

## A Note on Mayweather-Ortiz...HAUSER

Written by Thomas Hauser  
Monday, 19 September 2011 18:21

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Bart Barry wrote last year that the marketing plan for Floyd Mayweather Jr's fights has become, "How can we fool the public again?"

With that in mind, there came a time about a month ago when I tuned out Mayweather vs. Victor Ortiz. I didn't read the conference-call transcripts. I didn't go to Las Vegas for the fight. I didn't buy the pay-per-view. On fight night, I was curious enough to follow the action via short texts posted at brief intervals on ESPN.com. On Sunday morning, I watched the now-infamous fourth round and its aftermath on YouTube.

Mayweather is a superbly talented fighter. "Anything my mouth says, my hands can back it up," he states. "Once you put me in that squared circle, I'm home."

Floyd also has a penchant for anti-social behavior, having been criminally convicted twice for

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beating up women. He is currently under indictment for assaulting the mother of three of his children (in addition to physically threatening two of the children). He has engaged in racist homophobic rants; burns hundred-dollar bills in nightclubs to flaunt his wealth; and demeans opponents as a matter of course.

"I've been in a lot of fights," Arturo Gatti said before fighting Mayweather in 2005. "But I've never been in a fight where my opponent was talking like he is. He has no class, to speak about another fighter like he does."

The June 28th kick-off press conference for Mayweather-Ortiz began with a promotional film that praised Floyd as "pound-for-pound, the best fighter in the universe; [a man who] always fights the best and stands alone as the shining star in boxing."

Promoter Richard Schaefer advised the assembled media that Floyd is a "gentleman" and promised that Mayweather-Ortiz would be "the greatest pay-per-view card in the history of boxing."

Not to be outdone, World Boxing Council representative Jill Diamond said that Floyd "bleeds green" but has "a heart of gold."

The "bleeding green" was understandable, given the sanctioning fees that the WBC expected to reap from Mayweather-Ortiz. There are some battered women who might disagree with the "heart of gold" part.

Ortiz seemed a bit overwhelmed by it all.

The "high point" of the pre-fight marketing campaign was a profanity-laced confrontation between Floyd and his father on the first episode of HBO's Mayweather-Ortiz: 24/7. Floyd's conduct in that exchange was reminiscent of Mike Tyson's onstage tirade at the Hudson Theater during the build-up to Iron Mike's 2002 fight against Lennox Lewis.

The low point of the promotion was Mayweather's attack on Oscar De La Hoya after Ortiz said in the second episode of 24/7 that Oscar is his idol. That engendered a Mayweather tweet: "De La Hoya is a drug user, dresses in drag, committed adultery, and drinks alcohol; and Ortiz looks up to this guy."

At that point, Richard Schaefer balanced the competing interests of De La Hoya (his dear friend and partner) and Mayweather (a source of income) and resolutely declared, "I'm not going to get into the middle of that. I have a very nice relationship with Floyd. We work very well together. When Oscar came out with his statement [admitting to having been photographed by a stripper while wearing women's lingerie at a time when he was under the influence of cocaine], there were a lot of people who were very supportive of Oscar and wished him all the best with rehab. There are always those who will have a different opinion."

Meanwhile, it should be noted that, whenever De La Hoya and Mayweather appear jointly at a media event, Oscar has the look of a man who is trying to smile while chewing on glass.

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Mayweather was established as a 7-to-1 betting favorite over Ortiz. Thereafter, Victor's chances (such as they were) took another hit when the Nevada State Athletic Commission designated Joe Cortez as the referee for the fight.

Cortez (who has legally trademarked the phrase "I'm fair but I'm firm") was once regarded as one of boxing's better referees. But in recent years, there have been times when "unfair" and "infirm" have attached to his name. More specifically, he has engaged in questionable conduct that altered the flow of several big fights; most notably, Mayweather vs. Ricky Hatton and Amir Khan vs. Marcos Maidana.

The assumption was that Cortez's style of refereeing was likely to favor Mayweather over Ortiz. Carlos Acevedo put the matter in harsh perspective, writing, "Cortez, whose incompetence has been steadily growing, is now one of the perpetual black clouds of boxing. Among his peculiar habits is an inability to break fighters at the appropriate moment. Why let Cortez, whose reverse Midas touch has marred more than one big fight recently, in the building at all on Saturday night?"

Fight-night attendance at the MGM Grand Garden Arena was 14,687; well short of a sellout.

Mayweather dominated the first three rounds, which was bad news for Ortiz, who has a history of slowing down as a fight progresses and seemed to be breaking down both physically and mentally.

In round four, the following sequence of events occurred:

(1) Ortiz cornered Mayweather and, frustrated by his inability to land a clean shot, deliberately head-butted Floyd.

(2) Cortez called "time."

(3) Ortiz acknowledged his wrongdoing, hugged Mayweather, and kissed him on the cheek.

(4) Cortez walked Ortiz away from the corner, holding him by the arm, and appropriately deducted a point (for the head-butt; not the kiss).

(5) While Cortez was circling the ring, signaling the deduction to each judge and still holding Ortiz by the arm, Victor reached out with his free hand and touched Mayweather's left glove in another gesture of apology.

(6) Mayweather went to a neutral corner, and Cortez led Ortiz to the opposite side of the ring.

(7) Cortez motioned the fighters to ring center and then, inexplicably, turned away from the action, losing control of the moment.

(8) Ortiz moved to touch gloves again. Mayweather moved as though he was going to respond in kind and whacked Ortiz with a left hook (that neither Ortiz or Cortez saw coming) followed by

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a straight right hand that ended the fight.

Legal or illegal, it was a sucker punch.

After the fight, Mayweather was defiant. "S--t happens in boxing," he declared. "Protect yourself at all times."

He also got into an ugly shouting match with Larry Merchant, when the HBO analyst questioned him about the propriety of the knockout blow:

Mayweather: You'll never give me a fair shake. You know that. So I'm gonna let you talk to Victor Ortiz. All right? I'm through. Put somebody else up here to give me an interview.

Merchant: What are you talking about?

Mayweather: You never give me a fair shake. HBO needs to fire you. You don't know shit about boxing. You ain't s--t.

Merchant: I wish I was fifty years younger. I'd kick your ass.

Given the Mayweather family history, one might say that Merchant has become a "father figure" to Floyd.

Meanwhile . . . How should the boxing community assess Mayweather's sucker punch?

First, it should be noted that, as a general rule, Floyd conducts himself well in the ring. That was exemplified when chaos broke out during his 2006 fight against Zab Judah. While both trainers and Zab were throwing extra-curricular punches, Floyd stood calmly in a neutral corner.

Also, one can argue that, when Ortiz took the fight into the gutter with a flagrant foul, he was inviting an equally unsportsmanlike response.

And let's be honest. If the reverse had happened; if Mayweather had deliberately head-butted Ortiz and Victor responded with a sucker-punch knockout, many people would be saying today that Floyd got what he deserved.

That said; Mayweather-Ortiz was another proverbial black eye for boxing. Bill Dwyre (the veteran boxing writer for the Los Angeles Times and a man not given to hyperbole) wrote afterward, "The boos rang into the night and may not stop for months to come. Mayweather won his mega-fight against Ortiz, and each ought to be ashamed of himself. Any resemblance between sportsmanship and boxing vanished on a night of mugging and dirty play. This was more freak show than sporting event."

And Jim Lampley opined, "If you're the best fighter in the world and you like to claim that you're

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the best fighter in history, you shouldn't have to do that."

In a post-fight interview, Bernard Osuna of ESPN asked Mayweather, "What does this fight do for you?"

"It adds to my legacy," Mayweather responded.

It certainly does.

**Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at [thausen@rcn.com](mailto:thausen@rcn.com). His most recent book (Winks and Daggers: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing) has just been published by the University of Arkansas Press.**

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### **FighterforJC says:**

This is golden. Jim Lampley said it. All the uneducated thugs can disagree.

### **Radam G says:**

A sucka is born every minute is what I heard. I don't know about the thug. But it was a lesson learned. Don't hug or kiss a thug, because your arse he'll pug. Whatever! Holla!

### **ali says:**

[QUOTE=FighterforJC;9525]This is golden. Jim Lampley said it. All the uneducated thugs can disagree.[/QUOTE]

STFU!!! I tried of seeing your racist ass post.

### **FighterforJC says:**

[QUOTE=ali;9529]STFU!!! I tried of seeing your racist ass post.[/QUOTE]

I think YOU're the racist. Thugs come in all shapes, sizes and races. You're insinuating "thugs" just refer to one race.

### **Radam G says:**

Wow! Ali, you are one paradox, DUDE! What in da fudge are you -- a wolf or man? Dude, you be huffin' and puffin,' and tryin' to blow down all type of jive. I'm perplexed like a muthaquestion mark about your arse. Or maybe you just turn into a cyberspace wolf bytch -- I mean man -- when you miscomprehend syet. Anyway, guy, CHILLAX! Take a chill pill and some prune juice.

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Dat stuff will relax your arse and rush some of dat bullsh\*t out. Hehehehe! Holla!

**ali says:**

[QUOTE=FighterforJC;9532]I think YOU're the racist. Thugs come in all shapes, sizes and races. You're insinuating "thugs" just refer to one race.[/QUOTE]

Tried of your punk ass post.... u ain't never talking about shit.

**ali says:**

[QUOTE=Radam G;9533]Wow! Ali, you are one paradox, DUDE! What in da fudge are you -- a wolf or man? Dude, you be huffin' and puffin,' and tryin' to blow down all type of jive. I'm perplexed like a muthaquestion mark about your arse. Or maybe you just turn into a cyberspace wolf bytch -- I mean man -- when you miscomprehend syet. Anyway, guy, CHILLAX! Take a chill pill and some prune juice. Dat stuff will relax your arse and rush some of dat bullsh\*t out. Hehehehe! Holla![/QUOTE]

Stop acting like a groupie Radam B cause u far from a G....in my Reed Foxx my name is Radam B and then stands for bitch ass buster....

**ali says:**

Now let me get back to boxing.....one thing I haven't heard anybody say was right after the Ortiz head butt he threw a right hook which was dirty as hell. I don't see any of the mayweather haters saying anything about that.

**Shoulder Roll Defense says:**

I think some people fail to realize that Mayweather could care less about what the general public thinks about him. If anything, he knows that more people will buy his PPVs to see him lose because of his most recent action. Ortiz grew up hard and I sympathize with him, but I don't think he grew up in the ghetto because if he did, he would have known to be on guard because retaliation was coming. The mentality of the two fighters are very different because they are products of their unique environments. Floyd doesn't take no isht off of anybody, including his closest blood relatives and he was taught to be calculated assassin in the ring. A brother like Iron Mike Tyson would have immediately gotten DQ for fouling Ortiz immediately back, but Floyd is a lot more sophisticated than Mike Tyson.

**ali says:**

[QUOTE=Fe'Roz;9540]One guy headbutts. Whoop de freaking do. As if Holyfield Tyson Bradley and other didn't and many before them. One guy hits a fool with his hands down after a break and the brags about a KO and wonders why the audience boos. Give me the biggest break. Butts we see every fight. Sucker punches , legal or not, we rarely see. Fights with old men, experrienced trainers (Sr) and commentators, we rarely have to see. The world thug is not racial whatsoever. Thug is a noun that has no race or gender. It is the domain of the gangster, who proudly enjoys his image.[/QUOTE]

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Come on Fe'Roz I know thug has no race or gender.....But I just know how to read in-between the lines....

### **Radam G says:**

Wow! Ali, you are a hand full and a piece of \_\_\_\_\_! Get it together, dude. I'm an original G, BABBBBEEEE! Ya' don't know "jack-rabbit shyt about" me, in the word of the late, great, comedian Richard Pryor. Don't you know that his daughter and I use to dated? I'm down, joker! And I know how "ta play dat poker." Whaddu? Ya' ain't gettin' none! Hehehehehe! Holla!

### **Robert Curtis says:**

"Sucker punches" happen in high school hallways, barrooms and at backyard BBQs with thugs or hillbillies. When you are gloved-up in the ring, you're always supposed to be ready. Yeah, PBF didn't need to do that, but he could and did. A fighter's anger is one of his/her main ingredients. Mayweather may have lost control of his anger Saturday. It's a character flaw that a champion of truly great character like Pacquiao could exploit. But of course that fight happening is about as likely as ocean front property in Nebraska. But with global warming the way it is, who knows? You may see me paddling around North Platte someday.

### **FighterforJC says:**

[QUOTE=Robert Curtis;9548]"Sucker punches" happen in high school hallways, barrooms and at backyard BBQs with thugs or hillbillies. When you are gloved-up in the ring, you're always supposed to be ready. Yeah, PBF didn't need to do that, but he could and did. A fighter's anger is one of his/her main ingredients. Mayweather may have lost control of his anger Saturday. It's a character flaw that a champion of truly great character like Pacquiao could exploit. But of course that fight happening is about as likely as ocean front property in Nebraska. But with global warming the way it is, who knows? You may see me paddling around North Platte someday.[/QUOTE]

Uhm, Global Warming is a hoax.

### **Robert Curtis says:**

That's it! I want to see a global warming debate on TSS! What would Radam rhyme? How would Mortcola pontificate? Would The Roast referee? Would EM have to step in and hush my trash mouth? Well, I can't make head nor tails out of Al Gore's charts. All I know is that when I was a kid in Boston, the river behind my street would freeze over solid. Kids played hockey on it all day. In the past 30 years, I haven't seen that river frozen over once. Maybe someone's pouring antifreeze into it?

### **Condor says:**

Floyd could save children from a burning building, and there would be hate. The guy's from a very dysfunctional fighting family, with plenty of prison in its past, and he's a product of it. He'll

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never be on the Wheaties box. That's understood, acknowledged, and accepted. That said, he was there to win the fight and he exploited an opening! It was offered to him on a platter -like a mack truck- and he took it. Would Ortiz, or any other fighter have done the same? Would the outcry be as loud if the roles were reversed? Who knows? All speculative. But context is a must. Peace.

### **the Roast says:**

[QUOTE=Robert Curtis;9551]That's it! I want to see a global warming debate on TSS! What would Radam rhyme? How would Mortcola pontificate? Would The Roast referee? Would EM have to step in and hush my trash mouth? Well, I can't make head nor tails out of Al Gore's charts. All I know is that when I was a kid in Boston, the river behind my street would freeze over solid. Kids played hockey on it all day. In the past 30 years, I haven't seen that river frozen over once. Maybe someone's pouring antifreeze into it?[/QUOTE]

Allright lets have a good clean debate about global warming but if a plummy bastard gets KOed when I aint lookin do not blame me. Remember, I'm fair and somewhat firm. Lets touch 'em up!

### **FighterforJC says:**

[QUOTE=Robert Curtis;9551]That's it! I want to see a global warming debate on TSS! What would Radam rhyme? How would Mortcola pontificate? Would The Roast referee? Would EM have to step in and hush my trash mouth? Well, I can't make head nor tails out of Al Gore's charts. All I know is that when I was a kid in Boston, the river behind my street would freeze over solid. Kids played hockey on it all day. In the past 30 years, I haven't seen that river frozen over once. Maybe someone's pouring antifreeze into it?[/QUOTE]

How about the earth having natural cycles of "cooling" (as you talked about some 30 years ago, which, if you may recall (and I read about) there was fear of "global cooling." That the earth has beeng going through these cycles or if it's even "warming" today is not the real issue, but that man actually had anything to do with it. And you're right, the notion of the world warming up is as ridiculous as the theory that somebody's "putting antifreeze on it," which in essence is what the liberals have been propagating. You're welcome.

### **Radam G says:**

Hehehehehehehe! Yall suckas are crazy! Enough said! Holla!