

Finding Out The Truth About Lamont Peterson

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Wednesday, 29 January 2014 13:19



I traveled to Washington, D.C. over the weekend hoping to discover the truth about Lamont Peterson. The current IBF junior welterweight titleholder is a case-study of polarity. Despite being annihilated by Lucas Matthyse in his last fight, Peterson is still hailed a world champion by one of the major alphabet organizations simply because boxing politics wouldn't allow him to put his title on the line that night.

He's been just about everything a fighter can be. His rags to riches story has inspired us. His ignorant use of a performance enhancing drug, synthetic testosterone, has baffled us. His ring work has been the same. How fantastic was his struggle with Amir Khan? Peterson realized quickly he couldn't outbox the fast-handed Khan, so he walked him down over the next half of the fight to take the close decision victory. How terrible did he look against Lucas Matthyse? The hard-hitting Argentinean absolutely destroyed him, knocking Peterson down three times before the Round 3 stoppage last May.

Against the undefeated but relatively unknown Dierry Jean on Saturday, we'd certainly learn something more about Peterson. But what?

Make no mistake. Jean is a good fighter. While he had never been in the ring with someone as accomplished as Peterson, he's a talented and skillful junior welterweight who will someday make some noise as a contender in the 140-pound division.

"Jean isn't great at any one thing, but he's really good at many things," Fight Network's Corey Erdman told me before the fight.

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Jean certainly appeared to be making his mark against Peterson early. He strafed Peterson multiple times with straight left hands, and looked as confident as can be after the first six minutes. He was moving Peterson back and landing thudding punches that appeared from ringside to have him in the lead.

But Peterson changed things in Round 3 with a classic-Peterson-style move that fight fans in D.C. have come to expect from him.

And here is why I love watching Peterson fight. He wants to be a slick boxer. He really, really does. But he's not one. Oh sure, he can box circles around no-hopers and gatekeeper-types. But against real contenders, the kind you have to beat to make a good living in the sport, Peterson typically has no chance of looking slick. It's just not one of his God-given abilities. So against Jean, he was forced to be what he really is: a pressure-cooking and defiant stalker.

Peterson started walking Jean down in Round 3, and didn't stop until the bout was well in the bag in Round 12. He came forward and threw punches in bunches from all angles, and he genuinely appeared to like doing it.

This, my friends, is Lamont Peterson fully actualized.

Peterson was in his element on Saturday. The hometown crowd of over 6,600 chanted and cheered wildly for their hero. They love him there, and it showed. And why shouldn't they? Their man once again put on an impressive exhibition of gumption and willpower, making it clear to all present exactly who he is as a fighter – nay, as a human being.

Michael Woods alluded to it earlier in the week.

“...We do tend sometimes to go overboard, don't we, dismiss an athlete for a single loss, reduce their entire careers and beings off of one night, one defeat. Peterson, though, has dealt with rougher stuff than a mere KO loss. This kid, at age 8, was looking out for his one-year-younger brother Anthony, after their dad went to jail on drugs charges, and their mom was overwhelmed caring for seven children. The boys bounced around foster care, they lived

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on the streets of Washington, D.C., slept in bus stations, curled up in abandoned cars. They dabbled in pick-pocketing, and picked up food money cutting coke for dealers. Yes, you come from that, I dare say you are cut from a tougher cloth than the average Joe.”

Surrounded by the media at ringside, Peterson echoed similar sentiments on Saturday after the 12-round unanimous decision win. He is a man who refuses to be defined by setbacks.

“...I keep trying to tell ya’ll, everybody keeps trying to make a big deal out of one loss...if the best fight the best and you got the top guys fighting the top guys, a lot of the top guys are going to have losses. Sometimes it’s going to come with a knockout,” said Peterson.

“I always prepare myself when I step into the ring. I’m looking to win, but of course I know I can lose. So I just ask God for understanding, and I found my understanding of it. You know, my whole life, my whole story...it’s never been easy, so why would it be easy now? You know, every time it seems like I’m set and I [have] things flowing...there’s always a setback, right? So I’m built to get the setbacks and show people that you can get up and fix things. You can always come back. And that’s what I represent. I think that’s my purpose in life. I embrace it, and that’s what I’m going to continue to keep doing.”

The world is full of people who let singular moments ruin the rest of their lives. Where there is a bucket of water, they focus solely on the drop of water that made the largest ripple when it fell from the sky. That’s isn’t to say the drop has no value or meaning. It does. But the drop is only a small part of the whole. It is only a small part of the bucket.

But that’s not what this piece is really about. This is about Peterson, and what I learned about him in D.C. over the weekend. The truth about Lamont Peterson is that he’s a really good fighter with some damn admirable qualities. We could stand a few more like him in our sport.

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Carmine Cas says:

"pressure-cooking and defiant stalker" Excellent description, that's what he did against Kendall Holt as well

SouthPawFlo says:

Peterson and his Coach wants him to be a boxer, but when things get tough for him he's at his best as a come forward fighter...

I'm hoping he gets the fight with Danny G in the fall....

MisterLee says:

I ono, I was quite critical of his performance. He seemed to be unsure of pressuring or boxing throughout the fight; this is something that costed Mike Jones in last few fights leading up to Randall Bailey. Here are some more thoughts: [\[url\]www.misterleethepugilist.wordpress.com](http://www.misterleethepugilist.wordpress.com) if ya have 5 mins to kill. Fo' sho!