“I’d pay to see it,” trainer Abel Sanchez told me Monday, as we discussed a faceoff between Bernard Hopkins, the still ageless wonder who showed that he is not the man to use as the barmometer for what 48 looks like, and Andre Ward, the boss at 168 pounds.

Sanchez had looked on Saturday night in Brooklyn as his guy, Tavoris Cloud, had no answers, and could barely decipher the questions posed of him by Hopkins at Barclays Center. The Cali-based tutor was left with a greater sense of respect for Hopkins, and where the Philly freak of nature and willpower stands on the all-time pound for pound list.

“He’s in the top ten all-time for sure,” said Sanchez, who repeatedly gave the old man credit for doing his things, neutralizing his opponent, the Floridian 17 years his junior. “I think you have to give props to Hopkins at this tender age of 48, he’s still doing what he needs to do to nullify tactics, and not allow guys to work like they want to work. He had Tavoris confused is the best way I can put it.”

And pundits…There was no shortage of experts saying the younger man would outwork Hopkins in Brooklyn, show him that his time as a premier boxer was over, hand him his second straight loss and a message that his age had caught up with him.” Once again, Hopkins made the “experts” look like ninnies, as his ring generalship alone handed him round after round on the scorecards.

And what about a tussle between Hopkins (56-3-2) and the 29-year-old super middleweight ace, Ward? Hopkins said after the Cloud win that ten million wouldn’t be enough to get him into the ring against Ward, but Ward more than left the door ajar to the meetup. He said that he’s proved a lot, and wants to conquer new frontiers. That means pay-per-view, among other things, and Ward told me that he thinks a PPV against Hopkins is a most sellable package.

The reaction on the Twittersphere to that pairing has been mostly negative.

‘Hopkins will get killed.’ ‘Ward will retire him.’ Stuff like that is what you see…

The old man must be eating it up, storing it away into that corner of his brain where slights and disses are stored, for future reference. Would Sanchez like to see the 48 year-old Hopkins take on the undefeated Ward?

"Would I want to see it? Absolutely," said Sanchez, who goes back to work, helping Gennady Golovkin (25-0) get ready for 24-8-2 Nobuhiro Ishida, who should be an easy out, at 37 years old, having lost his last two, on March 30. "Do you want to bet against Hopkins again? It does depend on when the fight would happen, if he's not too old…But if it happens in four, five months, wow. Nobody out there is a challenge for Ward, and for Hopkins, mentally, for him getting up for the fight.That's Mayweather-Pacquiao, which never happened because they talked about it too much. It's like Leonard-Hagler, that's the kind of fight it is. I have no doubt there would be interest in it. It's a fight between two masters. I would pay for it."

So would I, and so would you.

Ward said both men would have to make IRA money, retire-and-be-comfortable money, and we'd have to see if that sort of stake could be raised.

But if and when it happens, you won't catch me saying Ward will destroy Hopkins, Hopkins has no chance, blah blah blah. I pretty much learned my lesson after Hopkins schooled Pavlik in 2008. Though to my discredit, I must admit this to you: The week of the Hopkins-Cloud fight, I started to Tweet, 'What do you think of a Hopkins-Andre Ward fight, if Hopkins beats Cloud.' Because I am just not enthralled with a Hopkins-Nathan Cleverly tussle. But I erased the Tweet, because I didn't want to get ahead of myself. I pretty much assumed I'd draw heat on Twitter, from folks telling me I'm crazy and stupid. LOL. I should have followed thru.

Yeah, Hopkins-Ward, book it. And bet against the old man at your own peril.

Comment on this article

McHomer says:

Well, you can count me as one of those who thinks Ward would destroy and retire ole B'Hop.

deepwater says:

hokins too smart to fight ward. never happen. ward has bigger fish to fry. maignaggi broner is gonna happen just like I predicted. Thurman failed even though he won. one time landed 50% of his power punches against a euro heavybag. no knockout.no one time. fail.

Radam G says:

WOW! Haters NEVER learn, and for dumb JIVE always YEARN!

It is stupid talk to think that Ward would "DESTROY and retire ole B'Hop." At this day, my little-long-retired-arse could come back and JIVE SOG da double fudge straight UP! I'm with Uncle Roger May: "More people don't kno' sh*t 'bout boksin!'"

SOG Ward is still less than 60 percent and is recovering from surgery. Of course B-Hop will call out a wounded warrior. It is all about settin' game, playin' a game and fooling da know nothings, fanfaronades, faders, haters, busters and ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ and double fudgin' ____ _____ and blank to the 19 power of dumb@ssness and the 39th power of don't-know syet, but how to jump hate.

Yall oughta give B-Hop kudos and his dues and STFU! Of course a healthy SOG has a 95 percent chance of whuppin' da arse of the art-master legend. But a 60-percent healthy SOG and two of his pretty cousins and 19 of the ugly ones would get a B-Hoppy beatdown. B-Hop is one pugilistic super legend that you can hate, but you cannot CLOWN! Maybe B-Hop can even beat a 90-percent healthy SOG and 99 percent of any of the YGs. Holla!

amayseng says:

not only that deepwater but in the post conference he calls out maignaggi, calling him a duck, saying he himself would destroy cotto, and referring to the older, more experienced and established malignaggi as "son" in a condescending juvenile way...
i did like thurman, but now i dont.
he looked horrible against a guy with a peek a boo gaurd...
he is all brute and no sweet science..

as far as hopkins and ward, nobody destroys hopkins but ward does have the best chance to beat him

hopkins wont fight ward, he wants him to carry the torch and wont risk ruining him

SouthPaul says:

If Hopkins sticks around then he should be expected to fight the best available opponent. No special treatment. I don't care who has the belt in a title fight either. When you step in the ring you're both equal in terms of the scoring process. Never have bought into the thought of..you gotta do something extra special to win the title, say like showing some sort of favoritism to the belt holder. Naw, that's wack. Same applies for Hopkins' veteran and age status. No special treatment! Ain't doing no one any favors by giving them an easy way out.

As far as Thurman goes.. I ain't completely sold on him but he helped himself in one way or another this weekend by going the distance. Much better than some early ko blowout. Solid win but nothing overly impressive.

SouthPaul says:

[QUOTE=deepwater;26889]hokins too smart to fight ward. never happen. ward has bigger fish to fry. maignaggi broner is gonna happen just like I predicted. Thurman failed even though he won. one time landed 50% of his power punches against a euro heavybag. no knockout.no one time. fail.[/QUOTE]

Uncle Roger is an obnoxious foul mouthed disrespectful SOB! I ain't never read an interview from this cat where he has anything nice or positive to say about anyone other than his nephew. And without pulling any ones curtain ... I've read all sorts of wack *** fight predictions from all sorts of experienced fighters . The truth is just cause someone has stepped into the ring don't make them some sort of know it all or teacher to the sport. Knowing something and teaching doesn't always go hand in hand. Respect, but that's the realest stuff I've said today. Lmfao. Holla'.

Radam G says:

That is not how the game has ever been, SouthPaul! It is the best pay, not the best play. Later for pridefighting. Now and forever for prizefighting. Let the best go on some knuckleheaded conquest. Let the prizefighters win, get big pay and rest. That is until BIG pay rears it moolah head again. Hehehe! Holla!

amayseng says:

so a 48 year old is expected to fight the very best guy and shouldnt pick and choose?

but the best boxer, floyd jr in the last 7 years can cherry pick with no one calling him out?

im not saying hopkins should fight bums, but he did just beat a 31 year old prime world champ...

SouthPaul says:

Enuff of the age talk already. Ain't no 48 year olds in this whole wide world who are identical so the numbers will always be misleading. I ain't criticizing Hopkins in any sort of way over his choice in fighting Cloud. Solid opponent, solid win, solid PRIZE for the challenge. Ward would be just about the biggest prize to Hopkins' fighting resume and money portfolio so can't be no excuses there, Radam. It's win win, homey, and that includes from fans perspective. Ain't too many boxing fans I know that would be against such a match up. Excellent stuff all the way across the board!

I ain't never let Floyd off for his cherry picking so to be clear... he too gets no special treatment .

SouthPaul says:

More on Uncle Roger. Such a great teacher ...such a great trainer .... That he ended up choking out a female fighter when he couldn't get things done his way. Lmfao. The man is a grade A asshole.

Radam G says:

Hehehehehe! SouthPaul! That was COLD! But Uncle Roger is RIGHTEOUSLY RIGHT. He said that he would whup a bytch's arse.

"That bytch hit me in my fu*kin' head wif uh [sic] lamp, so I choke ur [sic] @ss," Uncle Roger hollered. "Ain't gon' be lettin' no bytch hit me in my muthafu*kin' head....

"Most people don't kno syet 'bout boksin!' Where all da great champin' [sic] come from? Manny and dat bytch who talkin' all dat syet on the computer.... I dat kno' he be workin' out in diz gym. He okay! But dat lil high-yellow muthafu*ka' talk syet and he know he[sic] syet too. I fo'get dat bytch name. All 'em Filipino muthafucka' look like Packacow [sic] to me. Hahaha. How you be tallin' [sic] dey [sic] apart...."

C'mon, B-Sug! Be nice to all the tios of the world. My Tio Mamoy told me to invite you to the P-Island such that he can fudge up. Then he said in English: "Dat uh muthapucka don'uh be 'uh likin' ankles [sic]."

"Uncles po daw," -- ("That is uncles") -- I told him.

Then the ancient, fussy muthasucka told me in English: "Shutter da pucka up. I kno' da Yanky English butfoe [sic] you, yo' momma, yo' daddy and Granda-daddy was'uh [sic] even uh thinka [sic] 'bout."

I just walked away from Tio Mamoy's ancient arse.

Later for pridefighting and prizefighting. I ain't crazy. Seeing B-Hop whup an arse almost half his age, no way was I going to take a chance on my arse gettin' whup by an old an farty tio, who I'm a fourth and some changes his age. Hehehe! Did I tell you dat hard fart is 110 -- a legit 110!

Sometimes one must know the valuable of not pride-or-prize fighting. Some old d*cks and chicks, too, will put it on you.

Did I ever tell you how the old nun, Sister Maribeth fists-as-fast-as-lightning whup my arse when I was an out-of-control teenager? Hehehe! Holla!

McHomer says:

Radam, Ward isn't going into a fight with BHop at 60%. His surgery is over and he's already training lightly. It's not like a fight with BHop is going to happen anytime soon, BHop has been fighting every 10 months or so anyways. Ward throws a lot of punches, has excellent reflexes and is excellent fighting in the inside. Seems like a terrible style matchup for BHop. As far as

giving BHop his dues and "STFU", I'm not sure where you are getting that from. BHop did a great job against a limited Cloud but IMO can't hang with Ward.

Radam G says:

Ditto DAT, 100 percent! Of course Ward is not going into the ring not being his best with old-arse B-Hop! And that is the catch. B-Hop was talkin' smack at a SOG, who was illi,' SOG you oughta be just chillin!' B-Hop will never fight a dangerously, healthy SOG -- but for the BIG pay, not BIG play. And da game goes dat way. It is not pride, it is pay. Holla!

DaveB says:

Hopkins doesn't elevate his level he brings you down to his. Fight fans are used to his masterful tactics in lackluster fights. Calazaghe already showed these guys the blueprint. They just are not architects like he was.

Radam G says:

And they are not southpaws, either. It's left time. A left-handed fighting SOG would be brought down by B-Hop. B-Hop would try to get a contract where that if SOG turned southpaw 19mil of SOG's purse would be given to the old super grandmaster of making a young gun do it the B-Hop way. Holla!

Carmine Cas says:

Hopkins is one G.O.A.T.'s but against a healthy Ward, I don't see him having a good night. Unlike the other young fighters B-Hop has fought, Ward has a multi dimensional game, he's skill set is well versed int he sweet science, his IQ is quite high and he will be able to impose himself physically on Hopkins. Hopkins is doing the smart thing by acting like he respects Ward too much to fight him; that's why he was acting all buddy buddy with him in the locker room before the Froch fight. Plus the fight will only garner so much interest, among boxing fans it will be a hit, but the casual fans who hike up ppv numbers probably won't be into it unless GB promotes their as*** off. So how much could they potentially offer Bernard to change his mind? I want to see Bernard win another title at 50.

The Good Doctor says:

[QUOTE=Carmine Cas;26918]Hopkins is one G.O.A.T.'s but against a healthy Ward, I don't see him having a good night. Unlike the other young fighters B-Hop has fought, Ward has a multi dimensional game, he's skill set is well versed int he sweet science, his IQ is quite high and he will be able to impose himself physically on Hopkins. Hopkins is doing the smart thing by acting like he respects Ward too much to fight him; that's why he was acting all buddy buddy with him in the locker room before the Froch fight. Plus the fight will only garner so much interest, among boxing fans it will be a hit, but the casual fans who hike up ppv numbers probably won't be into it unless GB promotes their as*** off. So how much could they potentially offer Bernard to change his mind? I want to see Bernard win another title at 50.[/QUOTE]

I think he could win one at 50 too. Assuming things remain the same for the next 18-24 months he could fight Shumenov, Cleverly, or Abraham and have a decent shot.

SouthPaul says:

Lmfao multiplied by 10 prizefight purses!

[QUOTE=Radam G;26910]Hehehehehe! SouthPaul! That was COLD! But Uncle Roger is RIGHTEOUSLY RIGHT. He said that he would whup a bytch's arse.

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stormcentre says:

Hopkins would have no chance against Ward in my opinion, and that’s one reason why he’s stated he would never fight Ward. Ward is too skilled and would not allow Bernard to control

distance and when he fights. Still, Bernard has earned the right to avoid some fighters; since many others do. I also think Ward would be too refined for GGG too; but that’s another story.

kidcanvas says:

i said hopkins would ko cloud and he could have if he pushed it.... im happy with the beaten he gave him..ward?? hes a special guy , very unassuming but can do everything .. hopkins has the goods still to make it a pick em fight . who else is there? these younger guys suck..

Real Talk says:

First of all great win and much respect and admiration to a true master boxer Bernard "The Executioner" Hopkins one of he greatest of all times. One who reveals the truth and debunks myths about prime this, past your prime that and age dogma. One who shows that discipline, toughness, determination and a farmers blue collar work ethic combine with intelligence, hunger and respect for the thesweetscience and anyone can get it. I agree with Amayseng an I don't want to see that fight happen, it's better if Hopkins passes the torch to Ward for boxing. Hopkins and Ward can take rematches or other options. Thank you again Hop, I gleaned something else I can work on in the gym. Appreciate you. Dueces