

Robert Allen's Letter to Hopkins

Written by Rick Folstad
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It's a well-constructed letter supposedly written by IBF mandatory challenger Robert Allen, asking middleweight champ Bernard Hopkins if he'd like to step outside and settle things.

You know, decide who the real bad-ass is at 160 pounds. Allen isn't really asking Hopkins for a fight as much as he's demanding one, throwing in a few insults as incentive, hoping Hopkins will hear the trash talk and decide he's heard enough.

My favorite jab at Hopkins is this one by Allen which says, "Well, Bernie Boy. I have mowed down everyone in my path to get to you. Money will not stand in the way of our title fight." No wonder he wrote it down in an open letter to Hopkins.

He'd have a hard time saying that with a straight face. I can almost hear Hopkins' reply. "OK, Allen. I've listened to your foolish drivell long enough. Forget about the money. We're on. You name the time and the place. I'll be there." My guess is, Hopkins never read the letter or even saw it. But that's not the point. Since he dismantled Felix Trinidad more than a year ago, Hopkins hasn't exactly filled his dance card with scary, top contenders. He fought Carl Daniels in a token fight on Feb. 2 of this year, but that's it. And it's not like he can't find anyone to fight. Ask any of 54 or 55 world champions within two weight divisions of Hopkins, and they'll tell you they'd like to dance a few rounds with The Executioner. Call it a \$10 million fox-trot. Allen would love to boogie with Hopkins. "It's about time you stopped talking and started fighting again," Allen writes. "I know I'm tired of hearing you. I can only assume the media and the few fans you have left can't wait for someone to shut you up in and out of the ring." I'm not sure of his wording, but I think I understand the message. "You remember the night when you used (referee) Mills Lane to quit in our fight in Las Vegas? Well I do." Allen writes Just to recap, Allen and Hopkins fought to a no contest in August, 1998 after Hopkins was injured when he was shoved out of the ring by Lane, who was trying to break up a clinch. Six months later, Hopkins stopped Allen in seven rounds. "Unfortunately, I let my second opportunity slip by," writes Allen, stating the obvious. "I made mistakes. It will never happen again." Hopkins will probably see to that. According to Allen, the IBF had given Hopkins until Oct. 1 to make the mandatory fight. It's now the middle of October. He didn't do it. "Now, I understand that you may have to fight that well-known WBC contender next," Allen writes. Ah, I love sarcasm. Bernie is scheduled to fight WBC mandatory

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challenger Morrade Hakkar of France in January and we all know who
"Hatchetman" Hakkar is, the sensational French middleweight from
Besancon. Remember his unforgettable six-round decision win
over tough Eliseo Nogueira last summer in Massy, France? Or how can
you forget his epic ninth-round stoppage of Alban Girouard in Bonneval,
France just two years ago? No wonder Allen is upset with Hopkins. He's
defending his title against a tongue-twister. "I promise the fans
and the media I will not stop until I've shut you up for good,"
he says to Hopkins in closing. "Think of all the goodwill I just created with
that guarantee." He signs it, "Sincerely, Robert Allen."
What a nice guy.