It was the sucker punch heard and seen around the world.

Reaction came as swift and hard as the two-punch combination from Floyd Mayweather that laid WBC welterweight titleholder Victor Ortiz out cold for the count this past Saturday on the Golden Boy fight card in Las Vegas.

Prizefighters, trainers, commissioners and fans were quick to speak, scream and yell on whether or not Mayweather is a villain or hero.

During the press conference Ortiz hinted that the referee Joe Cortez, a man always involved in controversial endings, never truly called for the fight to resume. But Ortiz did acknowledge that he made a costly mistake.

“I learned a lesson,” said Ortiz, who was busy apologizing for intentionally head butting Mayweather on the mouth. He repeatedly hugged Mayweather who seemed to shrug it off and then proceed to wallop Ortiz with a left hook and right cross. Ortiz was looking at the referee who was looking somewhere off in space.

One person who found the knockout distasteful was Moreno Valley's Kaliesha West, a female world champion.

"Yes it is true, protect yourself at all times. But who wants to witness a cheap shot victory?" said West, the WBO bantamweight champ. "I would have preferred to see a fair-and-square victory. At the same time, I think Vic learned his lesson about being 'too nice' in that ring, especially after popping cheap shots. At the end of the night, they both made boxing look bad."

Another prizefighter, Brooklyn's Paul Malignaggi, was of the opposite opinion. The former junior welterweight world champion was incensed by the Ortiz head butts.

"I totally agree with Floyd. You cannot head butt a grown man intentionally all of those times and not expect him to get ticked off. Floyd reacted like any man would, he reacted angrily. I actually think he showed some self control because after that last head butt I would have flipped Victor over the top rope," said Malignaggi, who fights at the Staples Center on Oct. 15 against Mexico's Orlando Lora. "The rule is: protect yourself at all times. In a way I feel for Vic, but when I think about it, he also got what he deserved. If you fight like a punk you will be dealt like a punk, especially when in with a veteran like Floyd Mayweather."

Keith Kizer, the executive director for the Nevada State Athletic Commission, was walking back from the parking lot when we ran into each other after the fight.

"It was sad to see it end like that but there was nothing wrong according to the rules," said Kizer, who's dealt with controversies for many years as the head of the Commission. "Once the referee says to fight, then you have to protect yourself.

One boxing fan blames the entire debacle on referee Joe Cortez.

"What a travesty. That just wasn't right," said boxing fan Alfredo Esparza, who lives in the Pomona area. "Worst was the referee Joe Cortez. In every fight he referees something bad happens. He was looking at something else instead of the fight. Why does he always get the big fights? There must be a reason."

Boxing trainer Henry Ramirez, whose charge Josesito Lopez fought and lost by split decision on the same card, said it was one of those things that happens from time to time.

"Honestly, there was nothing wrong with it," Ramirez said. "The first thing they tell you in the dressing room is to protect yourself at all times."

It's not the first time an elite fighter was knocked out when not looking. Former junior featherweight world champion Israel "El Magnifico" Vazquez suffered the same fate as Ortiz back in 2002 for the same reason: he was looking at the referee with his hands down and Oscar Larios knocked him out. Three years later, Vazquez got his revenge with a three round butt whipping of Larios in Las Vegas to win the world title.

A rematch would be a good thing but somehow I don't see it happening.

Other boxing chatter

Lightweight contenders Vicente Escobedo and Rocky Juarez fight it out to see who grabs another world title shot and who heads out the door on Sept. 23 at Fantasy Springs Casino in Indio. Both fight under the Golden Boy Promotions banner and a loss could result in a farewell. It's a very important clash for both.

In Ontario, Calif., young Jonathan Arellano, a quick punching junior featherweight from Ontario, tangles with Northern California's Michael Ruiz Jr. in a battle between undefeated 122-pounders.Also on the Doubletree Hotel fight card will be Venezuela's Jhon Ortega fighting Riverside's Alex Viramontes and Sindy Amador matched with Mayela Perez in a female junior flyweight battle.

In Commerce, Calif., a boxing card features Tony Hirsch and Said Harrak will be the main event. Both boxing and MMA will be sprinkled liberally on the large fight card at the Commerce Casino.

Riverside's undefeated Lorenz Larkin (11-0) fights Nick Rossborough(18-13) on the Strikeforce mixed martial arts card at the Palms Casino Resort on Friday Sept. 23, in Las Vegas. The multi-talented MMA fighter is raising eyebrows with his recent performances in the light heavyweight division.

New York's Jon Jones (13-1) challenges Quinton "Rampage" Jackson (32-8) for the MMA light heavyweight championship on Saturday Sept. 24 in Denver, Colo. Ultimate Fighting Championship 135 also features Matt Hughes facing Josh Koscheck, and Nate Diaz versus Takanori Gomi. The event will be on pay-per-view television.

Filipino southpaw Mercito Gesta (22-0-1) beat Manuel Perez (16-7-1) by unanimous decision after 10 rounds in Parker, Arizona last Saturday. Also on the Top Rank card Jose Benavidez, Andy Ruiz and Jose Roman all won by knockout.

San Diego's Antonio Orozco (12-0, 8 KOs) won a unanimous decision over Fernando Rodriguez (6-7) after six rounds of a junior welterweight clash. The fight took place at Staples Center in Los Angeles.

San Diego's Amaris Quintana (5-0-2) remained undefeated by stopping Katarina De La Cruz (2-8-1) at the end of round two of a junior flyweight bout. The female fight took place in San Diego.

Heavyweight prospect Seth Mitchell (23-0-1, 17 KOs) knocked out Hector Ferreyro (21-11-2) at 2:17 of round three. The fight took place in Las Vegas last Friday. Mitchell is a former Michigan State linebacker. His manager is Al Haymon, who also manages Riverside's Chris "The Nightmare" Arreola.

WBC featherweight world titleholder Jhonny Gonzalez (50-7, 44 KOs) retained the title by knockout of Rogers Mtagwa (27-15-2) at 2:15 of round two. The title fight took place in El Paso,

Texas.

WBA minimum weigh titleholder Etsuko Tada (8-0-2) makes her sixth world title defense against Thailand's Nongmuy Kokietgym (10-2-3) on Wednesday Sept. 22, in Tokyo, Japan. Also on the card will be WBC minimum weight champ Naoko Fujioka (6-0) defending against Thailand's Kanittha Kokietgym (13-3).

Argentina's Marcos Maidana (30-2, 27 KOs) fights Petr Petrov (29-2-2) for a number one spot on the WBA junior welterweight division. The match takes place on Friday, Sept. 23, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Maidana was scheduled to fight Robert "The Ghost" Guerrero but he suffered an injury to his shoulder.

Australia's WIBF junior lightweight titleholder Diana Prazak (8-1, 6 KOs) fights Canada's Lindsay Garbatt (7-3-1, 3 KOs) on Saturday Sept. 24. The title fight takes place in Victoria, Australia.

Russia's Alexander Dimitrenko (31-1, 21 KOs) fights Michael Sprott (36-16, 17 KOs) for the EBU heavyweight title in Hamburg, Germany on Saturday Sept. 24. Cuba's Juan Carlos Gomez (49-2, 37 KOs) fights Darnell Wilson (23-12-3).

WBC junior flyweight titleholder Adrian Hernandez (21-1-1, 13 KOs) defends against Gideon Buthelezi (12-2, 4 KOs) on Saturday Sept. 24 in Mexico City. Buthelezi hails from South Africa.

Mexico's popular Jorge "El Travieso" Arce (57-6-2, 44 KOs) fights South Africa's Simphiwe Nongqayi (16-1-1, 6 KOs) in a 10 round junior featherweight bout. The fight takes place on Saturday Sept. 24 in Mexicali, Mexico. Arce's promoter Top Rank are looking to match him against Nonito Donaire in the near future.

Russia's Dmitry Pirog (18-0, 14 KOs) defends the WBO middleweight world title against Gennady Martirosyan (22-2, 11 KOs) on Sunday Sept. 25 in Olimp, Russia. Pirog captured the title by knocking out Danny Jacobs a year ago in Las Vegas.

Heavyweight Tyson Fury (16-0, 11 KOs) stopped Nicolai Firtha (20-9-1) at 2:19 of round five on Saturday in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Fury is quickly becoming a known heavyweight from the United Kingdom.

Fights on television

Fri. Showtime, 11 p.m. Lorenz Larkin (11-0) vs. Nick Rossborough (18-13).

Fri. Telefutura, 11:30 p.m., Vicente Escobedo (23-3) vs. Rocky Juarez (28-8-1).

Sat. Fox, 6 p.m., Jorge Arce (57-6-2) vs. Simphiwe Nongqayi (16-1-1).

Sat. pay-per-view, 6 p.m., Jon Jones (13-1) vs. Quinton Jackson (32-8); Matt Hughes vs. Josh Koscheck; Nate Diaz vs. Takanori Gomi.