

## Andre Ward Has His Way With Edwin Rodriguez

Written by Michael Woods

Saturday, 16 November 2013 22:57

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Andre Ward showed not a hint of ring rust as he dominated tough-chinned Edwin Rodriguez most thoroughly in Ontario, CA, and on HBO Saturday night. After 14 months away, Ward's timing didn't look off even a bit. It was chippy bout early, and it looked like it might go off the rails, but the fighters settled down some. Rodriguez looked to land haymakers, but he couldn't get a bead on the pound for pound ace, a pugilist-specialist whose power jab and left hook was a problem from the get go for the loser. After twelve rounds, the decision was a no brainer, and happily, the judges didn't drop the ball. They scored it 118-106, 117-107, 116-108 for the Cali boxer, who fans will hope will next pursue a mega-bout against Gennady Golovkin, or a showdown with a bomber at 175, Sergey Kovalev or Adonis Stevenson, perhaps.

According to CompuBox, Ward went 217-526 to 83-389 for the loser.

After, Ward spoke to Max Kellerman. The victor said that Edwin didn't really come to win, but that he wanted to get lucky. Did the loser not earn his respect? Ward said it was unprofessional to not try and make weight, and he used that to motivate himself. Ward was asked about Edwin's tactics, and Ward lauded the ref for cleaning things up. He said he was careful when he hurt him because he knew Edwin was still wanting to get lucky. Ward didn't call out anyone afterwards. He said the fans kept him afloat during his hiatus.

Rodriguez left the ring after the decision.

The WBA super middle champ Ward (26-0 with 14 KOs entering; age 29; from Oakland, CA) was 167.8 pounds. Rodriguez (24-0 with 16 KOs; age 28; from the Dominican Republic, living in Worcester, Mass.) didn't make the super middleweight limit, so he knew going in he couldn't win the title even if he beat Ward.

There was pre-fight drama on Friday, as Rodriguez was two pounds over weight. He couldn't

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lose any more, so he took a cut to his purse, and needed to be under 180 pounds on Saturday morning. He just made it, hitting 179.8 this morning. Team Ward threatened to pull out of the fight if the WBA's rules weren't abided by, and Rodriguez was only deducted 20% of his purse, not the 35-45% their rules call for if certain circumstances are met. But the show went on...

Edwin said his body gave up, and on Friday, he tried twice to sweat out weight, running, and in the sauna, but he couldn't do it. He told the HBO crew, though, an hour and a half before the weigh in, that he was in good shape to make weight.

In the first, Ward looked in fine form, though he was away from the ring for 14 months after hurting his right shoulder, and getting surgery. He hurt the shoulder when he was age 12, and it has been his Achilles heel. The rotator cuff was torn, he said, and he made the left hand better to compensate. Both hands looked stiff in round one, though there was a bunch of holding and grappling. Ward's jab was his best weapon. Edwin came out aggressive, and trainer Ronnie Shields said he liked the work.

In the second, the ref Jack Reiss told the men to "relax" and quit grappling. Lefts inside worked well for Ward as did his jab. A left hook from Edwin landed clean, and then they went back to grappling. Trainer Virgil Hunter said after that Edwin was "trying to disqualify himself."

In the third, a hard jab by Ward impressed. His timing was improving. Ward's jab to the body was clever and sharp. Was he pulling away, perhaps? Ward went 28-45 to 7-35 according to CompuBox in that round.

In the fourth, the fighters grappled and the ref got hit trying to break them up. Edwin had Ward in a headlock and that irked Ward. Reiss yelled at Edwin, and called him an instigator. He warned both men, and took two points from each man. He actually went to the lead commissioner, and asked that both men be fined. Ward landed a nasty jab after that hubbub. Ward was leaping in with left hooks by now. Edwin stuck out his tongue a few times, but that was his best answer.

In the fifth, a left hook by Ward landed heavy at 1:55. Edwin locked another headlock in on Ward, who had Edwin's right eye swelling. When Edwin missed it was often by a wide margin. Trainer Hunter asked for "the Floyd straight" right after the round. He asked Ward to remain

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balanced, as well.

In the sixth, Ward grinned as Edwin missed with two shots. The champ was so accurate though Edwin never looked buzzed. Shields told him he was behind, bigtime, after the round. In the seventh, it was a mellower round, until a Ward combo exploded on Edwin's head at 55 seconds. Rights to the body by Ward had to be bothersome. In the eighth, Ward got going with combos. The power jab kept on landing clean. Edwin kept on throwing the occasional looping bomb. As usual, Ward was master of distance. He landed from outside and inside, and then smartly blunted his foe by crowding him.

In the ninth, Edwin hung in there but Ward dictated the round with his jab. Hunter said he was "boxing a masterpiece" after the round. In the tenth, a left hook by Ward had the crowd buzzing. Ward's underrated ability to use his feet to get the angles he wanted was in evidence. Ward was the same dominant boxer in the 11th and 12th. A cut formed on Edwin's left eye late in the round and Reiss asked him if he wanted to continue. Yes, he said. We went to the cards.

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**TotoyBato says:**

Ward wins. Yaaaaaaaay!!!!!!!!? :/

**brownsugar says:**

amazingly accurate performance... didn't think Ward would make it look this easy. This guy pitches a perfect game everytime out. Good work by Jack Reese.

Rodriquez played the spoiler... willfully giving himself over to emotion rather than following the gameplan.

When a boxer forsakes his discipline.....he has already accepted defeat.

I hope GGG can continue his amazing run...

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Theres nothing I'd like more than an opportunity to see those two test their skills against each other.

Except for Ward vs Kovalov.... a fight that's destined to happen when Ward eventually moves up to It heavy.

### **TotoyBato says:**

Ward better move up. His skill set is more suited against slow economical fighters. Ward cannot cope with a buzz saw like GGG.

### **brownsugar says:**

[QUOTE=TotoyBato;40101]Ward better move up. His skill set is more suited against slow economical fighters. Ward cannot cope with a buzz saw like GGG.[/QUOTE]

I would have agreed with you a year ago except Ward has an extra dimension just like GGG. Conflict and adversity brings it out of him.

I'm not picking a winner yet but I expect a hotly contested battle when the fight gets made ( thinking positively)

### **amayseng says:**

ward is spectacular, however he holds waaaaaaay too much. the first half of the fight he held when it wasnt necessary. and as much as i hate to admit it, edwin was drained terribly, not wards fault, but edwin through 16 punches in one round then 18 the next, i believe eight and ninth rounds...once again not wards fault, but at this time he was unloading on edwin who just stood there, no movement at all.. this was a good fight back for ward being laid off so long.

im a huge fan of ward but he is tough to watch and because of this will never be a draw.

he is a fantastic person and professional though.

he could move up and take yet another belt. easily, he is that good.

### **brownsugar says:**

[QUOTE=amayseng;40106]ward is spectacular, however he holds waaaaaaay too much. the first half of the fight he held when it wasnt necessary. and as much as i hate to admit it, edwin was drained terribly, not wards fault, but edwin through 16 punches in one round then 18 the next, i believe eight and ninth rounds...once again not wards fault, but at this time he was unloading on edwin who just stood there, no movement at all.. this was a good fight back for ward being laid off so long.

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It seemed to me that Ward was the one trying to punch and ER was the one initiating the grappling. ER is usually gasping for air by the 7th round in a majority of his fights so its hard to tell.

Anyway we both agree that Ward is the standard of excellence ....can't wait to see who's next.

### **brownsugar says:**

Well its time for me to put the grandkids to sleep.... Call the sitter and step out for a while. Enjoy your weekend

### **the Roast says:**

That was about as one sided as it gets. Ward wins so easily it's borderline dull. He needs another great talent to push him to a higher level. Perhaps GGG is that talent. At this time I would like thank Laura from the TSS staff for confirming what many of us have feared, Deepwater was in fact banned for offensive comments. Deep to me will go down in TSS history as an all time great. I respect this forum and the rules that go with it. Some lines cannot be crossed. I come here tonight to bury deepwater, not to praise him. If anyone from here gets to Gleason's gym in NY ask for Deepwater. Tell him the Roast bought gold.

### **SouthPaul says:**

Lmfao@ the DeepWater eulogy. Classic, specially the buying gold. Well done.

I was at the fight in Ontario .. Sat with an excellent view ....and Saw it exactly the way Brown Suga' gives his tv description. Certainly did seem like ER initiated the holding and rough house tactics. I didn't mind. Made for a fun watch. More tomorrow, bed time... Zzzzzzzz.

### **mortcola says:**

I really like GGG. But, apart from his amateur background and stellar early-pro-career performance, there is no particular advantage he has over Ward, who has lightning reflexes and a complete defensive arsenal, not to mention some of the most accurate punching, as both lead and counter, as anyone any of us can name. Would be an interesting fight to say the least, except for maybe the size differential, but I see Ward as the clear winner in a fight that makes GGG look lost and confused more than we've ever seen him. GGG's offensive arsenal will get shut down, and he will struggle to survive in there against Andre.

I love all the smack that was said about Ward a couple of years ago. All wishful hating. The guy is the complete package in a way that would have pleased connoisseurs of any era.

### **gibola says:**

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Ward is great at what he does, he is a nightmare to fight but I don't like his style and I'm with amayseng, Ward throws then clinches way too much. If he's such a great boxer how come he can't outbox opponents rather than outmaul them? Don't get me wrong, it's effective, I see the powerjab, the awkward defence and the quick left hook (then grab). However the 2nd best p4p boxer (?) shouldn't spend half the night wrestling and pinning his opponent's arm to his side. I laughed at Kellerman sympathising with Ward over Rodriguez's clinching - Ward instigated most of it Max!!! Ricky Hatton once fought a guy (Juan Urango) who was stronger than him, Hatton jabbed beautifully, punched the body, changed angles and punched some more then clinched. He won easily but was murdered in the media for his grabbing. Faced with a stronger opponent Ward did a similar thing last night and we're supposed to say how great he is? HBO's Ward lovefest aside, he is effective, admirable, consistent, tough to beat - yes. A better p4p boxer than Rigondeaux, Pacquiao, Marquez, Bradley, etc? No way. I file Ward with Wlad K - I know he's effective, he wins fights, but it's no fun to watch and I'd rather HBO put their money into other fighters who make me want to tune in. I'd rather see Haye v Huck than any Wlad fight and I'd rather see the explosive Stevenson v Kovalev matchup than watch either guy experience a grab'n'grind 12 rounder against Ward.

### **DaveB says:**

Ward is as good as advertised. I think he would beat GGG in a total mismatch. I would rather GGG dominate at mw and see Ward eventually move up to lw. Fighting GGG would have been like Marvelous Marvin Hagler challenging Michael Spinks, although not as big a weight discrepancy. It wouldn't have turned out well for the Marvelous one. Ward does hold too much (I can see Radam saying holding is a lost art in the game) but Ward over does it. As far as him never being a big draw that is disputable because Mayweather is very boring but he is the biggest draw. I can't quite figure that one out. Only time will time but if Ward keeps winning one day he may take Mayweather's place as one of the top drawers. He isn't safety first like Klitschko so that is a plus. Yeah, I'd like to see him at 175. There is some business to take care of there.

### **amayseng says:**

[QUOTE=gibola;40119]Ward is great at what he does, he is a nightmare to fight but I don't like his style and I'm with amayseng, Ward throws then clinches way too much. If he's such a great boxer how come he can't outbox opponents rather than outmaul them? Don't get me wrong, it's effective, I see the powerjab, the awkward defence and the quick left hook (then grab). However the 2nd best p4p boxer (?) shouldn't spend half the night wrestling and pinning his opponent's arm to his side. I laughed at Kellerman sympathising with Ward over Rodriguez's clinching - Ward instigated most of it Max!!! Ricky Hatton once fought a guy (Juan Urango) who was stronger than him, Hatton jabbed beautifully, punched the body, changed angles and punched some more then clinched. He won easily but was murdered in the media for his grabbing. Faced with a stronger opponent Ward did a similar thing last night and we're supposed to say how great he is? HBO's Ward lovefest aside, he is effective, admirable, consistent, tough to beat - yes. A better p4p boxer than Rigondeaux, Pacquiao, Marquez, Bradley, etc? No way. I file Ward with Wlad K - I know he's effective, he wins fights, but it's no fun to watch and I'd rather HBO put their money into other fighters who make me want to tune in. I'd rather see Haye v Huck

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than any Wlad fight and I'd rather see the explosive Stevenson v Kovalev matchup than watch either guy experience a grab'n'grind 12 rounder against Ward.[/QUOTE]

exactly what I intended to say half asleep last night!! haha

don't get me wrong I am high on Ward, have always been, and he is a tremendous human being which makes me support him even more.

however he is tough to watch and in the first half of the fight did initiate a lot of the holding and arm pinning.

the fouls were initiated by him first holding causing Edwin to retaliate then Ward retaliate.

Ward is fantastic at everything he does and I can't see anyone beating him. The only way you beat him is by keeping him from pinning and clinching negating your inside game, GGG would have to be able to keep his arms free and punching on the inside or be able to feint Ward into reaching for a clinch and stepping back and shooting punches.

to be challenged Ward would have to move up to light heavy..

boxing is a business and if Ward isn't a draw then he won't make cents.....

either way he is a legit lb 4 lber

### **amayseng says:**

[QUOTE=DaveB;40120]Ward is as good as advertised. I think he would beat GGG in a total mismatch. I would rather GGG dominate at mw and see Ward eventually move up to lw. Fighting GGG would have been like Marvelous Marvin Hagler challenging Michael Spinks, although not as big a weight discrepancy. It wouldn't have turned out well for the Marvelous one. Ward does hold too much (I can see Radam saying holding is a lost art in the game) but Ward over does it. As far as him never being a big draw that is disputable because Mayweather is very boring but he is the biggest draw. I can't quite figure that one out. Only time will tell but if Ward keeps winning one day he may take Mayweather's place as one of the top drawers. He isn't safety first like Klitschko so that is a plus. Yeah, I'd like to see him at 175. There is some business to take care of there.[/QUOTE]

I think the problem is what you state, Ward holds but over does it, he holds when it isn't necessary.

instead of stinking out the first four rounds, he could have been landing clean razor punches. although he

is a smart cat, he knew Edwin was gonna have stamina issues and put his D first negating Edwin's offense.

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then he took over.

cant blame him for winning but it is what it is.

i am with ya on the floyd making forty million per fight and people buying ppvs for seventy bucks, i havent

figured that one out either

### **SouthPaul says:**

2 rounds in I can see the ugliness of this fight you speak of. Still, looks like Rodriguez instigating most of it. Long awkward ornery fighter Edwin is and it's creating the stop and go in this bout.

### **SouthPaul says:**

If I just heard this right Ronnie Shields seem to scold ER for fouling Ward? Just before start of the fourth.

### **brownsugar says:**

Deep was special..his sarcastic political satire will be missed...however if I was an editor I'm not sure how long I could tolerate the abuse.

### **brownsugar says:**

I maybe biased.

But I love watching Ward perform... In my most humble opinion I don't see how Ward gets a bad rap for holding when ER was running straight into Ward flailing wildly on the way in Ward had no choice except to suppress Rodriguez's charge.

When they were in the middle of the ring and Ward was punching ...Rodriquez was grappling. Anyway I thought Ward did what he needed to do and landed many clean eye-catching shots on ER while he was trying to stifle the fight.

Mortcola my have spoken the truth about Ward vs GGG... I hope we get to see it.

### **DaveB says:**

It is a shame what happened to Deepwater but I could see it coming. He had wonderful commentary and insight on boxing. I wish he could have stayed with that more. His attacks were too personal. Differing opinions are good personal attacks are not. Any way I wish him well.

### **amayseng says:**



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[QUOTE=DaveB;40134]It is a shame what happened to Deepwater but I could see it coming. He had wonderful commentary and insight on boxing. I wish he could have stayed with that more. His attacks were too personal. Differing opinions are good personal attacks are not. Any way I wish him well.[/QUOTE]

agreed. maybe he just got a temporary yet long ban.

he brought a lot to talking boxing and life. maybe he is just doing his time and will be allowed a second chance.

a second chance would be fitting, look at all the fighters who have had an opportunity at second chances,

hopkins, robbery  
mayweather sr, drugs dealing  
mayweather jr, 3 domestic abuse cases.  
tyson, no need to specify  
srr, drugs, alcohol  
vitali klitch, steroids  
roger mayweather, domestic abuse  
pavlik, alcohol

many many more received second chances and prospered.....

### **brownsugar says:**

Hopefully we haven't seen the last of Deep... And hopefully Deep can appreciate Editor Mike who is probably the most non biased easy going guy in the universe. His only crime was being non-offense to all types of people.

### **leon30001 says:**

[QUOTE]And hopefully Deep can appreciate Editor Mike who is probably the most non biased easy going guy in the universe. His only crime was being non-offense to all types of people.  
[/QUOTE]

I respectfully disagree; I find it tiresome how the Editor sticks liberal talking points into his articles - e.g. climate change, gay marriage, gun control - which I just don't understand given this is a BOXING forum. If he wants to push a political agenda, this is NOT the place for it, surely! He also implies anyone who does not adhere to his worldview is some sort of unfeeling monster which is completely inaccurate and quite offensive.

### **Carmine Cas says:**

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I hope Deepwater is not banned for life. Glad to SOG didn't show any rust and put on a great performance, unfortunately the holding is what comes along with his fights. Although it appeared that E Rod was the one initiating the holding. SOG keeps running through the opposition he's going to be breathing down Floyd's, realistically to the hardcore fans. What separates Money from Sog is the charisma, Floyd's a very polarizing figure; you either hate him or love him. Either you pay to see him, SOG does not have that commanding power over the casual fan base. He's a special fighter, and seems to be a great guy I hope has a very successful career

### **brownsugar says:**

[QUOTE=leon30001;40152]I respectfully disagree; I find it tiresome how the Editor sticks liberal talking points into his articles - e.g. climate change, gay marriage, gun control - which I just don't understand given this is a BOXING forum. If he wants to push a political agenda, this is NOT the place for it, surely! He also implies anyone who does not adhere to his worldview is some sort of unfeeling monster which is completely inaccurate and quite offensive.[/QUOTE]

I haven't gotten that impression Leon...but even if that were the case there's better ways to handle conflicting opinions...if you feel that way you should inbox the editor direct lay.