

HOW HE DID IT: Underrated Technician Matthyse Not Just A Bomber

Written by Lee Wylie
Tuesday, 21 May 2013 10:05



Lucas Matthyse (now 34-2 with 1 no contest and 32 Kos) showed why he is arguably the number one junior welterweight in the world –and one of the most avoided men in boxing –with an impressive third round knockout of Lamont Peterson (now 31-2-1 with 16 Kos) in Atlantic City on Saturday night.

Peterson, who had never been stopped in any of his previous 33 fights, was dropped by a left hook in the second round and again in the third. After tasting the canvas once more from yet another left hook, referee Steve Smoger deemed Peterson unfit to continue and wisely called a halt to the action. This is now the sixth fight in a row in which Matthyse has managed to take his opponent out before the final bell.

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Everyone and their mother knows that Lucas Matthyse is the owner of some extremely heavy hands, making him pound-for-pound one of the hardest hitters in all of boxing. In this analysis, however, I would like to focus more on Matthyse's craft and ring acumen, which, I believe, are vastly underappreciated and can be attributed toward many of his knockouts.

It was obvious from the opening bell that Peterson's game plan was based on controlling and maintaining distance and preventing Matthyse from getting set to hit. For Peterson to have had any kind of success then, he would have had to rely heavily on the jab (boxing's number one distance regulator) along with lateral movement so that Matthyse would have to keep realigning himself in order to punch effectively and with maximum power. It soon became apparent that neither Peterson's jab nor any lateral movement were going to be enough to thwart Matthyse's forward momentum.

Not only did Matthyse successfully block off Peterson's escape routes via some intelligent footwork and pressure, he also neutralized Peterson's jab.

It is very important for a fighter to have a varied attack. However, it is equally important that a fighter also has more than one way of defending an attack. Just as a fighter will soon recognize an offensive pattern should an opponent repeat the same technique over and over, a fighter will also be quick to spot and take advantage of an opponent who defends an attack the same way every time. Because Matthyse changed up his defenses for Peterson's jab throughout the fight, Peterson was unable to time him or lure him into any kind of a trap.

Rear hand parry

Instead of just simply covering up, a skill that all fighters should utilize more often is the rear hand parry to catch and deflect an incoming jab. When attempting to parry the jab, the hand that is on the outside of the attack (elbow side of an opponent's punch) should redirect the blow either across an opponent's body, up and over, or down and to the side. Unless a fighter is going up against an opponent who is in an opposite lead to their own, it is not advisable to parry an incoming jab with the lead hand as doing so will leave the lead side exposed for an opponent's more threatening rear hand. Parrying the jab with the rear hand disturbs an opponent's rhythm, making it more difficult for them to complete or launch a follow up attack and also creates counterpunching opportunities, particularly for the lead hand (catch and jab).

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The timing of this shot is crucial. It's a perfect example of Matthyse's technique, which is not just about power but also about precision and timing. This shot is a key moment in the fight, showing Matthyse's ability to land a clean, powerful blow.

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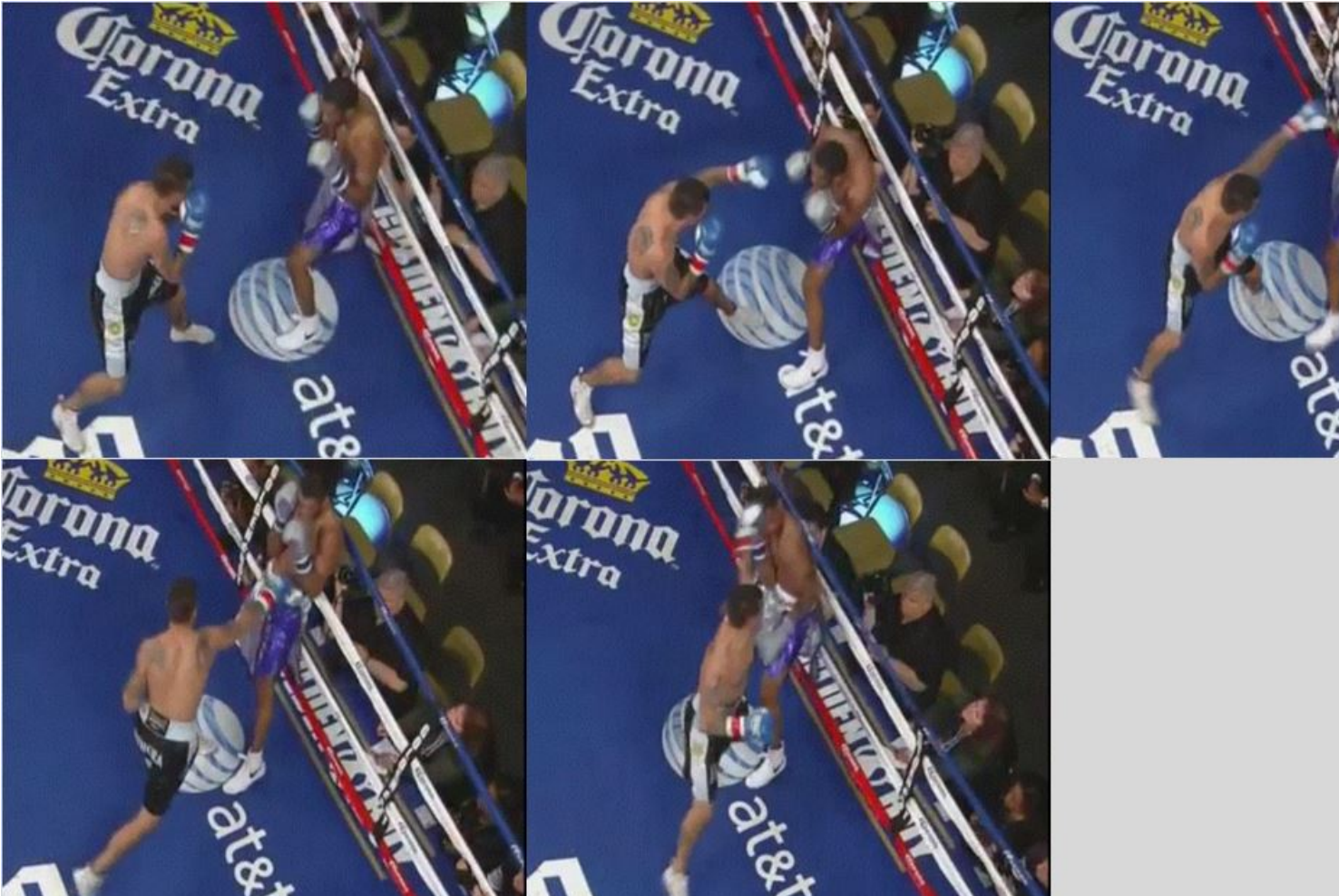
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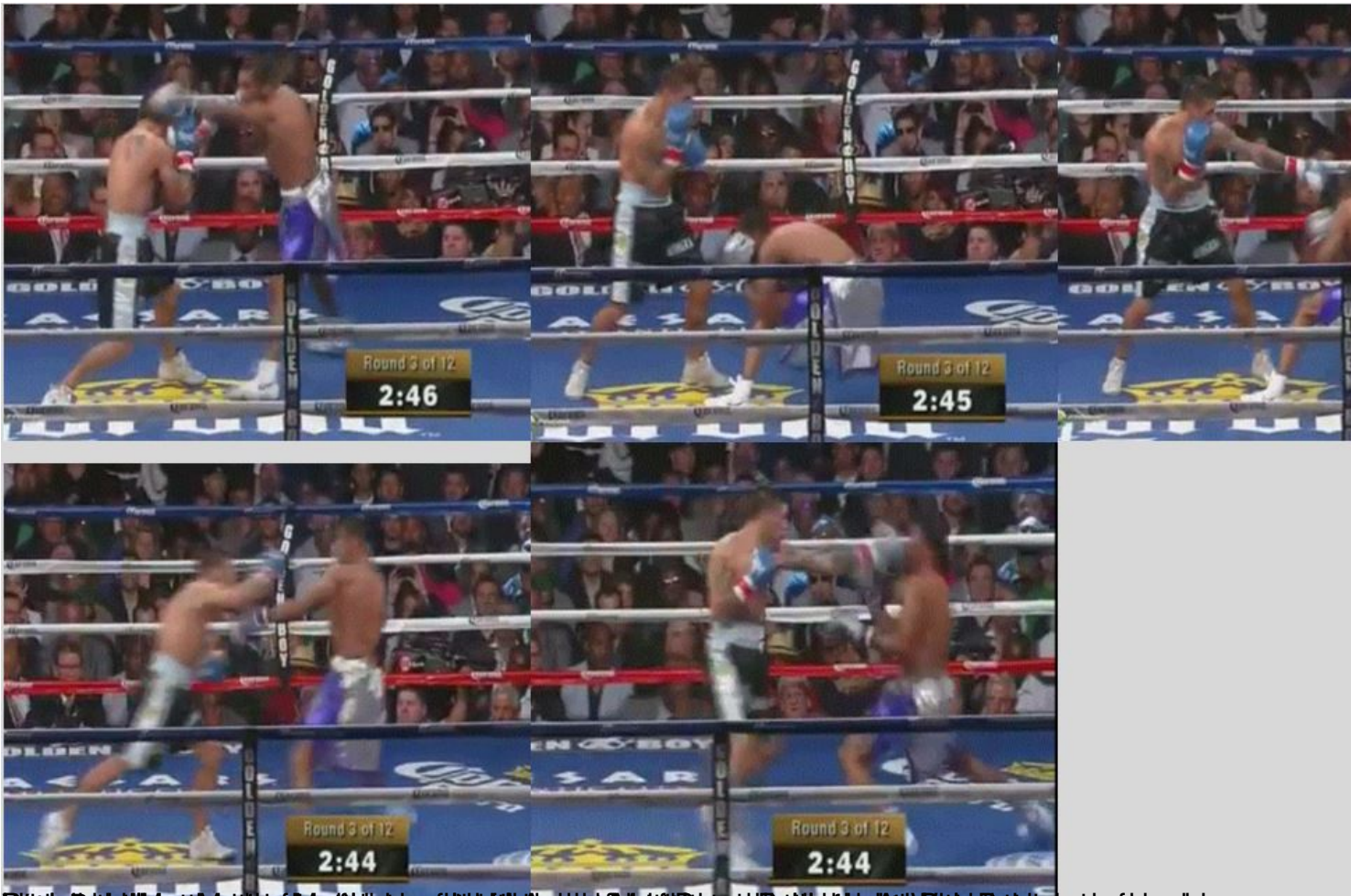
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Manny Pacquiao (left) lands a right-hand jab to the head of Juan Manuel Márquez (right) during their fight on May 12, 2012. Pacquiao is wearing white trunks and Márquez is wearing purple and white trunks. The background shows the 'Corona Extra' and 'at&t' logos.

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