

Shane Mosley and Winky Wright Hang Up The Gloves

Written by Michael Woods
Monday, 04 June 2012 13:26



Two stellar pugilists exited the stage this weekend, though, we must caution, this being boxing, retirement announcements are always best taken with a lump of caution. Shane Mosley on Sunday night made it known that he was hanging up the gloves, after nearly 20 years as a professional, and Winky Wright earlier in the day told the world that he was through.

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The Mosley news broke on the Ring website, as Lem Satterfield reported he got the word from Mosley's camp coordinator that his loss to Canelo Alvarez on May 5 would be his final scuffle. His record stands at 46-8-1. He didn't address the news on his official Twitter account right away, so I initially wanted to add a note of caution: boxers contemplate comebacks until they head for that final dirt nap. But on Monday morning, he Tweeted this: "Good Mourning everybody Just want to thank you for showing me so much love. Had a great career and loved every moment of it. win, lose or draw."

Mosley didn't look horrid against Canelo, and in fact could beat a fair number of folks at that weight class, even at age 40. But as of today, you can start the countdown to his entrance into the Hall of Fame, in 2017. The ex lightweight ace, who also held crowns at 147 and 154 pounds, will be remembered for truly emerging on all radar screens when he went from 135 to 147 and beat Oscar De La Hoya, via split decision, in June 2000. His star dimmed a bit from back to back losses to Vernon Forrest in 2002, but he regained his shine with another win over Oscar, in 2003.

It emerged in 2008 that Mosley used an illegal PED prior to this bout, an admission the California boxer made in grand jury testimony. His rep took a hit, as he told one and all--including me, looking me in the eyes as he said it during a one on one for a then cancelled Mosley-Zab Judah fight-- in defending himself that the accusation of PED use was bogus, that he must've been dosed unknowingly, before admitting under oath that he knew what he was doing when receiving chemical aid from Victor Conte at BALCO.

Back to back losses to Winky Wright in 2004 had many pundits proclaiming that clearly Mosley's best days were far behind him. But he proved doubters wrong, to an extent, with back to back wins against Fernando Vargas, in 2006. Vargas, though, was near the end of his line at the time. Many thought Mosley got the better of Miguel Cotto when they met in NYC in 2007, but the judges said otherwise, giving the Puerto Rican a UD nod. Now 37, Mosley's late-career apex came when he whacked Antonio Margarito around, and scored a TKO9 win in 2009, right after inspectors found hardened hand pads in the Mexican's mitts prior to their bout.

Critics of Mosley will say that Margarito wasn't the monster many thought, and was in fact an ordinary boxer if not able to use a PED in his gloves. Mosley didn't have much luck against Floyd Mayweather in his next bout, though he did buzz Money on the way to a wide decision loss. Mosley next engaged in a dreadful waltz with Sergio Mora, and followed that with a pick-up-the-paycheck effort against Pacquiao in May 2011. But he regained fans with a spirited

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effort against the phenom Canelo on the Mayweather-Cotto undercard. "Canelo can go a long ways," Mosley said after the loss to a man 19 years younger than he. "When the kids start to beat you, you might need to start going to promoting."

Indeed. Mosley says he has ample money in the bank, despite the theory that a divorce picked his pockets. He was always willing to take on an immense challenge and he must be lauded for never being a ducker. It could be argued that he maybe didn't live up to the sum of his parts, losing a bunch of efforts to fighters many experts thought he was more skilled than, but his willingness to test his personal boundaries will never be questioned. Best of luck to Shane Mosley in his retirement, and staving off that inevitable urge to test himself in the ring just one more time.

While Mosley's Hall call seems imminent, Winky Wright's will be up for more debate. He came back to the ring on June 2 after being away for three years, and looked OK against young gun Peter Quillin. But at 40, the reflexes weren't as cooperative as they once were for a man whose real name is "Ronald" but was tagged Winky by his grandma as a toddler. Once of the best defenders of his era, Wright was knocked down in round five and hurt a few other times. Sunday morning, after sleeping on it, he Tweeted: "It was fun while it lasted I did what I set out to do and that was to be great. Part of being a good boxer is knowing when to call it quits. If I can't be the champion again theres no need to keep boxing. But I thank all of u from the bottom of my heart for always supporting me & I'll still be ringside at all the fights!"

He will be known, as will Mosley, as one who sought stiff challenges. (Though he also had a rep as a "too tough" negotiator, with some thinking he often asked for more than his popularity called for.) Wright, who debuted in 1990, built up a nice record in Europe, as he fought for the Acaries brothers. He was known to hardcore fights fans as he wracked up title defenses of the IBF 154 pound crown he won against Robert Frazier in 2001. In his fifth defense, when he downed Shane Mosley, his time had really arrived. "A lot of people always told them that I was good but they didn't believe it because I never fought one of the big dudes. Now that I beat one of the big-name, pound-for-pound so-called fighters, you gotta give it up to me. I did what I said I can do," he said then. Another win against Mosley and his thorough domination of Felix Trinidad in 2005 gave him pound for pound cred in a big way. No, he wasn't a bomber or a trader, and therefore his skills were best appreciated by true fans of the sweet science. His jab and impenetrable D, featuring the longest elbows known to man, were frustrating even for the most skilled sharpshooters. Wright didn't agree with the judges who saw his 2006 clash with Jermain Taylor a draw, and he stubbornly clung to a dollar figure he thought he deserved, which squashed a rematch. Instead, he bettered Ike Quartey in December 2006, in Quartey's last bout.

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Wright went out of his comfort zone, and paid for it, when he agreed to go to 170 to snag a payday with Bernard Hopkins. He suffered his first loss in eight years in that one, then took almost two years off. He flirted with fights, and sometimes marinated in self-pity and frustration. "Why should I go fight these lesser guys when I know I'm above them?" Wright said in 2008. "You got De La Hoya. He's a steady loser; he lost two of his last three. Taylor lost his last fight. All of these fighters lose. But they have opponents who want to fight them again. I have nobody that wants to fight me because they know they're in for a tough fight. They're ducking me, they don't want to fight. That's why I'm left out. They want me to fight Kessler. Why do I need to fight these dudes? I'm at the top." He capitulated, and took a tuneup date with Michi Munoz for December 2008, but hurt his hands and cancelled it. A face-off with Arthur Abraham was discussed but instead Wright decided to lock horns with Paul Williams. It didn't go well; Long Tall Paul outboxed Wright clearly. He licked his wounds, set up a fight with Grady Brewer, and the plug got pulled on that card at the end of 2009. Kelly Pavlik went in another direction, a crack at Sergio Martinez in April 2010, so Winky went back to the links, and waiting. A K9 Bundrage gig didn't happen, neither did a scrap with Matthew Macklin in April 2011, because of a Wright injury. He filled the time helping out Chad Dawson, while eyeing Canelo or Miguel Cotto. He got a chance against a young gun, in Peter Quillin, and in that scrap Saturday, determined that at 40, he just can't do what he used to be able to. So he bid adieu to the game.

Will he resist the inevitable lure? Hard to predict...If you had to wager if either he or Mosley would un-retire, you have to think there is a decent chance that happens. It's human nature, it's especially human nature in boxing, with no teammates around to drill the truth into you in training camp. We at TSS thank both men for their service in entertaining us, and hope that their choice does them justice, in every which way, for them, their family and their long-term health and well-being.

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Radam G says:

See YA! I hanged my gloves up at 25. I was still in my early prime, but black balled most of the time. Yall know the deal! But I sued, and got the BIG meal. I'm down with O-P-P. You know ME!

Both of Winky and Sugar Shane will be back. If anything, to get that last win. And that is the way that you are going out. And you know that. So I don't buy this retirement act.

Winky and Sugar Shane ain't the Marvelous One. So they will be back for at least one more farewell, whup-an-arse bout. And you can take that to the houzzzee and bet on it -- BIG! Holla!

brownsugar says:

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Bravo!!! it's great to see Mosely transition to the next phase in his amazing career. why become the cannon-fodder, when you can buy, sell and market the cannon fodder yourself. Wink has to be given credit for showing some real honesty that could have possibly been the result of his family putting thier foot down and confronting him about his life-decisions.... Did you see the expression on his wifes face during the fight. .

I know that look,

It was the look of a woman still in love with her man saying "enough is enough". Winky's fought the good fight,.. he's got nothing to prove.

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mortcola says:

They are at different stages of realization. Mosley has had his butt whipped badly three times now, and knows he can only beat journeymen, not to mention that he has taken terrible punishment. Winky has excuses to come back: only rusty; still pretty sharp, not slow and rubber legged...only got beat by a guy too long and tall for Winky's short range arsenal, and by a very strong young middleweight he underestimated, who really did his homework, in a fight for which he should have had a tune-up. Don't get me wrong - writing is on the wall for Winky, he will be where Shane is soon if he comes back, despite having a much more sound defense. He can beat a few good young guys and delude himself into thinking he's got a shot. But he'd be a fool not to stand by his retirement announcement. The days of championships and big checks are over, and he still has his health, and his marriage. Go live a good life, Winky, nothing more to prove.

the Roast says:

Much respect to these two great Champions. There comes a time to hang 'em up and let the young men have their day. Better one fight too early than one fight too late. Thanks for all the great fights Shane and Wink.

dino da vinci says:

[QUOTE=the Roast;16992]Much respect to these two great Champions. There comes a time to hang 'em up and let the young men have their day. Better one fight too early than one fight too late. Thanks for all the great fights Shane and Wink.[/QUOTE]

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Very well said.

Radam G says:

@the Roast. They will be back. They will fight chumps and get more wins. They are not the kinds that will hang 'em up with their last bout being an a\$\$ thrashing. There is absolutely no Italy in sight for these two. Now if they shave their domes, I might accept the retirement talk. Holla!

the Roast says:

I don't know RG. Shane sounds like he has plans to move on to. Winky seems content. If they aren't hurting for money maybe its time to move on. I thought Oscar would have come back by now. Maybe I could teach these guys some tennis. You can hit that yellow ball well into your 60's, and it doesn't hit back.

Condor says:

Right on Roast. Great comment.

For true boxing fans, these men have been in our lives since the mid-90's. There's something to be said for longevity. Much, MUCH respect to them both.

Condor says:

On a side note, I've met Winky on a couple of occasions in St. Petersburg, FL and he's a super nice, down-to-earth, and gracious guy.

Radam G says:

Antonio "Tijuana Tornado" Margarito has just announced his retirement, according to news reports. Danggit! I guess jive does happen in threes. But I don't expect for the Tijuana Tornado to get any respect or love here in this Universe.

And when the attacks and lies on him go overboard, and then I comment, the haters will lose their minds trying to make me fit into their hatred mudholes. I could imagine if he would had been the fighter to lose the usage of his legs after a motorcycle accident. Huh! Hum! ____ ____
____ ____ ____!

Smooth sailing, Tony! You were one heckuva warrior. I'll see ya around da hurt bitnezz. Holla!

ultimoshogun says:

True that Radam, i'm one of the few who gave Margarito the benefit of the doubt that the plaster of paris was an isolated incident. Margarito was a true blood and guts warrior who left it all in the ring and gets my respect. If I was going into battle Braveheart style i'd want a guy like

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Margarito by my side. I'll remember Margarito for the way he ate Cotto's best shots and just smiled and kept coming in their first fight. I'll remember Shane for his exciting fights with DLH, Vernon Forrest and how he demolished the seemingly indestructible Margarito. For me, Shane and Margarito were must see TV. Winky, I'm not so sure he's retiring for good. I won't be surprised if he fights again in the future...for now, thanks for the memories fellas, it was a pleasure.

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