

The Judges Don't Get A Do Over - Neither Do You

Written by Frank Lotierzo
Monday, 02 July 2012 11:55



Judge Ross had one shot to score this fight. So should you, reader. Of course hindsight is 20/20. Lotierzo maintains. (Hohan Photos)

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Well, it's been two plus weeks since Timothy Bradley's disputed split decision victory over Manny Pacquiao. And during the course of the past two weeks, mostly everyone who watched the fight live on June 9th has re watched it again trying to see what they missed and how two supposedly competent professional judges could score the fight in Bradley's favor.

For the record I scored the fight 117-111 / 9-3 Pacquiao. That's a score which I would've submitted directly after the fight had I been working it as a judge. For years I've stated that the judges don't have the best vantage point to view the fight being that they're below the ring and have to look up at the action taking place. But that has nothing to do with the Pacquiao-Bradley bout. Judges have been sitting in the same spot scoring fights for over 100 years and managed to end up with the correct verdict regarding the decision most of the time. So forget about where they sit for the time being.

That said, if you don't get the scoring right in fights that are one-sided, you shouldn't be judging fights. It's true that you can misread a few things that take place in the ring, but any competent judge should be able to pick up on nearly anything that happens in the ring, regardless of where you're seated. There's never an excuse for coming up with the wrong winner in a fight that's one-sided.

The point here is you can go back and watch Pacquiao-Bradley or Frazier-Ali 1 until the stars fall from the sky. What ever score you come up with doesn't count nor does it matter. The only score that matters is the one you had on the night of the fight as you watched the bout in the moment. The judges don't get any do over and neither should any observer. If you had a gripe about the decision when it was announced, that's all that matters. However, if you went back and watched the fight over and over and concluded that Bradley wasn't as hurt or shook as you originally thought, too bad. Because when you watched the fight in the moment you thought he was more rattled than he actually was during the replay.

The only legitimate feel you can get for the fight happens in the moment. When you go back and watch it again and see that certain punches didn't land as cleanly as you originally thought, again, too bad. See, the judges, who I have no love for, don't have the luxury of going back and watching it again.

Something else that comes into play when watching/scoring a fight is -- the bigger puncher, when he lands, usually appears to be more in control than the fighter who is the mover or boxer. Round seven of Pacquiao-Bradley is a perfect example. On the night of the fight it looked as if

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Bradley was throwing like an amateur and was just placing his spaghetti armed shots. Then towards the end of the round Manny gets through with three pretty good lefts that rock Bradley as he looks to get out.

On the night of the fight Pacquiao's three clean lefts are what seemed to carry the round. However, when I watched the fight a second time, Bradley didn't look as shook as it felt like he was the night of the fight. So in hindsight, I can see a case for Bradley perhaps winning the seventh round. Again, that means nothing because on the night of the bout I saw it as a Pacquiao round.

The in the moment has a lot to do with scoring a professional fight. If fighter A looks hurt as you're watching the fight, then your perception is that he's hurt and you score the round for Fighter B. Going back and realizing that it wasn't as bad as you thought may be the more accurate description, but it's too late because as stated earlier, there's no do overs. Only how you saw the fight as it happens matters.

This isn't giving judges Jerry Roth and C.J. Ross a pass and account for how they scored the fight. The point is, the only score that counts is the one you came to on June 9th 2012. I find much fault with how they scored the fight. As the fight was unfolding I was reaching to give Bradley rounds. And that was after scoring the first round in his favor. As it's been said repeatedly, there were four rounds that could be viewed as swing rounds, but that's it. On the night of the fight I unknowingly at the time split them and that's apparently how I ended up with the fight 9-3 for Pacquiao.

In hindsight after watching the replay, the fight did seem a little more closely contested, but that's not what I saw when viewing it live, something that makes the cards submitted by Ross and Roth more perplexing. This isn't a debate as to why they saw the fight the way they did. It's to illustrate that the only scorecard that means anything is the one you render the night of the fight.

Below is a link to Frazier-Ali I, rounds three and four. I was at the fight that night. Granted, I was only 11 but was into my fourth year being obsessed with boxing. Both the judges and referee scored rounds three and four in favor of Joe Frazier. I too felt Frazier won those two rounds the night of the fight. His big left hooks at the end of the rounds were what you most remembered along with Ali looking a little unsure of himself.

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When I got the tape of the fight years later, I thought the judges were blind. Watching the tape, it's obvious Ali dominated most of the round in both cases, but Joe came on big at the end of them. Live, it seemed to appear that Ali was in trouble and Joe had the upper hand. On tape, Ali doesn't look as hurt or in trouble.

On the night of the fight everyone saw rounds three and four in favor of Frazier. Yet when I watch the replay, I give those rounds to Muhammad Ali. Unfortunately, that doesn't count because had I been a judge that night, I would've joined Artie Aidala, Bill Rheet and Arthur Mercante and scored them for Frazier. Check it out below.

The next time there's a controversy over the scoring of a fight, your only argument is how you score the fight while watching it in the moment.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eP7sZS-DMmY>

[Comment on this article](#)

deepwater says:

this writer is a clown. 4 things. clean punches, effective aggression, defense, ring generalship. that's it folks. nothing more nothing less. it's sad when these writers don't fight against the corruption in boxing. stop making excuses for the corruption. google ron lipton.

deepwater says:

\$\$\$\$ runs the show. 1 billion changed hands in the betting market on this corrupt dec. google ron lipton and see how deep the corruption goes.

amayseng says:

@deepwater i agree completely. this was a set up from the beginning..

you can watch almost any fight again and again trying to give a guy some rounds

or credit but that doesn't mean he actually won those rounds..rewatching with that

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mentality means you end up changing your own judging standards.

brownsugar says:

agreed,.. to many factors at work,.. the promoter, Las Vegas gambling... and the potential rematch. somethings not right with that entire picture.

Radam G says:

I'm SUPER DOWN with Deepwater on this one. Cannot we now just move on. We all know that crooks and cheats got paid. And to a pauper's grave, the truth and the whole truth got laid. Holla!

Radam G says:

BTW, I think that the most hated fighter -- Tim Bradley -- in da games nowadays should rematch Da Manny in Macau, China, or Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Tim could get double the 6mil he made in da Sin City shameful cheat. But TB will also get double of da arse thrashing that Da Manny put him.

Second time around, TB will nose dive right into the canvas. Instead of him fibbing about a broken foot and a twisted ankle, his darn orbit, nose and jaw will be BROKEN. Then you haters would say that Da Manny is on dat mythical A-side-meth jive. Holla!

spit bucket says:

@ deepwater,
Thanks for the heads-up on Ron Lipton... very interesting reading, great stuff!

rude M says:

I wonder why the writer kept referring to Ross and Roth. Shouldn't it be Ross and Ford?

rude M says:

In boxing, what is so is what is so even if it isn't so. I could see the writer's point and it makes sense. To that regard, I guess boxing is direly in need of some serious changes. I propose three: (1) hire 5 judges, one each corner and the referee, (2) legitimize even rounds, and (3) when in doubt, use instant replay like they do in tennis & basketball (I don't know how, however it might come in handy).

amayseng says:

@rude m,

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I agree, 5 judges with open scoring after each round,
then a fighter can change his gameplan if he KNoWS
the judges aren't accepting of his attention to win rounds,
And secondly go with instant replay to review things like slips or true
knockdowns and also head butts.
Replay can be done between rounds without interfering in the action

Holy **** that makes sense.

gibola says:

Agreed. Pacquiao by 2pts. My beef is with HBO's coverage.

Coxs Corner says:

@deepwater Apparently the article went over your head. Frank is a former boxer and he writes for a sophisticated boxing audience, which is not everyone who read his articles obviously. Frank is far from a clown he is one of the most knowledgeable boxing people I have ever talked to. Yes you judge the fight on the 4 categories 1) clean and hard punching 2) effective aggression 3) defense and ring generalship but its how you view those 4 categories during the course of the fight. Not watching it later on film. Frank's article is referring more to the 1st category which Harold Lederman or any boxing judge with their salt would be the first to tell you is the most important category. Watching a fight live might mean you thought a punch was more damaging than it was when you watch it later, but you have to judge it how it seemed live not after you know the outcome watching the fight later. Simple as that.

TotoyBato says:

Hopefully that fiasco wakes up Manny and gets his killer instinct back. His Jesus loving does not really mix with his primary livelihood. On the do-over (if it happens) we should see the old killer Manny. Let us pray.

Radam G says:

C'mon, Coxs Corner, don't sink hypersensitive and thinskin on us. Hyperbolicism is a BIG PART of da game. So is constructive criticizism. So is sarcasm and a bit of bullsh*tology.

It not COOL to holla at any boxer about how he gets rhetorically down. Every boxer and dey mamma know another boxer's spit. Frank is a boxer -- never mind the former syet. We KNOW that. Once a pugilist always that -- just no longer active. When it comes to boxing, the maxim: "It

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takes one to know one" is RIGHTEOUSLY TRUTH. Even in cyberspace, one knows the real fighter here and fakers of "ex" and "former" this and that.

BTW, "Watching a fight live" doe not mean "[that] you thought a punch was more damaging than it was when you watch it later..." Boxers, worth their salt, know -- not "thought" syet. [Guessing is for the phonies and vaporers.] After you have been hit, shunned, knocked out and beat up muthasuckas and all the other stuff that comes with da game, you know what you know. You can even tell by the way the torso or the noggin of a fighter shakes and tembles if he were hit or not, even if you don't litterally see the actual contact of a punch. Getting hit is the same way as if a bullet strikes or a snake bites a person. If you are in da know, you know what da heck happened.

There are no excuses for the cheat that was put on Da Manny. And Superscribe F-Lo has his opinion, but pugilistic whup-a\$\$er Deepwater disagree. It is all right to disagree. A lot of these TSS reader disagree with me 90 percent of the time, but I end being RIGHT about 95 percent of the time. Then the muthasuckas catch a TUDE. Holla!

amayseng says:

@radam

of course punches look much harder live than in a replay.

in the replay you can see through slow motion and different angles that the punches may not be landing as crisp or cleanly as we thought..

however, the main reason they look much harder live is because of the opponents reaction to them, hence, even in the replay and continued rounds he still reacts to them as if they are detrimental, because in theory they are..

hence, there is a reason bradley played retreat for 12 rounds and did not attempt to stay in the pocket in fight but in fact pull a devon alexander and slap while getting the hell out...

deepwater says:

[QUOTE=Coxs Corner;18056]@deepwater Apparently the article went over your head. Frank is a former boxer and he writes for a sophisticated boxing audience, which is not everyone who read his articles obviously. Frank is far from a clown he is one of the most knowledgeable boxing people I have ever talked to. Yes you judge the fight on the 4 categories 1) clean and hard punching 2) effective aggression 3) defense and ring generalship but its how you view

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good for you. I am a boxer and have been around the game and in the ring.my comment stands.the fix was in and this writer is making an excuse for blatant corruption.no excuses.

Radam G says:

@Amayseng, I'm lost by your post. A fighter, and a lot of fighting experts know a scoring punch from a melodramatic Big Screen Rocky punch anyday of the week. See, REAL fighters don't just LOOK. Correct shots have distinct sounds. REAL fighters don't give a double fudge what talking heads say or compubox indicates. Just by the sound of a punch, we can tell you if it were to the body or head -- and what area of the body or head. For instance, to the jaw or nose or chin, to the eye or forehead, to the ribs or liver, to the heart or neck, to the solar-plexus or armpit and to the top of the dome or a rabbit punch. Da game is call the sweet science for a REASON. It a mass of sciences -- like any science -- that no run-of-the-mill bullsh*tter can bullsh*t a real scientist about.

See, those who know the game, know about the smell, the sound and the look -- the least important. Man, there legally blinded trainers -- Uncle Roger is one -- that don't miss much of syet when it comes to legit, correct scoring of punches and whup-arse.

Cyberspace has come in with a lot of clutter and mutter and bullsh*t imitation butter. But we in da game know the snow-jobbing and creampuffation [sic] -- a word that I made up -- of our sweet science that we worked our a\$\$es off in. And D@MN if we are going to let the righteousness of the sweet science be cyberspace jacked by jackoffs and jacka\$\$es.

I know that you saw that recent by poll SHOWTIME about how cyberspace is fudging with da reality and actuality of da game because determined muthasuckas are going to keep gettin' on their cyberspace clutter, mutter and imitation butter syet. And they have the right to that, but REAL BOXERS and EXPERTS also have the right to retorts to da fakers, faders, jokers, halfwits, nitwits, fanboys and pure nutcases looking for a rumble. And in the words of the late, great [Uncy] Howard Cosell: "Tell it like it is." Holla!

amayseng says:

@radam,

i was not very clear, what i meant was that when people break things down in replay and re watch and re watch they train their mind to tell themselves that because a punch didnt knock the other guy down or out or been perfectly clean then it must not have been effective. when my point is that the punches were hard and effective and bradley proved it by continuing to run from them as they touched him.

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poloy_wafuko says:

I happened to watch great fights in the 80s the likes of Roberto Duran, Marvelous "Marvin" Hagler, Sugar Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearns, Pernell Whitaker, Roger Mayweather, Julio Cesar Chavez, Milton McCrory, Eusibeo Pedroza, Larry Holmes, Gerry Cooney, Mike Tyson, Michael Spinks, Barry McGuigan, Rafael "Bazooka" Limon, Donald Curry..etc.

Great fights that go the distance will always be determined by the judges' decision. Every time the public clamor is not favorable for them in a boxing match decision, the blame always fall to the judges and sometimes they are called "biased".

In fairness to the boxing judges, let us analyze their judgment subjectively. Let us consider the role of the judges:

1. Each judge will score according to his/her own fight observation as he/she saw the fight in each round in a 10-point must system. The judges are not allowed to read pre-fight articles by the boxing writers that could probably influence them for a preconceived judgment during the fight. Each judge has no privilege of seeing monitors during the fight neither has an opportunity to view a slow-mo replay.

2. Judges' scoring are subjective. While others may favor the aggressor, others would favor the one with cleaner shots connected even at less work rate. Judges are seated at the center of each three sides of the ring. At this point, perhaps the two judges have seen a clean and clear shot connected, yet the other one has only seen the back of the fighter or perhaps his view was obstructed by the referee and didn't see the clean shot. Maybe the two judges gave the round to the one with cleaner shots, while the other judge gave the round to the opponent.

3. Audience and fans who disagreed with the decision could not be blamed either. They have the luxury of viewing the fight in many angles through TV and big screen monitors. They have the convenience of seeing almost all aspects in the fight that the judges have not seen. For example, when a boxer is hit with a cleaner body shot in his left side, the judge in his right side could not have seen it, or a boxer was hit by a hook in his left temple but the judge in his right could have not seen it while the people watching TV have seen it all due to multi-angles shown on TV.

4. Let us also consider the work rate factor. Let us all agree that during the first half of the fight Pacquiao's work rate was higher where he threw volumes of punches which connected most of time. But in rounds 8 to 12, Pacquiao's work rate has diminished that even Quinito Henson and Chino Trinidad, who worked as broadcast panel of the fight for GMA 7 here in the Philippines, have noticed that Pacquiao was inactive in the second half of the fight unlike in the first few rounds where he was relentless. Let me cite an example. In the 80s, there was a great fight between then undefeated Julio Cesar Chavez against Meldrick Taylor. In the first few rounds, Chavez was relentless connecting solid shots towards Taylor. However, in the second half of the fight, Taylor began to connect in volume of punches and the tide was turning when suddenly a punch to the jaw dropped Taylor with only two seconds left in the last round. Had Taylor not been knocked out, he could have been the unanimous winner in the judges' scorecards. This is what happened to Pacquiao against Bradley where he seldom throw punches and made himself a counter-puncher. Although, Bradley didn't connected too many but he was the one who threw punches.

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During the Pacquiao VS. Marquez III fight, I have Marquez won that fight 115-113, but Pacquiao barely got that win. Though many people may disagree with me, the two judges who favored Bradley to win have the same scores as mine. I scored the fight 115-113 for Bradley. I am not anti-Pacquiao because I'm also a Filipino, but Pacquiao has not done much enough to win.