Written by Frank Lotierzo
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In the last month we've seen the two best fighter/managers in boxing, Floyd Mayweather and Bernard Hopkins involved in two controversial PPV bouts. And it can easily be argued that the referee in both bouts (Joe Cortez in Mayweather-Ortiz and Pat Russell in Hopkins-Dawson) greatly contributed to the controversy that followed both fights.

Cortez lost control of the Mayweather-Ortiz fight in the fourth round and that enabled Mayweather to stay within the rules and take advantage of a vulnerable Ortiz and knock him out. In this past weekend's fight between light heavyweights Bernard Hopkins 52-6-2 (32) and Chad Dawson 31-1 (18), Russell flat out made the wrong call when he declared Dawson the knockout winner at the end of the second round. I don't know what Russell was watching, but Dawson clearly slammed Hopkins to the canvas in the second round. He didn't punch him or hit him to put him there. What Dawson did was an intentional foul and Hopkins, who claimed he hurt his left shoulder as he hit the canvas, should've been given five minutes to recover and then it should've been decided after that about what to do if he couldn't continue fighting.

And if Hopkins couldn't continue with the use of both arms, then Dawson should've been disqualified or the bout should've been ruled No Contest. In regards to the aftermath of the bout there are two controversies surrounding the outcome: 1) what was Pat Russell watching and how could he not see that Dawson purposely fouled Hopkins and 2) was Hopkins really injured to the point where he would've been compromised physically if he continued fighting? And sadly we'll never have the definitive answer to either question. For starters, Russell will never admit that he messed up or even perhaps had a hidden agenda. All we know is that if he really believes Dawson didn't foul Hopkins, then he should have his license as a referee stripped immediately.

Which leaves us to determine what was going on with Hopkins.

One thing is for sure, no one reading this will ever be convinced that what they've already determined was wrong with him and why he didn't continue the fight, is wrong. If you think Hopkins was faking it, no way a doctor's report or evaluation that says he was significantly injured is going to change your mind. People believe whatever they want. If Roberto Duran said he threw up his hands against Sugar Ray Leonard and walked away from him in their rematch because he was afraid Leonard might stop him, many wouldn't buy it. However, when he said he made a hasty decision to quit because of stomach cramps, most didn't believe it and insinuated that he really turned away because he wanted out of the fight because he feared Leonard would stop him. So does it really matter what Hopkins says about why he couldn't proceed with the fight against Dawson? Of course it doesn't.

That said, there is one thing about the ending of the fight that I have no doubt, and that is Hopkins didn't feign being injured because he felt Dawson had his number after five minutes of fighting in which there really wasn't a meaningful or memorable punch exchanged by either fighter. If anyone thinks that, they don't know Hopkins. Perhaps in the short time the fight lasted, Hopkins may have gathered enough information to process that it wasn't going to be an easy night, but that's as far as it goes. No one watching that fight (including the two fighters) can know from what took place how that fight might have turned out.

We've seen Hopkins get off to slow starts before and by the midpoint of the fight he's in control and has his opponent at wits end. And if we know nothing else about Hopkins, we know that he's an opportunist and thinks on his feet. Do I think it's plausible that Hopkins, after he was dumped onto the canvas thought, "maybe I can turn this into another payday by getting Dawson DQ'd and we do it again. This way I won't absorb any punishment and I can get paid again." Now that I believe. But there's no way anyone can convince me that after almost two very uneventful rounds that Hopkins saw he couldn't beat Dawson and wanted out. It's not like he knew Dawson was going to throw him down and give him that out. I think it's possible he wanted an easy win instead of a hard one, a good payday for a short night's work, and the

possibility of doing it again. But quit because he thought he couldn't beat Chad Dawson on October 15th 2011, I don't believe that. I've seen other fighters have much better rounds against Hopkins than Chad Dawson did this past weekend, and he never looked for an out.

In his first fight with Jean Pascal, Hopkins was rabbit punched, knocked down twice and lost three of the first four rounds against a fighter who's a much bigger puncher than Dawson and he didn't bail on the fight. Please, maybe he milked getting tossed out of the ring, but he wasn't looking for an out because he thought he had a fighter in front of him who he couldn't solve stylistically. Sure, he's a whiner and sometimes an excuse maker, but he's no quitter and it's ridiculous to try and pin that on him now. And if anyone reading this is so smart and has such a high boxing aptitude that they just know that based on the five and a half minutes Hopkins and Dawson fought, that Dawson was on his way to certain victory, you're smarter than even you think you are pertaining to the sport of professional boxing.

And lastly, to reiterate, the decision should be overturned and ruled a No Contest.

Frank Lotierzo can be contacted at GlovedFist@Gmail.com.

Comment on this article

"B" says:

It may have been a foul but i don't blame Chad for what he did at all. I love Benard as a fighter. To all who think he's dirty don't know anything about the era in which Hopkins embodies. I mean Benard does get away with alot of rough tactics but that his style. Now on the other hand if you're a fighter about to go against Bhop you must establish from the jump that you are not gonna be bullied and you are not going for any nonsense. I don't know how the fight would have turned out but I'm sure most of you folks watching it who have watched Chad in the past saw that he was serious bussiness last saturday. I am not saying Benard was not going to win but I almost sure it would not have been easy. I think that would have been one of Bhops roughest nights.

Radam G says:

Like 99.9 percent of the time, Arch-Super-Pugilistic Scribe F-Lo is righteously preaching and teaching to those who want DA REAL and KNOW DA DEAL. As for da know nothings, busters, haters, fakers, faders and bullsyetologists, nothing that he scribbles or scripts or sh*ts will bring 'em out of their imaginery expertise and making up rules and bizarre boldness to continue to get

down with fantasies when fairness is so obvious.

B-Hop was gettin' up in Bad Chad's arse, and the Bad One couldn't handle it. I'm of the belief that B-Hop was gonna to mess Bad Chad's head up so bad, that Bad Chad would has gotten out of the bout by getting disqualified....Just sayin!' That why he went grizzly bear. Holla!

FighterforJC says:

[QUOTE="B";10067]It may have been a foul but i don't blame Chad for what he did at all. I love Benard as a fighter. To all who think he's dirty don't know anything about the era in which Hopkins embodies. I mean Benard does get away with alot of rough tactics but that his style. Now on the other hand if you're a fighter about to go against Bhop you must establish from the jump that you are not gonna be bullied and you are not going for any nonsense. I don't know how the fight would have turned out but I'm sure most of you folks watching it who have watched Chad in the past saw that he was serious bussiness last saturday. I am not saying Benard was not going to win but I almost sure it would not have been easy. I think that would have been one of Bhops roughest nights.[/QUOTE]

Amen. Dawson wasn't going for any of the dirty crap that Hopkins was going to put on him. I certainly hope the shoulder injury was legit because Hopkins deserved it. I just read that the commission was backing the ref, I hope that sticks. What better way to add insult to injury than for B-flop to lose his title without honor.

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Hopkins deserved a dislocated shoulder?

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[QUOTE=mortcola;10077]F4JC - The commission stated they are standing behind the ref until the formal protest is lodged by the Hopkins camp.[/QUOTE]

How sad.

Either way, Flopkins has been exposed, anyway. Good luck finding an opponent people will pay to see him fight.

And absolutely, Hopkins deserved the shoulder injury (which I still don't believe is legit anyway). He perfected the craft of cheating legally, he deserves to pay for it.

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You carry a great deal of hatred. Odd and sad.

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The stoppage was caused by a "quit," end of story. So you're telling me that any champion can pretend to trip and twist their ankle before a punch is thrown and he should be able to keep his title? I hope future champs keep that in mind especially if they're facing a younger, stronger, slicker opponent that they can't beat.

teaser says:

med report says separated shoulder...boxing is proving to be a circus and with titles changing hands like this it's no wonder....no contest and a rematch (not on ppv unless you want to loose ur shirt on it) would be the answer .Funny how people are so quick to question the heart of a future hall of famer...just sayin....it ain't too christian lol

Radam G says:

The WBC - We Be Collecting -- declared the BCD-B-Hop fiasco a "technical draw," and noted that B-Hop will remain CHAMPION! Dat-a-boy! Even the corruptest alphabet sanctioning organization could not go so low as to blow. Holla!