

The Sound and the Fury, Signifying Nothing

Written by Steve Kim

Monday, 29 November 1999 19:00

Much was made about the recent incident this past weekend in Puerto Rico between Bernard Hopkins and Roy Jones. Jones, was in town to support his little buddy, Derrik Gainer, who was defending his WBA featherweight title against local favorite Daniel Seda. Hopkins, was in town to coax the recently retired Felix Trinidad out of retirement and hound Jones.

It was reported that Bernard Hopkins barged into Gainers lockerroom and shoved Jones and that both men were then quickly separated. If you think nobodies that crazy, well, consider that Hopkins last year caused quite a stir by throwing down a Puerto Rican flag in front of about 10,000 enraged countrymen of Felix Trinidad during a promotional stop in his country. The fact that Hopkins still has the guts to go back there(in fact, this is his second trip) should tell you if this actually happened or not.

Then after the premature ending of Gainer-Seda, both Hopkins and Jones faced off for photographers and did some jawing. Reports started surfacing that this would be the prelude to a rematch in December, gullible web-sites excitedly wrote about how a second Jones-Hopkins bout was being made.

I say it ain't happening. What you saw this past weekend is as close as you'll see to those to ever getting in on again. I had predicted in the past that those two would never step in the same ring with each other- I'm wrong on that one, but I'll stand by this: I don't think they'll ever have a rematch.

Now, I could be wrong(and hopefully for boxing's sake I am) and I've been incorrect many times, but I just can't see it happening. Because at the end of the day, this little incident didn't suddenly inject a whole new revenue stream into this promotion and both men will still be stubborn to a fault in their demands. Hopkins, will continue to seek a \$10 million payday while Roy will keep singing his familiar tune of '60-40' It was a great publicity stunt, but too bad it's for a fight that most likely not going to happen.

Hopkins, will continue to believe in what he thinks is just- even if that means cutting off his own nose to spite his face. And Jones, will continue to take HBO to the cleaners by facing the Glen Kelly's and Clinton Woods of the world. By the way, what was Jones doing in Puerto Rico just two weeks before his own bout? Oh yeah, it's not like he has to actually train for this Woods character, what was I thinking? What's ironic is that this squabble with Hopkins was probably the most serious event that's happened to him inside a boxing ring in over three years.

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And to be fair, it's the first time Hopkins has been in the ring since his February stoppage of Carl Daniels in February. A lot of time has passed since then but it just seems like eons ago that Hopkins was capturing the imagination of the boxing world by de-throning Felix Trinidad off his pound-for-pound perch. He was the peoples champion and the feel-good story of the year. That, like the momentum of his career has come to a screeching halt and as of right now, he has no fights on his horizon and no network to call his home.

What both Hopkins and Jones seem to be like is the two baddest bullies on the schoolyard who find ways to dominate their turf, while making sure they themselves never have to cross paths. Both are gifted fighters, headed for the Hall-of-Fame, with ego's and pride the size of Butterbean and maybe, just maybe they don't feel the risk of fighting each other outweighs the reward.

Maybe both of them are content to rule their respective turf(Hopkins at middleweight, Jones at light heavyweight) and looking like they didn't back down.

NOT OUT OF THE WOODS

While Jones' mandatory challenger Clinton Woods has a sparking record (32-1) it must be noted that out of those 32 wins, 17 have come against fighter with records of .500 or below. In fact, his last fight was against a Clint Johnson that sported a record of 9-11-1. Hey, I understand that you don't want to jeopardize your number one ranking but that's ridiculous. In fact, just two fights ago, he took on a Paul Bonson who's ledger was 11-38-6. Which would have been his 31st professional bout.

His two most recognizable wins are an ancient Yawe Davis and Ole Klemetsen and his lone loss was to the pedestrian David Starie- best known in our country for stinking out the joint against Joe Calzaghe on a Mike Tyson undercard.

Jose Sulaiman and the WBC have a lot of explaining to do. Not that they will, because they never do, but Woods is another highly questionable, highly dubious mis-mandatory that Jones has been shoving down our throats for awhile.

I'll give Jones this, he isn't much for drama, but he's a helluva manager. Anyone that can get themselves paid \$4-5 million for fighting these types of guys, time and time again, has to be applauded.

This mis-mandatory will be taking place at the Rose Garden(the home of the Portland Trailblazers) and was made possible by Nike. I guess with the

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Blazer season still a few months away that the natives are starving for
some entertainment, but since when are massacres entertaining ? I thought
televised executions were illegal?

HBO and Nike, should both said, "

Just Don't Do It."

CREDIT DUE

But I will give Jones this, even when he wasn't
Gainer.

fighting, he still overshadowed