

..Did I mention the head butt?

Written by Rick Folstad
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It's been seven months since the legend of "Sugar" Shane Mosley went up in a puff of controversy.

Right hands and left hooks always tell the truth about a fighter. But ask Mosley what happened, how Vernon Forrest beat him in 12 easy rounds last January, and Mosley tells you about the holding, about the low blows and most important, he tells you about the dangers of the head, how when it's used as a battering ram, it can break your concentration, remove you of your senses and leave you with five stitches.

It can steal your fight away.

"I know what happened (in that first fight)," Mosley said Tuesday on a conference call with boxing writers from around the country.

"He hit me with a head butt in the second round and he did it on purpose.

I know it was deliberately done and I know how he does it. I'm prepared for it now."

On July 20 in Indianapolis, Mosley gets his second chance at the only fighter who has ever beaten him as a pro. And Mosley (38-1, 35 KOs) is still angry about how he lost, how Forrest (34-0, 26 KOs) learned to throw that crazy head of his as well as he throws a jab.

In an hour-long call, Mosley mentioned the head butt more than a dozen times, but it wasn't all his fault. Most of the questions required him to explain what happened at Madison Square Garden, how the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world became just another notch on Vernon Forrest's six-gun.

Mosley said he learned how Forrest butts heads from an old sparring partner of the WBC welterweight champ. He explained how you throw your left jab and then throw your right and how you can lead with the hard part of your head. Technical stuff. It was like he was telling you how to perform CPR.

"He throws his head first and then throws his right hand," Mosley said, trying to clarify a few things for all the listeners. "Without the head butt, I think I would have knocked him out."

Without wheels, we walk. Without money, we're broke. Without excuses, we have nothing left to say.

"I went back to my corner after the first round and knew I would knock him out in three or four rounds," he said.

Then they clash heads in round two and Mosley spends the rest of the fight thinking he's

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riding the roller coaster at Disney World.

"I was surprised when I got hit with his head," Mosley said. "How could he butt me when he was so far away from me?"

Crazy things happen in the fight game.

So how does Mosley slip the hard head of Vernon Forrest this time?

"He's a very smart and very tricky fighter," Mosley said. "But he won't trick me any more. I'm ready for him. I'm ready to go to war."

It's easy to believe Mosley. He's a great fighter and a classy guy. He hasn't assaulted a reporter, taken a swing at a doorman or failed a drug test. He hasn't slapped a woman or bit an ear or tipped over a table.

How nice is this guy? When asked why he wanted an immediate rematch with Forrest instead of taking a few warm-up fights, he implied it was for the benefit of all the other welterweights out there in the world.

"I can't see myself knocking out another poor soul just because I'm mad at Vernon Forrest," he said. "That's not right for the other guy."

It's funny, but I think he really means it.