesday conference call in which he promised to school another rook (Jean Pascal), show the cynical, bloated keyboard tappers that they (we) are blowhard naysayers, and railed against an unnamed Mafia int he sport who would like to see him retired.

Yes indeed, why this man doesnt have a reality show, I have no idea.

Hopkins, who turns 46 on January 15, was asked if he might walk away after beating Pascal. He said that boxing isnt flourishing, other than Pacman and Mayweather, really, so there is still a market for his services. He might be marketable at 50, he said, so it doesnt sound like he has one butt cheek in the hammock.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

He said if someone whipped him in the ring, hed consider exiting the sport. But no one has done this yet, so he asked everyone to hold off on the contemplation of retirement. He busted on us out of shape keyboard tappers for that should-he-retire storyline, and asked us to consider that we might miss him when hes gone. He thanked the media for the critiques, which serve to motivate him.

I thank yall, I thank yall, I thank yall, he said.

Who else you going to ask a question for two seconds, and get a ten minute answer he asked.

If he wins, hell be the oldest champion in boxing history, and Hopkins said that means a lot to him. I feel its a great accomplishment to beat George Foremans record nine days out, he said. Its outside what everyone else is doing in boxing.

The fighter asked the writers who doubt him to refrain from blaming Pascal for being too young.

He said a lot of people want him out of boxing, but most of those over 40 are rooting for him. This victory is a devastating blow for some people who want him out, for whatever reason, I know why, but for whatever reason. ...Nobody should be asked to leave a sport or job if theyre not mentally ready to go...Id never ask anybody, a janitor or a casher..at the end of the day thats a personals individual decisions.

After he beat Kelly Pavlik, he stared out into the audience because he was angry at the powers that be, the Mafia of boxing, who wanted him shut down.

His tombstone, he said, will read, A man has walked this land.

He said when he retires, there will be no comebacks...this time. Because then hell be pushing 50, as opposed to being a mere pup when he said, Im done after he beat Antonio Tarver in June 2006.

Hopkins said itll be more of a pleasure fighting out of the US this time, in Canada, than when he fight an Ecuadorian in Ecuador, during a time of war in Ecuador (versus Segundo Mercado in 1994).

He admitted that he didnt think Pascal would beat Chad Dawson, and that in that fight, he noted that Dawson didnt win because he didnt adjust.

Is he one of the top ten best guys Ive fought, no, he said, but added the cautionary note that he wont train less because Pascal isnt a legend. You look at me, and look at his resume...and you tell me whos the Harvard graduate?

Hopkins said he hasnt succeeded in getting Pascals head, because hes young, and intoxicated with his newfound fame. But he will, Hopkins thinks, feel nervous when hes in the ring, staring at Hopkins.

Hopkins said fighting in Canada is Pascals biggest asset, after being queried by a Canadian writer.

He says Golden Boy will insure a fair deal in Canada.

Hopkins said that he thinks the smarter fighter, the one with the best plan, will win. He said hell be ready if Pascal tries to overwhelm him with volume, or if he tries to evade the older man. After 26 years of professional boxing, he says hes seen every style. Im looking for a fight that will test everything about Bernard Hopkins that night, he said.

Richard Schaefer, his promoter, said that he thinks Hopkins remains hungry, and is as hungry as he was when he was starting out. He said doubters shouldnt doubt the fighter, and that anyone who thinks Pascal will win should know better by now.

The fight will be shown on pay per view in Canada, the promoter said, and he expects it to be the biggest ever ppv in Canada.