

Hopkins Made Dawson Look Subpar In Losing Effort

Written by Frank Lotierzo
Monday, 30 April 2012 16:33



Yes - 29 year old Chad Dawson 31-1 (17) outpointed 47 year old light heavyweight champ Bernard Hopkins 52-6- 2 (32) this past weekend and distinguished himself as the top light heavyweight in boxing. I scored the fight 116-113 / 7-4-1 in favor of Dawson. The fact that judges aren't allowed to score even rounds is one of the more absurd things in boxing. Neither Dawson or Hopkins warranted the first round being scored for them based on a feint or missed jab during the closing seconds of the round.

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So what's the take away from the fight?

To be perfectly blunt, Dawson looked lousy and father time has gained another step on Hopkins. Yes, Bernard's body looked softer than it ever has before during a fight and it was astounding how many times he was either frozen by or totally faked out by Dawson's hand and shoulder feints, a sure sign of Chad's terrific hand speed and Hopkins' lack of confidence in his once spectacular instincts, so he over-corrected. That said, once again, despite in an effort in which he came up a little short, Hopkins made another outstanding fighter look sub-par, even though none of the head-butting, sporadic charges along with the headlocks and holding and hitting were a surprise to either Chad or trainer John Scully. Actually, they counted on Hopkins to stick to form, yet for the first five rounds of the bout it was correctly pointed out by Emanuel Steward and Max Kellerman how Dawson was fighting Bernard's fight and was being totally taken out of his game.

For a majority of his career and especially beginning in his late thirties, Hopkins has managed to disrupt, stymie, neutralize and befuddle every fighter he faced with the possible exception of Jermain Taylor. To say that he does that sounds easy when it's just words....but when you really think about it, it's astounding how he does it to everybody. What is missed so much by so many writers, broadcasters and fans is - just how hard it is to fight, forget about doing it correctly and scientifically, just doing it. Professionals, in order to excel at the highest level must do it correctly and scientifically every time out.

Combat sports, regardless of whether we're talking about boxing, mixed martial arts or greco Roman wrestling, are the hardest sports for any athlete to master. There's recently been a lot of cookbook analysts and tutorials all over the internet and in boxing publications on how to fight. Everything is written within the realm of the perfect world, which doesn't exist for one single second in actual combat. Sure, if you give this guy movement or pivot when you throw a certain punch anticipating the counter, you get a pre-determined result by mastering A, B, and C. Right. So why not manufacture the next world beater? Cause it can't be done, fighters, real fighters that is, are born, not built or manufactured.

Every fighter is different. They all jab different, feint different, move different, hold their hands different and despite all of them trying to accomplish the same thing, none of them go about it the same way. Yet for a decade, regardless of who the fighter was in front of him, Bernard Hopkins managed to find their weakness and force them to fight from it a majority of the bout. The only things that have somewhat neutralized him is spectacular speed and athleticism, as we saw this past weekend during his bout with Chad Dawson.

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Think about it - Dawson may be the most athletically and physically gifted light heavyweights since Roy Jones when he was at his peak. All Chad had to do was let his athleticism take over and force Hopkins to have to deal with that. But no, once he's in front of you and you really don't know what to expect, Hopkins brings you down to his level. Again, everyone knows this going in before the fight, yet every fighter is put off and thrown out of sync by Hopkins' antics and tactics.

Prior to the fight the cookbook called for Dawson to push the fight and overwhelm Hopkins with his speed and volume punching. As long as Chad stayed busy and forced Hopkins to defend without making the fight a war or street fight, he would have no problem with a fighter who looks to slow the fight down and isn't capable of putting together multiple punch combinations. However, once he was in there and the presence of Hopkins projected that there's nothing but minefields and trapdoors in front of me, Chad fought at a pace where Hopkins saw everything and was able to time him with lead right hands and a few short hooks inside. Smartly, Dawson's trainer John Scully saw this and implored his fighter to not fall for Hopkins' subterfuge and start to assert himself.

From the start of the fifth round on Dawson fought more of his fight and used his reach and speed just enough to the point to where he filled the holes and there wasn't much left for Bernard to work with. And once Hopkins was forced to create his own offense he was more vulnerable to counters. And that's one thing that really bothers Hopkins - getting hit cleanly. No, he's not afraid to get hit nor is he ever hurt when he is caught. What messes with him more than any fighter in recent memory is how Hopkins is embarrassed when he is nailed, no doubt because it happens so infrequently. The thought of embarrassing him stymies him more than anything else. Show him you're capable of doing that to him and you may have something.

To finish where I started, yes, Dawson won a three point victory over Hopkins and is now at the top of the light heavyweight food chain. But is he really the man based on his showing against Hopkins? Perhaps that's yet to be determined. But he sure didn't handle Hopkins the way he should've and may even be physically capable of doing. Dawson may have won the boxing match, but I come away thinking more about how once again Bernard took an outstanding fighter and forced him to fight down to the level that he needed him to in order to have a chance to beat the almost 18 year younger fighter, than I do being overwhelmed by how Dawson looked or fought.

When all is said and done - the difference was Dawson landed a couple more punches in more rounds than Hopkins did. I'm not sure that constitutes the beginning of a new era, and it may not

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even be the end of the Hopkins era. Fighting is the hardest thing any athlete can attempt to master - yet Hopkins has repeatedly taken the best of the best in the professional ranks and regardless of their age, size, style or mentality, he brings them down to the level he needs them to be at and makes them look as if they're fighting in the big time for the very first time.

Dawson just has a style that's bad for Hopkins. I'd say that Bernard can no longer perform at the elite level, but he'd still beat a lot of guys currently out there.

[Comment on this article](#)

ali says:

Who doesn't look sub-par against Hopkins? Even a prime Roy Jones didn't look good against Hopkins getting a ugly win is good enough.

Radam G says:

C'mon SCLA Ali! Quit politricking. B-Hop made SuperBad Chad look like a windmill swinging BYTCH! Admit it, SCLA Ali! Just admit da jive and give everybodeee and dey momma a high five. You KNOOOOOOOOW keep B-Hop -- I mean HOPE -- alive. Is a getting an ugly girl good enough? And don't give me dat on-da-block jive dat ugly girls need lovin' too. You just want them to make you a sandmitch [sic]. Hehehehe! Holla!

amayseng says:

stat of the night, dawson landed like 25 of 200 jabs... thats 2 jabs landed a round...

say what you will about hopkins, for 47 my good Lord does he have some excellent

genetics and his boxing iq is literally unsurpassed by anyone...

ali says:

Radam if she's ugly with a big *** it's good enough for me. Lol..Name 1 fighter that has looked good against B-Hop? U can't triple O.G if you try to look pretty against B-Hop you getting your *** whoop plain and simple

Blakehoc says:

Frank- You're exactly right. Spot on.

SouthPaul says:

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The only person made to look subpar was boxing judge Luis Rivera. Horrible scorecard.

He made Dawson miss a lot, wonderful, but he didn't do much of anything to capitalize on it. Nothing too overly impressive in my humble opinion.

gibola says:

While it's a remarkable feat for a man of Hopkin's years to do what he does in the ring, it's a hell of a lot easier to make the other guy look lousy if you're not trying to land punches yourself. Skirting round the outside of the ring for two and a half minutes making sure you don't get hit - as Hopkins has done in many of his fights in the last decade - is sure to make the other guy look bad, but it doesn't win fights. You can quite rightly admire Hopkins making everybody look bad, but what good is it if it's unwatchable most of the time and you don't give yourself a shot a winning? If his only shot at winning is fighting this way then the cheerleaders in his corner should drop the conspiracy theories and be honest and tell him to call time on a great career.

ali says:

Gibola & SouthPaul y'all right on point. After B-Hop fight with Pavlik he said he was going to be a lot more aggressive in the rest of his fights. Lol knock it off B-Hop.

brownsugar says:

what kind of article is this???????

the consolation prize for those fans still in awe of the Hopkins dirty-fight-Legacy?

Bhop reminded me of a 50 year old stripper against Dawson.

The kind that hides behind her Boa Feathers because she's got more to hide,....
.....Than she has to show.

The Kind of Stripper that hides behind props of various kinds because she doesn't want you to see her shifting bags of silicon, the dubious patches of stretchmarks where smooth skin used to be,...

.....Or her faltering choreography.

Bhop always resorts to non-boxing whenever he feels threatened by a skillful opponent.

he effectively dumped manure into the living rooms of multitudes of boxing fans Saturday night....as if the fans crave it.(we don't)

Stinking up the homes of many during his non-fight performance with Dawson.

He put more effort into not fighting,.... than an old stripper who puts more effort into NOT trying to show her aging body.... The lusty crowd hollers....more,....more,... more,.... and Bhop

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responds by giving Less,....less,....less.

The fans deserve better than being forced to endure the 48 minutes of non-sportman-like conduct displayed by Bhop against Dawson.

Ship him off to Europe where he's sure to extend his career another 2 years. Keep him on EPIX, or SkyBox,... but please don't let him back on HBO.

deepwater says:

bad chad is not so bad. he doesnt have the killer instinct and will never have a following. his trainer scully has more heart. hopkins still has a couple more fights left in him and if chad actually fought like was a bad *** hopkins would have won.

Matthew says:

I also thought Dawson won by a few points, but since his first fight with Glen Johnson (where he showed a lot of heart and skill) he has looked underwhelming to me. Something is missing. He has all the physical tools, but to me he lacks fire and a killer instinct. He just seems too comfortable to win by a decision. I thought Manny Steward would have been great for him, but Dawson didn't want to go to Detroit to train. I thought Scully did a good job of keeping him mentally engaged in the fight, but he probably should have been able to win more convincingly against a guy 18 years his senior. Credit should be given to Hopkins; even though his style isn't crowd-pleasing anymore, he is damn near impossible to catch cleanly and he is tough as nails. He is simply impossible to look good against. Dawson is a prime example of one of the big problems in today's fight game: the best fighters simply do not fight enough. He turned pro in 2001 and only has 32 fights! That's ridiculous. He's also changed trainers almost as often as Oscar De La Hoya, so I think his development may have been stunted. I'd like to see him take on Cloud (whom he ducked) and rematch Pascal. If he looks impressive and shows some fire against those guys, it may not be too late for him.

Radam G says:

Danggit! SCLA Ali! Hehehehehe! You are fitting boastfully into the stereotype about brothas. "A girl can be as ugly or ogooley as a witch's s***, but if she has a big, ole hinny, da take brotha will take her and tear dat arse up." C'mon, SCLA Ali, where is the innerlove? Some of the best dames have arsens as flat as backboards of pick-up basketball games on da block. Hehehehe! Ya' ain't no good, SCLA Ali! Holla!

Real Talk says:

Great article F-Lo, I say you hit the nail on the head. 2 things though, the thing about fighters being born not built I'm not really sold on and think it's cliché. Seth Mitchell for example was he born or built. Everyone is capable of fighting if motivated, it's mental. A woman can be scared to death of snakes but if her kids are in danger from a snake survival instinct kicks in and fear goes out the window. She will kill the snake, battle and die for her kids. The same is true for a

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peaceful man who doesn't want any trouble but if trouble comes to his door and threatens his family, that peaceful man will become a warrior. That's my perception of people. It's a warrior inside the mind of almost everyone. 2nd thing is this, if Chad wouldn't have fought three forty year old guys how many of us would know his name, given that these weren't average Joe's but still? I'm going to use Radam's word and say Chad is pulling an optical illusion. He has talent yes, but how good is he really or what is his ranking in 175 really? I know what Andre Ward is and he earned my respect by fighting the best at 168....all of'em available and beating them. Chad...well that's something different. He fights the guys on the down slope of there careers or journeyman with marginal skill level. He fights a live dog in Pascal and get his @__ handed to him. Campillo is there, Tavoris Thunder Cloud is there, stop hiding like Nazim Richardson said and called good money on that. Yousa dude with a lot of talent being wasted and will remain nameless in mediocre land as a pretender babysitting the strap for the next real champ. Step up and clean house or I predict your reign will short like leprechaun...a hiccup. Like Terry Norris beat Sugar Ray but ask 10 people today who he is and see what they say. Marinate and meditate on that one. Last thing Hopkins don't retire so this Dude can claim he did something. Fight at least one or two more times and leave with a W. My coach had me working on slipping the jab and digging a short shot to the body, then hook, pivot and hook again not easy at it sounds F-Lo so I feel you on how hard it can be. My hook was too wide so I had to shorten it up and bring it from my chin, part of that it because I was fetting tired and sloppy but that can get you hurt or KO'd. Little things like this go unnoticed by people who don't know anything about boxing. It's skills and technique not a bar fight or high school brawl. Every time I watch Hopkins fight I'm noticing things that I can add to playbook or work on still. When the fight come on next Saturday I'm gon watch it about 5 or 6 more times. I got my reasons, and that picture up there didn't show Dawson getting butted. That's Hopkins with his chin tucked and his head in his chest giving himself room to work on the inside. We got robbed of all the inside fight game by the ref. I wish they picked Arthur Mercante for this fight, would've been much better I bet you that. Dueces

Real Talk says:

[QUOTE=amayseng;15772]stat of the night, dawson landed like 25 of 200 jabs... thats 2 jabs landed a round...

say what you will about hopkins, for 47 my good Lord does he have some excellent

genetics and his boxing iq is literally unsurpassed by anyone...[/QUOTE]

That's real spit in the spit bucket amayseng, I see your eyes saw what I saw buddy row. Peace n Blessings

Real Talk says:

[QUOTE=gibola;15777]While it's a remarkable feat for a man of Hopkin's years to do what he does in the ring, it's a hell of a lot easier to make the other guy look lousy if you're not trying to land punches yourself. Skirting round the outside of the ring for two and a half minutes making sure you don't get hit - as Hopkins has done in many of his fights in the last decade - is sure to make the other guy look bad, but it doesn't win fights. You can quite rightly admire Hopkins

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making everybody look bad, but what good is it if it's unwatchable most of the time and you don't give yourself a shot at winning? If his only shot at winning is fighting this way then the cheerleaders in his corner should drop the conspiracy theories and be honest and tell him to call time on a great career.[/QUOTE]Man Hopkins is a counter puncher and so is Chad. If Chad was coming to take the title he should've pressed the action. Hopkins saw the traps he set and didn't take the bait and was laying traps of his own thinking Chad was going to bring the fight, he didn't. Hopkins pressed him some but got countered a couple times so he wasn't able to press like he wanted to. Both fighters were neutralized to a certain degree because of their styles. It happens but it's not all on Hopkins. As far as the rough house fighting goes Hopkins had that in his trickbag 20 years ago but nobody bltched about it then. What's all the noise about now?

Radam G says:

All respect due, B-Sug, but B-Hop is no way ever resorting "to non-boxing" tactics. Dude is true to da core -- what the oldtimers, dey mommas and anybody who know da game call -- a straight-up "genius boxing fool." B-Hop doesn't ever have to feel "threatened by [any] skillful opponent." Dude is a master of the arch mastery of da whup a\$\$\$. You may not like the way he does it. But none the same, he does it. He did straight fudge up SBC's game and made him "look sub-par" and lost like a "little red riding hood" trying to figure out if B-Hop was boksing's grandpa or "the big, bad wolf."

Like Uncle Roger says, "Most people don't know syet 'bout boksin!" Nobody is asking those know-nothing fans a penny to watch B-Hop. At any time they can stop. But their favorites, he'll just keep knocking 'em from the top. Super Bad Chad was a flop -- a dumb sucker or a naive lopyy pop. The old-gray arse genius made him look like a has not. Holla!

SouthPaul says:

[B]Ali[/B]

Thanks.

[B]

Brownsugar[/B]

Your stripper analogy was superb! Job well done, best read today.

riverside says:

Hopkins not an all time great boxer, he is an opportunist boxer! with great suces, not too long ago we criticized Carlos Molina, for making everybody look bad. A true defensive fighter is somebody like Sweat Pea whitaker/ Money May/ James toney/ roberto duran. Hopkins holds and hits, leads with head, grabs. runs. Any boxer is going to look Bad!. Hopkins knows if he stands and trades punches and tries to box Dawson, he is going to get his @ss KOd.

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Radam G says:

The late, great, Sugar Ray Robinson was "an opportunist boxer," TOO! I syet you not. All great boxers were. Looks at the advantage time that Sugar Ray Leonard took in fighting ATG Marvelous Marvin Hagler at the right time of weakness. And tell me about Money May being an opportunist in fighting Miguel Cotto five or six later than he could have at the right time of weakness.

Being one of the greatest pugilists ever, B-Hop is definitely at the top. And that is real money. And with it, you can make a BIG bank drop. Holla!

Oraclem says:

Hopkins has shunned intuitive boxing in favor of a romantic one. Once an android who can evade contact and make his tango partner a buffoon, Hopkins has refined his style to an affectionate poet who is desirous of too much contact akin to a repressed public display of affection. He literally uses his head like a coconut instead of a volleyball. The once master of distance and craft would now bulldoze his way for a profound hug and climax his move with a takedown reminiscent of lovers meeting in the beach and slamming their sweaty bodies in the sand. Chad Dawson should be given credit for trying to improvise a dance step amid Bernard's skewed tango.