



Bernard Hopkins isn't only an all-time great in the ring, he's one of the sports' best all-time talkers. Here are some highlights from a Hopkins Q'n A which took place last week.

Q) Bernard, I think we all know that you should have already made history, back in December. It was not a good decision. I think most of us know that you won that fight. That said, what would this mean to you to break George's record? What would it mean to boxing overall?

B. Hopkins

For me, personally, it's a great achievement to be still doing what I do at a high level and to be able to do it and make history at the same time. Now that I'm here, it's more appreciated to me to last this long in the game. This is a game where if you get 10 years out of this sport, you're considered lucky. So, to get two decades and come upon history at least four or five times in my career with the defenses as a middleweight and of course, I beat Tarver to become the only middleweight to become a light heavyweight champion. I mean, you put all this stuff together and then you look at what I'm ready to do now, next Saturday, with the opportunity to surpass George Foreman with 190 days outside of when he beat the Michael Moorer. As Jim Lampley said, "It happened; it happened on HBO."

I mean, you say Archie Moore, you say Bernard Hopkins. I consider it-and he was one of the greats also that accomplished a great achievement in his forties. So it is surreal that Archie Moore, if you know anything about history, which I believe you do, fought in Montreal, Canada and he fought Durelle in Canada for the championship after getting knocked down once or twice. He came back and won that fight. Archie Moore was victorious.

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Written by The Sweet Science
Monday, 16 May 2011 10:31

I get a chance to follow those footsteps. For anybody who's listening, do your research. You'll see I'm correct. I'm a veteran. I know how to have patience through the next ten days of [preparation for] combat. So I'm ready. I'm ready mentally; I'm ready physically. I can't worry about what they did last fight. That's the past, but it's the reminder that I've been down this road before. I get a chance to-not redeem myself, but I get a chance to make their wrong become my right.

Q

I don't know if you were listening to George's comments before you came on to the call, but he talked about that...no judges. You need a knock-out to win the fight. He seemed pretty adamant about the fact that you need to go for the knock-out. Don't leave it in the judge's hands. I know you probably knew that was the case last time with what happened in the first fight. What are your thoughts about the possibility that you might need to get the knock-out just to make sure there's absolutely zero question about what will happen to this fight next Saturday?

B. Hopkins

I would love to go in there and get my knockout. That would stop my drought. The last time I had a knockout was Oscar de la Hoya. I've been in a drought for many years, but I'll take a good beat-down, sort of like a William Joppy type of beat-down. It'd probably be better for Pascal to get knocked out than take a 12-round beating because we know that everybody that fought, well, not everybody, but most of the young fighters that were in the ring with me for more than eight to ten rounds weren't the same after that. I don't have to mention any names, we know who they are.

My thing is to execute. If I win every round and fight every round, it's like you win the fight. You win the fight. Beat this guy up. You just make it seem one-sided. I'm looking to put that type of performance on. The only way to do that is to put the pressure on Pascal. I don't believe he can fight backing up. I believe that, when you're going to a target, things can happen. I'm aware of that.

As you said, the last fight when we talked-to let you know I remembered-you said, "Why didn't

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you fight like that a long time ago?" I said, "I wouldn't be here if I did." I tell you what. You're going to see, I take that as an honest question because, at the end of the day, I'm at that point now where I'm going to bring on some Philadelphia fight to that town in that ring in Montreal. I'm going to press and I'm going to back him up. I'm going to make him fight and that's why this fight is going to be one of the best fights that HBO had on World Championship Boxing. I know they're going to do major ratings because it's going to be a fight that people are going to talk about between now and then.

After last Saturday, I think the boxing fans deserve a nice knockdown, drag out fight. I'm willing to do my part. That's all I can say to everybody who's listening. I know you all heard promises and what people are going to do. I've been part of that, but my style is my style, but I promise, that what you all will see next Saturday, like last fight, it's going to be way out of character. That doesn't mean I'm not going to be smart, I'm not going to stick to the game plan, but you're going to see the old Philadelphia Bernard Hopkins, old Philadelphia history from the Benny Driscoll, to Willy "The Worm" [Monroe], the Cyclone of Hearts-and I could go on and on and on. That's going to be next Saturday. You all are going to enjoy a great, historic fight.

Q

Bernard, I wanted to ask you one thing about your training camp situation. Nazim Richardson, obviously, your trainer has been with Shane Mosley for many weeks, getting him ready for last week's fight with Pacquiao. I talked to him when I was in Las Vegas. He said he kept in touch with [assistant trainer] Danny [Davis] on the telephone. He paid a visit to the training camp during the course of the camp, but how was it to go through the camp and not have him back until these last two weeks? I mean, was there anything, and he says you're such a veteran it didn't make a difference, but what are your thoughts about having Naazim away from most of your training camp?

B. Hopkins

I told Naazim I'm going to give him my cell phone bill because he called me every other day. So, I got a cell phone bill for over five G's. So, Naazim and I have done this more than one time. Naazim knows, and you know, I run my own ship. I mean, it's no secret to people that have known me for boxing. You've known me over 10 years. I basically run my own thing. I was comfortable with it.

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Naazim had an opportunity to fight on that big stage like that. Of course, physically, he can't go in and fight, but he's here now. Trust me; if you saw my cell phone bill. I don't know what Danny's cell phone bill will look like and I'm not paying for it, but I know that Naazim's been making sure that I don't overdo it and making sure, because you know I say I run three miles and I run five. So, it's been good.

We add a little adjustment here, a little adjustment there. Again, you used the word veteran. I would never put my situation there where I know everything, but I keep it honest with me and my mind and my mental state, but I know how to take orders from a person that I respect because you have to respect him. I'll be fine. We'll be fine. Everything was good.

Q

You seem to have developed a pretty healthy dislike for Pascal based on some of the things he said. Is that a real dislike or is that just hype for the fight? Can you talk about that?

B. Hopkins

I said a lot of things about my opponents to get in their head, but I never said an opponent cheated. I never said a person did anything to win a fight, outside of the ring or inside of the ring, but that becomes a part of the game, but it's just part of a person's being intimidated or just not knowing what to say. A lot of it had to do with this...you have to say something to justify what you didn't do, but there are repercussions. I mean, when you're younger, you say things. Your parents will smack you on your hand or give you a punishment or something like that, but we are accountable for what we say and what we do. Come May 21st, I will take care of the physical part of it and then, I'll let my people take care of the other part of it.

I don't have to tell you what that means and I don't want to get into it, but at the end of the day, I've always been a guy that speaks about health awareness and speaks about how if you take care of your body yesterday, you'll have something tomorrow. You take care of your money now; you'll have something in the future. It's the same concept. If you're a guy that likes to spend, eventually you're going to be broke.

So, it's no different than the way I treat my life in the way I act, in the way I think, in the way I deal with my family. It's the same thing. When things are being questioned about what I have done for all of these years and my credibility and my hard work, there are repercussions beyond that. I'm going to take care of business next Saturday and then we deal with the other stuff later.

Q

How much tougher is it to train for a fight at 46 than it was at 36 or 26?

B. Hopkins

For me, it isn't tough at all. Just, basically, they have to pull me back. Naazim Richardson continued to call me from [Big Bear and] Vegas. We had an alternate guy that came up with Naazim in his late fifties named Moses who was sort of like Danny's eyes and ears. He trained also in Philadelphia, but he never got the notoriety because he never had the athlete to take him that far to get it.

I've been in good hands with Danny Davis, but the only thing is to have me not overdo what I have loved to do for two decades. I like to train. I like to run. I like to eat the right foods. This is a habit. It's a good when you've got good habits, it makes everybody's job easier. Of course, sometimes I have aches and pains or I have a lot of rub-in muscle cream in my medicine cabinet, but other than that, 20 years of boxing as a professional since I was nine years old as an amateur, you're going to have these things as time goes on.

I think 50 percent of me, and that's not knocking any other fighter; I'm only speaking for myself, is 100 percent in today's world of athletics. People in any sport; football, basketball, hockey, I don't care, golf, I think that people look at me; they should think I'm not the norm. I'm glad to say I'm not the norm doing everything right and everything by the book.

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The way I took care of my body after leaving the penitentiary twenty-something years ago, it is discipline, never taking anyone lightly, never having an excuse for not being in shape, not being 20, 30 pounds over my weight and I'm fighting light heavyweight and I'm weighing 205 pounds and I have to train to get the weight off and then train for the fight. That's not me. I'm letting everybody know there's no secret out there on me. It's just discipline and sometimes it's hard for others and sometimes, it's not. For me, it's not.

Q

When will you know when it's time for you to hang it up?

B. Hopkins

When I get beat up.

Q

I wondering if you watched Mosley/Pacquiao this weekend and like to take on Mosley's performance, a lot of people are busting his chops really hard saying that they don't think you really fought to win. I'd like your take on it.

B. Hopkins

I think that at the end of the day, he talked a really good game and he fought. I just think that he would have went out as a winner if he just showed effort to win and not touch gloves every round. So everything works for different people and when people see me in the streets of Philadelphia and they see me coming in again and they see me now, they say "You see the fight Bernard? Why did he keep touching gloves every round?" This is a legitimate question, because that's strange to average people. These aren't hard-core boxing people. I say, "That's a sign of submission."

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It's called body language and I'm not bragging my upbringing. I was sort of like George but I was a guy in the street when I had that mentality. Some would call it a bully. I don't brag about being that, and I speak against that now, but when I was younger, they'd see me coming up the street, everybody would go into their houses. Part of that body language of submission is to praise the guy. You don't want that bully that's around that corner to take your watch or take your chain or take your wallet. So, you want to be friends with him. You want to be nice with him. So, translate that to boxing. Translate that to the match Saturday.

Listen, if Pascal starts trying to shake my hand every round, I know I got him mentally and now I've got to make it happen physically because at the end of the day, we're fighting. That's what we do. That's what changes our lives and my family's live...to be able to do things for them because we are fighters. So, the referee says, "Shake hands and come out fighting." He doesn't say, "Every round shake hands."

So, when the guy wants to be friends and fight at the same time, everybody else sees it. He submitted early in the fight after the knock down. Something happened and he submitted after that.

Q

You made some comments earlier in this call talking about the accusations that Pascal made concerning what he talked about and charged you with. Do you sort of-I don't want to say sympathize, but do you have a better understanding of how Manny Pacquiao might have felt when people were talking about what he might or not be doing?

B. Hopkins

I think it's probably the same. I can say that I hope the other fighters don't use that as a cop-out to justify what they did or didn't do the night they fought or the night that they lost. If you win, of course, there's no room-nobody will make that statement or comment, but I just hope that it doesn't become a trend for people to punk out of just manning up saying, "Hey, I got a draw and that wasn't my choice. The judges called it," and you do it again. That's fine. I

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can live with that. You can live with that. But, when the guys start saying, "You cheated, you cheated, you cheated," with no merit, with no proof, you start thinking...where did you get this?

Q

I've been doing some research and one of the things that I found is that you've been on the pound-for-pound list for probably 12 years and nobody around has been on that list. I know it's a subjective list and everybody has their own list, but in doing the research, you've been on somebody's pound per pound list since 1998 or 1999. I mean, they're not talking about it but how do you feel about that? I mean everybody's come and gone and you're still on that list.

B. Hopkins

I feel great about being in that elite group because it took some thought for somebody to analyze all the fighters that are still fighting, maybe not at 40, maybe not in their 30's, and somehow some had me there and it took some work for me to be there. It took some winning and it took some longevity, but it's good. I haven't looked at the pound-for-pound list, to be honest with you in a long time because I think at the end of the day, people have their opinion. On some people's lists I'm not even there and one of them I believe, is *Ring Magazine* and that's probably one of the elite and credible pound-for-pound lists that's out there now, but, I'm still cool with that. If you stay in the game long enough, there are so many achievements if you are lucky and blessed enough and then you achieve a lot of stuff and you'll find more and sometimes, you'll run out.

Like in my case, I hadn't ran out of finding historic moments to look forward to and one is coming May 21st with the attempt to pass George Foreman's record. So, it's an honor to know that our work will still be here and still to be on people's lists and still be talked about without embarrassing my legacy, embarrassing myself and my family. I really am honored to know that I can still represent in a respectful way.

Q

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I would like to know how big is the extra pressure that comes with the fact of trying to beat Foreman's record.

B. Hopkins

It is very important to me to win the fight first and then let everything else fall in. That's the first and most important thing that's on my mind is winning the fight and not the record, because you can't get the record, if you can't win the fight. So at the end of the day, I don't put the cart in front of the horse, I get the horse in front of the cart. Right now, that horse is 12 rounds, if it goes that far, with Pascal in Montreal.

Q

What will be the song that will play when you step into the ring in Montreal? Will it be "My Way" again? And, why?

B. Hopkins

I will be playing one of my traditions that I have been playing for the last six, seven, eight fights and that's "My Way" by Frank Sinatra. To play that song, there has to be a history behind that person that plays that song.

Q

George spoke of something earlier about the knockout. Is that something that you are definitely going to try to do? Is that part of your fight plan or do you plan to maybe just be in it for the distance?

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B. Hopkins

Well, even though I'm a 46-year-old guy in shape, if I can get a guy out of there within one or two rounds, yes, but I mean our coaches always tell us, you don't go in a fight looking for a knockout because not every punch is a knockout punch. You set these things up and they come as time goes on.

Again, when I go in that ring, I know about being a 20-something year veteran, I know I got a guy hurt. Trust me. I won't back up and let him survive. I won't take it easy on him. I won't just throw punches just to win the round. I want to get the guy out of there. That's that instinct. You create the knock-out. You make the guy knock himself out by doing things that you want him to do without him knowing it. That's the seasoned veteran. That comes with time. That comes with education. That comes with experience in the ring and that comes with knowing that knockouts are not forced. Knockouts are created.

Q

On the HBO Face-Off, Jean Pascal claimed you didn't respect him. Was there anything that he did in the first fight that impressed or even surprised you?

B. Hopkins

At the end of the day, respect is not given. Respect is earned. I'm not going to respect anybody because he signed up and got a license to be a fighter. I'm not going to respect anybody because the only recognizable name he has on his record is Chad Dawson and that happened because of a head butt and they went to the scorecards and he happened to be winning after it looked like he was going to be knocked out.

So, when you say about respect, compared to what I've done in the game and what he's done in the game, he should be paying homage to me. It's the opposite. He's not respecting his elder. I am the elder on the block. He's a young guy that's on the block and he's disrespecting the block and I'm telling him to pick the trash up and he's telling me, "Old man, get in the

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house and mind your business." So, I have to come out, take my slippers off, put my teeth in and spank him. That is the respect of the young and the old.

You've got to remember this, and anybody that's past 40 will understand this or older, the old is always threatened by the young. I don't give a damn if it's boxing. I don't care if it's in your business. We all are victim of that as long as we live to see old or certain age. Sometimes the young win and sometimes the old win, but in my case, May 21st-you will see the old win.

Q

All of us here know that you are the grand master of head games. Have you sensed a crack in Pascal's mindset during all the media buildup to this fight?

B. Hopkins

I think he showed it himself. I think he's showed it himself by bringing up something that can cost him a lot of money later on and that's allegations that totally is from way out north, but just by that in itself, this stuff from the first fight, that completely had me saying, "Wait a minute, this guy, is he serious?" Or is he just that ignorant? Is he just that green?" I've been blessed to have been around all kinds of people. I'm around young people all day in the gym, so I understand certain mentalities, but I'm not shocked to a point where I see these things because I understand the different era. I'm in a different era. Even in the streets of Philadelphia, the young are totally different than when I was coming up. It's a whole new different mindset in today's world from the boxing world through society. We all know that.

I just take it as the guy that's really scared to death, but dangerous, but in the same token, because of ignorance, he can be extremely dangerous. So, I do not underestimate him. I do not look at it as an easy fight. I look at it as a scared, young guy who is high on himself and he wants to be great, but he doesn't want to pay the time.

Q

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You were talking about if you win, should you win, which most of us believe you will, you have a three fight deal with HBO and you were going to name, in addition to Chad Dawson, other guys you would like to fight. Is that accurate first of all and then also could you name guys beyond Chad Dawson you would try to fight?

B. Hopkins

Yes, that's definitely accurate. The winner of Chad Dawson-Adrian Diaconu fight would be a fight that would happen in the fall. Then, I would love to fight, if he is done with his contract over there at Showtime, I'd love to go back to Canada and I'd love to fight Bute and then if there's another optional fight there, maybe the winner of the Super Six. That would be over by then and I assume the winner of that would be freed up to do something. To me, that will be really representing Archie Moore in a big way.

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amayseng says:

12 rounds to 0 for bernard hopkins this saturday.

the Roast says:

I got B-Hop in a close one. Pascal needs to throw more punches than he did last time. Hopkins will counter but he knows he has to take it in front of that crowd. Should be a good one. Winner vs Dawson will be good also.