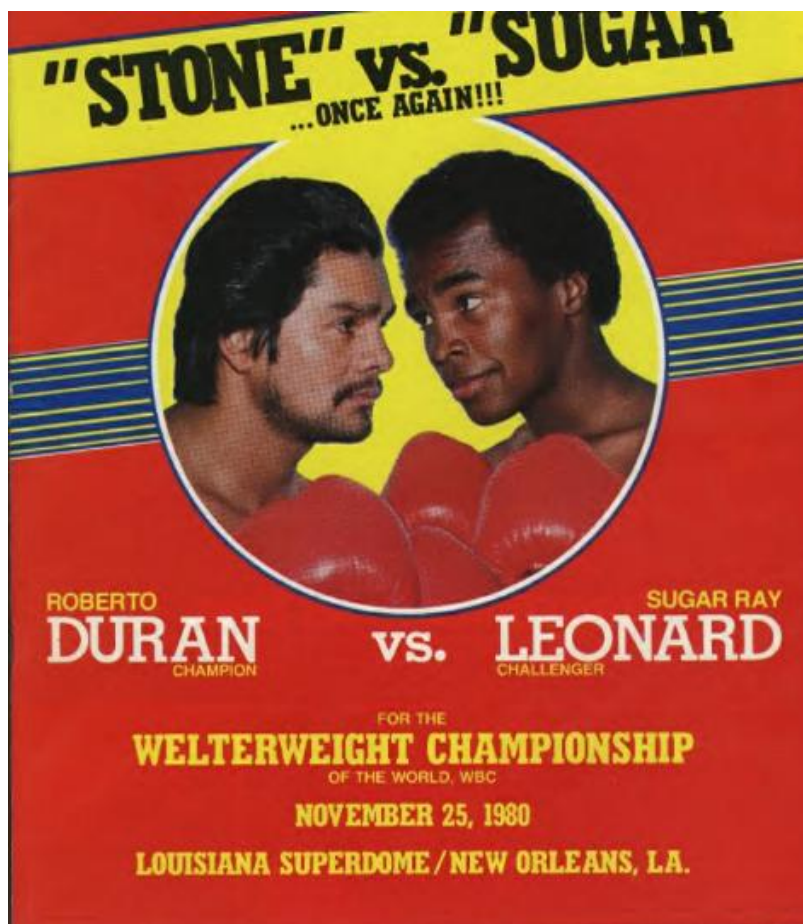


Documentarian Drath Looks At "No Mas" Fight, Leonard-Duran Rivalry

Written by Michael Woods

Monday, 07 October 2013 20:00



Eric Drath is my favorite documentarian. The film-maker made a doc in 2008 called "Cornered: A Life Caught in the Ring," about the Luis Resto-Billy Collins-Panama Lewis glove tampering debacle, which I will watch whenever it pops up on cable, and force me to ponder the depths of man's inhumanity to man, the brutality of the so-called sweet science and Drath's skill as a story crafter.

For that reason, I am much looking forward to his current project, "No Mas," which runs on ESPN Oct. 15, part of the beyond-acclaimed "30 for 30" series. The film chronicles the rivalry between Sugar Ray Leonard, the flashy-fisted 70s and 80s superstar whose buoyant grin attracted casual sports fans to his fights, and Roberto Duran, a malevolent Panamanian who folklore maintains once punched out a horse, knocking out the poor beast on a bet. The title, "No Mas," refers to the scarlet letters of surrender Duran uttered in round eight of their Nov. 25, 1980 rematch from a faceoff five months earlier, won by Duran.

I posed some questions to Drath to get a better sense of what he was trying to communicate with the film.

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Q) What draws you to this fine sport?

A) I was hooked on boxing the first time I attended a live show. It was a local club card in the field house of Yonkers Raceway. The atmosphere was intense and the suspense as thick as the smoke that filled the room. The two fighters were led to the ring one after the next, like ancient gladiators entering the forum. I could only imagine the thoughts running through their minds as they walked through the crowd with determined looks on their faces. I had an immediate respect and awe for them, as well as the sport.

Q) How did you decide the subject matter? Were you more keen to delve into the character of Duran more so than Leonard, or vice versa?

A) The rivalry between Leonard and Duran is one of the greatest in modern sports, with the words "No Mas" enduring well past November 25, 1980 as a catch phrase for their epic bouts. I ran into Leonard at an event in Washington D.C. and asked him if it ever bothered him that there was more attention surrounding Duran's quitting than interest and respect for Ray's victory. He said yes, and thus set out the film to follow Ray's journey to confront Duran once and for all about "No Mas." I would say that I was more of a Leonard fan growing up since he was such a big star and seemed to represent everything that American television celebrated. However, I must say that after making this film, I have so much respect for Duran and would consider them equally great in their own right.

Q) What is some new ground broken in this film? I'm assuming that even hardened boxing fans will learn something new?

A) Just the fact that these two legends who truly hated each other agreed to come together and have a man-to-man talk about their most controversial fight is ground-breaking in itself. The film is really a journey that Ray takes us on. Without giving too much away, I hope viewers come away with new meaning from not only what is said, but also what is not said but can be seen. Sometimes the greatest answers are not spoon fed with a voiceover or a blatant confession, although that's usually the easiest way to convey meaning to a mass audience. But things in real life are not always so simple. There is not always a clear winner and a clear loser. Boxing fans strive for that maybe even more than others. We want to know who won and who lost and we do not want any gray areas or question marks. However, like in life, that is not always the case. And I think/hope what viewers will find is that "No Mas" is a more complex story than meets the eye. It's not really about why; it's about how people live with the decisions they make and how they face down their past and seek closure in their own way. Hopefully what is ultimately uncovered is an older story, brought back to new life with a newfound meaning and outlook for both Roberto Duran and Ray Leonard.

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Hop says:

Hearns?

Radam G says:

Typo in the headline! OMG! "Si Mas!" Hearns went out on his shield in the first bout. Holla!

[Comment on this article](#)

Matthew says:

Hearns ALWAYS went out on his shield. There was no quit in that guy. I'm very much looking forward to this documentary, even if it doesn't cover any new ground.

dino da vinci says:

Anybody else remember when Ray Leonard interviewed Ray Leonard? And yes you read that correctly. There was always something about Ray's persona that troubled me. Nothing, however on how he fought. In the whole best ever discussion, his accomplishments must be considered. If someone started out a conversation with 'I think Ray Leonard was the greatest pound for pound fighter of all time', and kept naming his selections in order, when that person concluded their list I might say something to the effect you have Jack Johnson too high or I think you have Joe Louis too low. Ray was insanely special in the ring. Of course, so was Duran, another short list all-time great. Look at Ray Leonard's resume. He fought fellow Hall of Fame monsters. In their prime. And beat them.

Are you listening Mr. Mayweather?

teaser says:

yup Hearns could box when he wanted to but never backed away from a firefighthe was

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going down swinging ...guess you can't mention Leonard and Duran without Tommy coming into mind ...man I wish they were in their prime today

dino da vinci says:

[QUOTE=teaser;38284]yup Hearn could box when he wanted to but never backed away from a firefighthe was going down swinging ...guess you can't mention Leonard and Duran without Tommy coming into mind ...man I wish they were in their prime today[/QUOTE]

Wow! If they were in their prime today, I can name the fighter who would be 4th on the P-4-P list.