

## The Year in Boxing, Part 2

Written by Michael Woods

Monday, 30 December 2013 23:27

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May belonged to Mayweather, as "Money" earned a b-load of it for his night of "toil" against Robert Guerrero.

The underdog challenger did the best he could to stir up the pot with misdeeds that were TMZ worthy in the run-up to the promotion, and then his pop, Ruben, tried to get under Floyd's skin by calling him a "woman beater" at the final presser ahead of the first fight of Floyd's megadeal with Showtime.

Most all like Mayweather to get the better of the Ghost, all but Canelo Alvarez. "Robert Guerrero has a great opportunity to win," Canelo predicted. "He's hungry for glory and will try everything to get the victory. I am picking Guerrero." Yeah, no. Hunger for glory is one thing, but having the skill set to defuse and dissect Mayweather is a different deal. Canelo would learn that for himself a bit down the line....

On fight night, May 4, Mayweather looked utterly superb. He'd been hit a few times in his last outing, against Miguel Cotto, but working with his pop had him back to using his legs as weapons, keeping him out of range when Guerrero came into striking range, and helping him get whatever angle he wanted on the loser, enroute to taking a UD12, 117-111 times three. Floyd landed 60% of his power shots, and all who theorized that a jail stint and a year off would sap him shut their traps.

Two days later, we heard that Manny Pacquiao would seek to curtail a two-fight losing streak, and dodge the taxman, with a gig in Macau, against Brandon Rios. Would Rios, the plucky banger with a yen for rumbles and a distinct lack of aversion to trading, finish what Juan Manuel Marquez started? A hint was provided which many of us keyboard tappers should have paid the most keen of attention to: most fighters liked Pacman to beat Rios, by a wide margin, assessing

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"Bam Bam" to be more of a club level fighter than a player on the elite fields.

The sport lost a certified character, in matchmaker-gadfly-conspiracy theorist Johnny Bos, on May 11, and we were all a bit poorer for it, as the Sunset Park, Brooklyn native had boxing in his blood, from tip to top, and nobody alive could surpass him in that capacity. Here's a snippet from an homage I wrote:

*"This XL character--he was 6-4, north of 250 pounds, prone to wearing hip hop and pimp-ish gear-- was something of a tortured soul. He had a pathological need to diagnose the ills he saw riddling the sport and broadcast his critiques to the world. At the same time, in more recent years, he wanted to be back on the big stage, in NYC, fashioning the paths of prospects to the big time. For a years, I'd try and gently counsel him to adjust his expectations and subvert his iconoclastic tendencies, so he might be accepted back into the club which he bitterly railed had spurned him. "Johnny," I'd say, "it makes it harder for the big shots to bring you back into the fold when you say controversial things, and are too honest." But he was pathologically incapable of self-censorship. The truth wasn't something to be dispensed selectively. He couldn't pick and choose his spots, modulate his delivery to minimize the damage to the ego of the guilty. He couldn't, he wouldn't, and for that he must be praised, and his passing must be lamented with more fanfare than his level of celebrity typically enjoys." I think about him pretty often, all this time later...*

The Lucas Matthyse bandwagon got filled to over-capacity after he beat up Lamont Peterson, so much so that his promoter, Richard Schaefer, requested an extra seat, as he ejaculated heady praise after the third round rubout in AC, "We have a new Manny Pacquiao. He's from Argentina, and his name is Lucas Matthyse."

Mayweather ended up the month making more news, telling the world that he'd be taking on a young, strong rumbler, the heart-throb hitter Canelo Alvarez, that September. The word dropped on Twitter, a sure sign of the times: "I chose my opponent for September 14th and it's Canelo Alvarez. I'm giving the fans what they want. It will be at the MGM Grand."

June brought the dropping of another shoe, with word that Kery Davis was out at HBO. He'd been the main connection between HBO and uber advisor Al Haymon, so with Haymon persona non grata at HBO, well, the writing was on the wall.

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Arturo Gatti continued to provoke years after his death, but you can count me among those who supported his inclusion into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. The man was in four Fights of the Year, for goodness sake, he gave you more than your money's worth every time he gloved up, and he exemplified the essence of willpower on display during trying times in the athletic realm. Damn right he deserved a Hall pass...

Light heavy Adonis Stevenson launched a left that stopped Chad Dawson, and himself onto must see lists, and did the sport a kind favor by prolonging the legacy of Manny Steward, his trainer-manager, that much more. Here's what I wrote after Adonis downed Dawson, from a portion of a conversation I had with Steward not long before he died: "Adonis is dangerous all the way through. We got some kind of weird-ass guy here, one of these stamina freaks... There's nothing like knocking [emeffers] out. That's what made Mike Tyson special. I train all my fighters to go for the KO. But they have the stamina in case it doesn't happen."

Cracks appeared in the Adrien Broner wing of the Hall of Fame, as the former Mr. HBO had a hard time with Paul Malignaggi in his initial testing of the welterweight waters. The buildup to this bout set a record for crassness, with too much talk of side dishes and such for the liking of many. Postfight, Malignaggi ranted that the most politically connected get always gets the W. So did he simply leave it at that? No; the Brooklynner made the savvy move, and hooked on with the same man who advises Broner, one Al Haymon. Can't beat 'em...

Mid month, the hardcore push to tell the world that still thinks Mike Tyson is the heavyweight champion about the upcoming Floyd Mayweather-Canelo Alvarez scrap unfolded. The 11-city tour to hype the event kicked off in NYC, in Times Square. The effort to nudge, nay yank, boxing out of the niche category for a spell paid dividends, as Mayweather was all over mainstream media, from the Comedy Channel to MSNBC to Bloomberg News, before, during and after the Canelo "test."

A man some think could be a great candidate to be at the top of the talent apex when Mayweather is nearing the finish line, Gennady Golovkin, impressed fans with his intensity in taking out Matthew Macklin in NYC. A left hook hatched in hell drained the energy from the Irishman in round three, and excited Golovkinites demanded he sign to fight Andre Ward, and Floyd Mayweather, on the same night, ASAP.

July brought us a notable occurrence which we hope balloons into a full-fledged trend, so we can look back and say we told 'em so. Golden Boy and Floyd Mayweather broke the news that

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the Floyd-Canelo card would be bolstered by a showdown between young guns Danny Garcia, a 140 pound champ, and Lucas Matthysse. Jokes about Garcia's head being destined for row four at the MGM ensued, but a trend towards stacking PPVs, rather than merely letting the feature bout carry all the weight makes nothing but sense to me, if the people who put these things together actually, ya know, care about pleasing the wallet-openers who keep the sport afloat.

An underrated ex champ, known more for his sexual identity and the fact that his punches killed a foe, died the third week of July, and the boxing world mourned Emile Griffith. His legacy will be that of a man who serves as a reminder of the ultimate price any person can pay in that ring, and as a symbol of acceptance, who helped usher the pushback against homophobia another millimeter forward.

This one was a certified under the radar classic, friends. Anyone who figured the Omar Figueroa-Nihito Arakawa bout which unfolded in San Antonio would be on the short list for FOY needs to contact me about a job, and a physician about getting counseling and meds for their addiction to watching too many crappy streams. The wide scores for Figgy didn't give near enough credit to the scary reservoir of toughness and pride the Japanese boxer showed, scary because you had to hope he'd not absorbed a lethal level of punishment over twelve rounds. This was ostensibly a lightweight tussle, but in terms of heart and will, two heavyweights traded leather that night in Texas.

August 2013, and Mike Tyson still commanded eyes and ears on him whenever he popped up. The fighter turned promoter told us he was planning on killing himself during the dark days of 2008, 2009, and his addiction to drugs had him thinking his time on this earth wouldn't be for much longer. But he persevered, and with his new promotional work, and a book, and a one-man stage act, the former Brooklyn bad boy continues to mesmerize; it used to be with his prowess with violence, and now it is his rare ability to process his missteps in a humorous, self-effacing and fresh fashion.

The hottest month didn't overwhelm with live action, but the month's marquee tussle had to be Jhonny Gonzalez' derailment of Abner Mares' momentum train. Left hooks in round one spelled doom for Mares, a feather champ up against a former bantam and feather titlist. The two had sparred five years before, and Mares' star had drifted upward while the older man's had dimmed.

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### **Radam G says:**

Boxing is full of optical illusions. And I give Money May MAD props for doing a mixed of Houdini and Marlin The Magician.

Wow! Money May fought a club-fighting-like humbug in "The Cali Ghost." And a hyped-up B fighter in Canelo. The promotions were grand to get eyeballs and easy impressionable minds behind those PPV screens. Because the live gates didn't sell out.

Not a single one of the above fighters had a chance to beat Money May. The Cuban Lara would beat Canelo easier than Money May did. And Rios, Broner and Maidana would stop the humbuggish Guerrero. The Siberian Rocky would hospitalize him.

Play those FUNKY optical illusions, Money May! It is all about banking, as the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ don't know that you got jiggy with a con on them, and they're straight-up stanking [sic]. Holla!

### **Radam G says:**

Maybe Deepwater will rejoin us next year to give his take on da haps of da game.

"Come back, SHANE!" Holla

### **amayseng says:**

Good article, gald to see Gatti had Mikes support, the man gave his soul just to please the fans.

Radam, no way broner beats the ghost. The ghost may not have the flash, speed or one punch KO power

but he is tenacious and comes forward with thudding punches. broner doesnt have a chance.

deepwater, start a new account with a new name, dont talk about gold or communism and you may get by....

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### **Radam G says:**

Sorry, A-seng! But Robert Guerrero [name misspelled] is not as skill-less as his crazy-arse pops was, the son is just a more-lucky humbug than his boxing-days pops was. Trust me! Just as I knew that Broner would get beat by Maidana, I know Broner would STOP The Cali Humbug Ghost. KHTFO!

If the powers that be fights him against a live dawg in 2014, dude is going to be totally EXPOSED. Don't be fooled by boksing's many optical illusions. They are to cause mass confusions. Holla!

### **amayseng says:**

I dont count the ghosts fight against floyd or even at WW

watch him fight at his natural weight, fluid with good agility and footwork, decent skill and combination punching and dude has a granite chin. AB timbered like a tree from one clipping left hook by madaina

then he was staggered and on queer street another 7 times in that match.

ghost all day vs AB

### **Radam G says:**

Hehehe! AB is all that you said. But styles make fights. The Ghost is mincemeat against all the faults of AB. And the Ghost's chin may hold up, but not his skin and liver. AB will chop up his mug and liver blast him.

I'm telling you that the Cali humbug Ghost will be further exposed in 2014. That is if he dances with a warm body.

Randall Bailey has been calling him out, and would put him to sleep. Holla!