

## MONDAY AM QB: Matthyse Takes Checkered Flag

Written by Bernard Fernandez  
Monday, 20 May 2013 09:51

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ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. \_ Anyone who has ever attended a NASCAR race knows there is a world of difference between watching the sport on television and being there in person. On TV, the cars don't seem nearly as fast, or as powerful, as they really are. If you're sitting in the stands, especially if you're close to the track, the noise and vibration of a 190-mph racecar vrooming past is akin to finding yourself at the edge of a tornado.

Saturday night, in Boardwalk Hall, referee Steve Smoger had an especially close view of the high-octane thrust of Argentine power puncher Lucas "The Machine" Matthyse, and it was Smoger who decided to wave the checkered flag before the completion of lap, uh, Round 3, lest Lamont Peterson slam into the retaining wall once too often.

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Peterson (31-2-1, 16 KOs), whose IBF junior welterweight championship was not on the line in the catchweight bout (the contract limit was 141 pounds), had already been floored three times when Smoger stepped in and waved it off 2 minutes, 14 seconds into the third of the scheduled 12 rounds. To let matters continue beyond that point, Smoger decided, would simply be to invite disaster for the obviously woozy Peterson.

“The first significant punch (Matthyse) landed in Round 1, I could see Lamont was very hurt,” said Smoger. “But he recovered. In Round 2, I was very tempted to stop it after the first knockdown, but Lamont recovered again. He responded to me verbally. He walked to me when I asked him to. Still, I said to myself, ‘The next time he takes a shot like that, I’m putting an end to this.’”

So when Matthyse (34-2, 32 KOs), whose 94.1 knockout percentage is among the highest of any fighter in any weight class, sent Peterson crashing to the canvas for the third time, Smoger knew what to do.

“His power,” Smoger said of Matthyse, “is very significant.”

No ratings information yet as to the size of the Showtime audience for the televised doubleheader -- IBF welterweight champion Devon Alexander (25-1, 14 KOs) was awarded a seventh-round TKO over England’s Lee Purdy (20-4-1, 13 KOs) in a non-title bout when Purdy’s corner did not allow him to come out for Round 8 -- but the on-site audience, a disappointing 4,250, had to realize that what they had just seen might be the start of something big. There is the very real possibility American fight fans had just witnessed the arrival of boxing’s Next Big Thing, even if that big thing is 30 years old, doesn’t speak English and has been a professional since 2004.

When you have the potential to take anyone out at any time with a well-placed haymaker, by definition you are star material.

“I asked Paulie Malignaggi (the WBA welterweight titlist who was in attendance), ‘Who can beat this guy?’” said Golden Boy CEO Richard Schaefer, who can see Matthyse-generated dollar signs shimmering in the near future. “Paulie said, ‘Somebody who can fight a perfect fight for 12 rounds. And by ‘perfect,’ I mean somebody who can’t even get touched by the guy

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because if you get touched, you'll probably go down.”

The probable next opponent to be touched by Matthyse --and who might prove more capable of touching him back than was Peterson --is WBC/WBA super lightweight champion Danny “Swift” Garcia (26-0, 16 KOs ), who also is a fair hand at making short nights of his fights. Garcia was at ringside to scout Matthyse in what now seems to be an almost-done deal for a Sept. 7 slugfest, probably in the Verizon Center in Washington, D.C.

“It’s very likely,” Schaefer said of a Garcia-Matthyse matchup that would come prepackaged as a contender for Fight of the Year consideration. “I’ve discussed the fight with Al Haymon, Danny’s manager, who represents Lucas as well. That’s the fight we’re going to do. It’s a fight I want to do, it’s a fight fans want to see. Danny Garcia is a fighter who’s never turned down anybody. He’s a great fighter. A lot of people might underestimate him, but he always steps up and delivers. He delivers big.”

Among those disposed to underestimate Garcia is Matthyse, who dissed the Philadelphian as just another victim-in-waiting.

“He’s a slow fighter,” Matthyse said of Garcia, notwithstanding the champion’s zippy nickname. “He’s slow, he’s wide open. I know I would win that fight as well.”

Garcia, for his part, doesn’t sound like someone inclined to duck anyone.

“You know me,” he said earlier last week. “I’ll fight anybody.”

Matthyse isn’t without his vulnerabilities, given his split-decision losses to Zab Judah and Alexander, although his supporters insist that he was jobbed on both occasions. But his status as a really big bopper continues to grow, putting him in a category with such legendary KO artists as Earnie Shavers, Julian Jackson and a handful of others who had to be considered dangerous for every second of every round, regardless of the round-by-round scorecards submitted by the judges.

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IBF light heavyweight champion Bernard “The Executioner” Hopkins, at 48, has seen and done everything there is to do in the ring, and was as wowed as Malignaggi by Matthisse’s demonstration of blunt-force trauma. He was so impressed, in fact, that the Golden Boy executive, in a moment of candor, admitted that he wouldn’t be too eager to put his Philly homeboy, Garcia, in with Matthisse just yet.

“I’ve never seen a (junior welterweight) hit like a heavyweight, or close to it,” Hopkins said. “I guarantee, there’s a lot of 140-pound guys who are not sleeping good tonight.

“My strategy (for fighting someone like Matthisse) would be to get the guy snoring. As soon as he got to the point where he was falling asleep, then I would start fighting. That’s the strategy you got to use against somebody who’s got dynamite in both hands. You got to get him to blow off some steam.

“Peterson was doing the right thing early on, but somehow he got brave or tired. Brave and tired can turn all men into (losers).”

And what of Garcia, whose courage and willingness to mix it up is beyond dispute? Would he meet Matthisse head-on, and maybe be the guy to land the first crushing shot win?

“I told Richard I don’t want to see that fight right now,” said Hopkins, who considers Garcia something of a protégé. “If it was up to me, I wouldn’t do it.”

Asked if Garcia’s meat-and-potatoes style was “tailor-made” for Matthisse, Hopkins said, “Yes.”

Alexander, a slick southpaw whose title also was not on the line --Purdy, a late fill-in for the injured Kell Brook, came in a pound over the 140-pound limit at the weigh-in, and was able take off only two-tenths of a pound within the allotted period --has that disputed split decision over Matthisse to his credit, but he clearly does not pack the putaway pop of the Argentine. He landed 176 of 625 punches against Purdy, 157 of those connections being “power” shots,

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according to CompuBox, but the stoppage was more a matter of steady, incremental damage than the result of a Matthyse-type lightning bolt.

“I hurt my left hand in the first round,” Alexander explained. “I had to switch up and use my right, my hook and my uppercut.”

Next up for Alexander might be a unification bout with WBC welterweight king Floyd Mayweather Jr., widely acknowledged as the best pound-for-pound fighter on the planet. The St. Louis resident believes he can pull off the upset, if given the chance.

“Everybody wants to prove they’re the one to beat Floyd,” he said. “I definitely want that fight. I’ve never shied away from any opponent. I’ve been fighting since I’ve been seven years old. What makes him better than me?”

Uh ... a firm grasp on reality? Not that Alexander is chopped liver, but his best doesn’t beat Mayweather’s best. That’s pretty much guaranteed. But everyone who throws down with Floyd harbors the hope that maybe, just maybe, he’ll have the off-night of their dreams. And even they catch Floyd at the top of his game, well, at least the payday for making the attempt is sure to salve their pain.

To his credit, Peterson, who retained his title strap despite the beatdown, insisted he was ready, willing and maybe even able to again put himself into Matthyse’s line of fire after going down three times.

“The beginning plan was to keep boxing,” Peterson said. “Sometime in the second round I got hit in the back of the head and got a little upset. I got a little more reckless and wanted to bang. I could feel the fight heating up. I kind of abandoned the plan a little bit and I paid for it.

“He’s a good puncher. He had me hurt. I was hoping (Smoger) wouldn’t stop the fight because I feel I can weather any storm. I was willing to fight on.”

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It is the warrior's creed, one that the late Arturo Gatti – Atlantic City's longtime franchise fighter who had consecrated the canvas in Boardwalk Hall with no small amount of his and his opponents' blood – would surely appreciate. But Matthyse can bring the crowd to its feet even when he misses, which is what happened when he fell down after whiffing on a huge left hook in the second round. He didn't miss the next time he threw a loaded-up bomb, setting into motion the chain reaction that had Smoger on Good Samaritan alert.

[Comment on this article](#)

### **Radam G says:**

Nice copy, and great NASCAR analogy. I'm reminded of how haters listen to the propaganda of the management of their favorite fighters about the talking heads calling punches that are not connecting. WOW! What the nuthugging haters don't know -- because they are not there live -- is that the talking heads and the ringside audience can hear punching crashing into jaws, noses, stomachs and ribs. Holla!

### **Carmine Cas says:**

Bring on Garcia-Matthyse! So what happens to Peterson? Does he go back on TRT? Lmao

### **dino da vinci says:**

Floyd won't fight Alexander. That has 600-650,000 buys written all over it. Devon deserves the opportunity but won't get it.

### **Radam G says:**

NO! NO! NO! NO! it has about 150,000 PPV buyouts written all over it. Showtime should come clean about Money May-The Cali Cali during one mil. Try 870thou. This cooking-da-books jive should be condemn. GBP and now Showtime oughta QUIT!

Wow! And I use to get into HBO's jive for being the -- I thought -- greatest humbug send the late, crazy promoter known as the "White Don King." Holla!

### **deepwater says:**

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Bring on Canelo

### **amayseng says:**

[QUOTE=dino da vinci;30981]Floyd won't fight Alexander. That has 600-650,000 buys written all over it. Devon deserves the opportunity but won't get it.[/QUOTE]

Wow

No way he deserves a Floyd fight.

How? From what?

He's done nothing.

Floyd is getting pressure to fight Canelo at 154 due to the lackluster ppv sales.

But will he?

The contract will be dismissed I say.

I said off the bat Floyd wouldn't fight 6 times in 30 months.

### **dino da vinci says:**

[QUOTE=Radam G;30984]NO! NO! NO! NO! it has about 150,000 PPV buyouts written all over it. Showtime should come clean about Money May-The Cali Ghost during one mil. Try 870thou. This cooking-da-books jive should be condemn. GBP and now Showtime oughta QUIT!

Wow! And I use to get into HBO's jive for being the -- I thought -- greatest humbug since the late, crazy promoter known as the "White Don King." Holla![/QUOTE]

Radam, if you, me or deepwater fought him it would do 150,000. OK, maybe deepwater does 200,000. This isn't Oscar, who could of fought literally anybody and done a decent number.

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Floyd can't carry the 'b' side, and if he fights Alexander we'll find out in a hurry. Unless of course, Devon has a few good months of (a) rescuing old people from a burning building, (b) unattended babies drowning in those little blue swimming pools with the fish on them, and/or (c) discovers an alien in his backyard who agrees to work his corner come fight night, all leading up to the night of the fight.

@Amayseng. Yes, there will always be guys more worthy, agreed, but Devon certainly hasn't embarrassed himself with quality of opposition. He's worthy.

### **Radam G says:**

I cannot agree that even Showtime would try that jive with super none-appearing Alexander. In the first place, in that last bout against the Cali Ghost, Money May did not do 1mil PPV payouts. And he didn't sell out the live gate at MGM. Face it! The Money May's appeal has faded and Showtime got jobbed by him. Also GBP is stinking in appeal and not getting buying butts to its many show. This is why GBP CEO shouted to the world that Matthyse is "the next Manny Pacquiao!"

C'mon, MAN! That a trick of the trade stealing the thunder from a global-megastar. Come November, Da Manny will become the first boxer to get more than a mil PPV buyouts in two different superpower countries. Against Rios, Da Manny will get 1mil PPV buyouts in the USA, and more than 1.5mil PPV buyouts in China. Worldwide, Da Manny will get nearly 4mil PPV and Big-Screen payouts. And Da Manny totalopurse of 57mil will zoom pass Money May's 95mil. Holla!

### **dino da vinci says:**

OK, make it two in a row. How does 57 mil zoom past 95 mil?

### **Radam G says:**

By adding \$57mil more. It is not rocket science -- just sweet science, BABEEE! China TIME! PAC TIME! PAY TIME! And the BIG PAY BACK! Both the Cali Cranium Crusher/Big Foot and Hulkquez are PUNKED. Holla!

### **dino da vinci says:**

I just received an email from the great (really, really great) Joe Rein, world class boxing writer, commenting on fellow scribe Bernard Fernandez:

[I]Just as Mayweather is head-'n-shoulders above the rest, Bernard Fernandez is the creme de la creme of writers.[/I]

As usual we agree Mr Rein. I don't recall what author stated when asked who was the world's finest writer, (I paraphrase here) "When it comes to the very best, there is no particular order". We at the TSS have been very blessed to be able to call our own, the [B]very best[/B] at the



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intersection of where boxing meets the written word.

### **Matthew says:**

I don't think too many people are clamoring for a Mayweather-Alexander showdown, other than hardcore Mayweather fans. That fight has snoozer written all over it. The only plausible Mayweather fight I would actually pay to see would be a fight against Alvarez. I'd also pay to see him take on one of the middleweight belt holders, but that's about as likely to happen as a meaningful reduction in government spending. Matthyse is one of only a handful of active boxers that truly knows how to punch (the other that comes to mind is Golovkin), and that, in my opinion, makes him a must-see attraction. If a proposed fight against Garcia takes place in D.C. in September, I will buy tickets.