

A Star Was **MAYBE** Born; Yes, Tureano Johnson Is No Loser

Written by Michael Woods
Monday, 07 April 2014 11:55



Maybe a star wasn't born on that Main Events NBC Fight Night card Friday night, but a contender, a player at 160 damn sure was.

OK, raise your hand if you knew who the heck Tureano Johnson was, and what he was capable of doing, before Friday night.

That's not many, that's not many, you're in trouble out there...

All action, fan-friendly, cajones to the wall, predatory style, what was not to like from the Cuban-trained hitter, who lives in the Bahamas?

Well, for one thing, if we want to be know it alls, and nitpick, if you're his trainer, you probably want that tenth round against Curtis Stevens back, and you want your kid to fight a little bit smarter i.e. cautiously, so he skates to the finish line with the win intact...instead of breaking down in tears, which he was after he got TKO'd, and got emotional speaking to his promoter, Gary Shaw, postfight.

The stoppage--was it good? was it bad? was the ref in error? should Steve Smoger ref every fight every night?--dominated social media, with many folks not liking the timing of the plug-pulling by Gary Rosado in PA.

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Me, I'm a "always better too early than too late kind of guy," who supports the referee, who made the best call he could in the heat of the battle, after seeing Stevens land a filthy left hook, which buzzed Johnson badly. Rosado then saw Stevens flurrying, and Johnson not defending himself that well, and not answering back. and he did what he thought was the best course of action for the health and well-being of the boxer, which is his primary job. And remember, he didn't have the benefit of that super slo-mo replay that we all do at home...

I reached out to the "loser," and wondered how he viewed the stoppage. "I don't agree with the stoppage, but I have to accept it," the 30-year-old Johnson (14-1) told me. "I just think nothing can be done about it. I can't change it, so I've got to move on."

He told the world the same when he Tweeted, a bit after the bout ended, "I could have taken a knee or clinched. Tell the fans I understand that."

Noted. And props go to the man for not crying a river, understanding the ref was looking out for him.

And if there's a next time, what does he do differently, if anything? "Hopefully learn to tie up better," Johnson told me.

His promoter, Gary Shaw, on Monday still thought his kid "deserved a chance to finish the fight." He said he is of course totally mindful of the health and safety of the boxer, but noted that he agreed with those who pointed that if the guy who reffed the main event, the Steve Cunningham-Amir Mansour fight, Steve Smoger, worked the Stevens-Johnson bout, the result could have been different. OK, could have been...Or maybe Stevens keeps whaling away, and Johnson gets knocked cold, and pitches face first to the mat. Instead, he is ambulatory, and while disappointed, pumped to show that he has more to offer than he showed on Friday.

Shaw has a sparkling idea of a match that could easily draw interest, I think, from HBO. "I'd love to see Tureano against James Kirkland," he told me.

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Shaw isn't looking back on the ninth round break, and wishing the Johnson corner told their guy to run out the clock. Me neither. You dance the sort of dance that brought you to the county fair finals, in my view. The Johnson method, balls to the wall, pure aggression, is what the fans respond to, and what sells. And guess what? He should be rewarded handsomely for fighting in this manner, and this loss shouldn't affect his prospects, not one stitch. He risked greatly the whole way through, and for that, he deserves ample reward. What about a rematch with Stevens, is that a possibility? Shaw says Johnson asked him to set it up, and he's happy to do it on a Main Events card, to boot. "It shows what a warrior he is," the promoter stated. "Or I'd like Johnson versus Kirkland on an HBO opener, that would be spectacular. He's proved his mettle."

That he did; Stevens' promoter Kathy Duva agrees. She also agrees with me, and thinks the stoppage was righteous. "I thought the stoppage was correct," she told me. "Curtis was teeing off on Johnson, his hands were down by his sides. Everyone taking issue with the stoppage, they wanted Curtis to knock him more silly? I also think the aftermath bore out the correctness of the stoppage, it took Johnson a few seconds to realize what happened."

Duva also pointed out that Johnson, after round eight, walked back to the wrong corner, and that it took him a bit to realize this. "Nobody can really judge how conscious he was or wasn't. I agree, it's better too early than too late. He lives to fight another day."

Duva agrees with Shaw, and me, that the "loss" doesn't diminish a guy who came in an unknown. "He should get tons of opportunities," she said. What about against Stevens again? "I couldn't ask those two to do that again to each other with the budget I have," Duva said.

Shaw said he knew what he had in Johnson when he signed the Bahamas resident two years ago, but didn't advertise that going into the Stevens fight, for fear of scaring off Team Stevens. "We thought he'd win the fight. We didn't build him up," he noted. "He's not a "typical" Cuban fighter. Everybody told me he was a real fighter, TV friendly, a real good puncher."

They weren't lying. I'm much looking forward to seeing what this all-action Cuban/Bahamian does in his next tangle.

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brownsugar says:

The kid was defenses, completely and utterly....Johnson was in no condition to fire back. Ref did his job..... Johnson vs Kirkland...Wow!

The Shadow says:

Tureano is good dude. Poor Tureano.

I especially like how Tureano always refers to Tureano as Tureano -- even as Tureano speaks.

I can just picture him as youth in Nassau. Mom is calling him to come home and clean his room.

"Come in and clean your room!"

"No! Tureano doesn't want to. I'm playing with my frie... er, the other children are playing with Tureano!"

Hope he gets a nice fight soon.

The Shadow says:

Hey, did you guys know that Michael Jackson had a brother with the same name? Toriano Jackson.

Radam G says:

I agree that T-Jo is no loser. But he was a fool fighting instead of a "fighting fool," as we da game call mad mucho-punching pugs.

All T-Jo had to do was five percent of what he learnt and was taught in Havana, Cuba.

He was absolutely too fast for and had too much adroitness for turtle-footed Curtis Stevens.

This bout maybe a candidate for Fight of the Year, but T-Jo maybe a candidate for Bonehead of the Year IMHO.

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Holla!

Radam G says:

[QUOTE=The Shadow;48440]Hey, did you guys know that Michael Jackson had a brother with the same name? Toriano Jackson.[/QUOTE]The J-Fam is part Native American and Latino on Popa Joe's side of the J-Fam. Holla!

deepwater2 says:

I talked to Milton Iecroix who was in his corner , Milton said he was fine and the ref should not of stopped the fight . This is boxing guys . He should of been allowed to get knocked down and have a count at least . He was winning the fight . He was eating Stevens punches all night and was fine. He was never down or hurt in the fight. Watch Derrick Jefferson vs mo better Harris on you tube to get an idea what I'm talking about .give the guy a chance to come back , if he stumbled across the ring I would understand the stoppage but not in this case . Rematch

Radam G says:

It was no doubt a bad, home-cooking-and-crooking stoppage. But Trainer M-Lec should have been on the lookout for this type of stuff. Holla!

The Shadow says:

[QUOTE=deepwater2;48445]I talked to Milton Iecroix who was in his corner , Milton said he was fine and the ref should not of stopped the fight . This is boxing guys . He should of been allowed to get knocked down and have a count at least . He was winning the fight . He was eating Stevens punches all night and was fine. He was never down or hurt in the fight. Watch Derrick Jefferson vs mo better Harris on you tube to get an idea what I'm talking about .give the guy a chance to come back , if he stumbled across the ring I would understand the stoppage but not in this case . Rematch[/QUOTE]

Tureano approves this comment.

I didn't see the fight, is he good? Based on what I read, see and hear, he deserves another shot. Good thing he got his first loss now. He seemed to be really devastated about it.

Could've ended up a lot worse for him, mentally, if it would've happened 10-15 fights from now.

Skibbz says:

Looks like I better watch this fight... I have never heard of Tureano Johnson. Does he have a good future in the division?

the Roast says:

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Yes, if you didn't see it go find it and watch it! I don't know if Johnson will be a star. A Star would have knocked Stevens out, he landed enough punches and never came close to dropping Stevens. I disagree with Brownsugar, I wouldn't say he was defenseless. He staggered to the ropes and the ref jumped right in. Think of all the fights where a fighter staggered to the ropes and came back. The 10th round of Bowe-Holyfield? Corrales-Castillo? There are many, many more.

brownsugar says:

I hear you Roast and can see why you would feel that way.....I am not saying my position is perfect... This is the sport of boxing which is all about painful resolutions.

But I'm actually surprised Johnson made it though the 4th (I think) when Stevens was tagging him at will, with head snapping shots reminded my of the head spinning sequences from the Exorcist. The ref could have stepped in right there but he didn't.

During the last round it was clear that Johnson didn't have the wherewith all to grab-on, take a knee, or fight back as he staggered back to the ropes.....Johnson had an unconscious grimace of pain and bewilderment on his face as if he was subconsciously saying..." What just happened? "... and a begging look in his eyed that said. "save me". Steven was closing in fast wnd winding up for an explosive finish....Johnson had nothing.

I actually wanted Johnson to win... I saw what a buzz saw he was two weeks before the fight and wanted desperately to see a new hopeful shake the division....but can anybody tell me what possibility Johnson had of surviving the next few seconds? (not to mention the subsequent physical damage to his cranium).

The fight was slightly like Bramble vs Livingston....but in this case the busy guy was winning. I think the ref probably saw enough of Johnson sacrificing his defense in exchange for winning The fight on points and ultimately made the right decision.

Does anybody else believe Johnson could have continued? Just curious.

the Roast says:

I can't really be too hard on the ref. There was a second or a split second after the ref jumped in where Johnson was un aware of where he was before he snapped back and started complaining. I just think let the fight play out to the max. Johnson may have very well been flattened. After a fight of that quality he deserved that moment. I hope for a rematch.

The Shadow says:

Tureano should have taken a knee. I think Tureano understands this. At least Tureano acknowledges that much.

I interviewed him earlier, by the way.

Here's an excerpt in Q&A form:

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[I]DS:

Now that you've had a chance to reflect on your performance, how are you feeling?

Tureano:

Tureano feels he lets his people of Nassau, Bahamas down. Tureano was robbed. Theft. Felony.

(Pauses.)

It was a robbery. It was nothing new. Tureano just wanted to represent his people of the Bahamas. A small nation. Tureano came and did what Tureano said he would.

Tureano won't say much, he's not the one to cry and complain. Tureano will let the fans be the judge.

DS:

Do you want a rematch with Curtis Stevens? If so, how do you see that match playing out?

T:[/I][I]

Curtis Stevens is a great fighter. No doubt about it. He's one of the best. He can crack, he's good, he's a great fighter. One of the best ever.

But he wasn't enough for Tureano.

Clearly, you can see that. Tureano won every round. Tureano's left jab was sharper than his. Tureano's right hand was better than his. Tureano's defense was superior to his. Tureano's bicep was bigger than his. And Tureano's pecker was bigger than his.

Tureano stays humble, all grace be to God. They took it from me. Next time, you will see an ever better performance from Tureano.

In fact, Tureano predicts that Tureano will outclass Curtis Stevens and take his girlfriend on a cruise to the Bahamas. You ever hear Eddie Murphy's Raw? What happens when your chick goes to the Bahamas? She will fall into the embrace of a Bahamian lover man named Dexter St. Jacques.

Except this time, she will succumb to the master that is Dexter St. Tureano.

(Sings.) Don't let him fool ya, OH NO!

Did you know that Tureano is also the greatest singer of all times? Bob Marley travelled into the future, inspired by Tureano he penned songs that influenced millions.

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Such is the power of Tureano. Think Curtis Stevens can compete with that? I would tend to say no.

DS:

Thank you for the interview, Tureano.

T:

Thank you. It was an honor for me to let you meet me. Tureano will back in style.[/I]

deepwater2 says:

I believe he could of continued, Milton L in his corner believed he could of continued, his trainer in the corner believed he could of continued, and his family in the audience believed he could of continued. You only take a knee after a liver shot because you pretty much have to . The thing to do when buzzed is hold and tie up. It's very very hard to take a knee just because you get buzzed.a boxer never wants to take a knee and go to the floor unless he is forced to do it. Anyone here ever get buzzed in sparring or a bout and take a knee? Or do you fight back even harder or tie the guy up?

brownsugar says:

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Great perspective.

I can understand a fighter not wanting to show weakness. Most guys would rather get taken out than to give the impression of "bowing down".

But the best do it.... and those who are smart enough to give themselves a chance to win will not hesitate.

Cotto has taken a knee before... So has Tim Bradley and Steve Cunningham.

Nobody wants to ...I get it.You make an excellent point.

But sometimes there are no alternatives if the fighters can't properly protect themselves. I don't think it would have been necessarily wrong to let Johnson get counted out on his back. But the way it stands ... Johnson can learn from his mistake without having to listen to fans laughing their butts off during highlight reels when ESPN or some other media outlet uses the footage for a "Comeback of the Year Compilation video".

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And he takes less damage as a bonus...

Carmine Cas says:

Personally I think the ref should have waited a little longer and accessed the situation, yes he looked hurt but give him a better chance.

One of the guys I used to train with, who is a well decorated amateur sparred with Curtis, I heard to outboxed him easily and Stevens just kept attempting that one punch knock out punch. Curtis is a good fighter but he seems to be in love with his power too much and does not let the knockout happen organically.

Tureano should have mixed it up a little; boxed from the outside like he was taught in Cuba and also smother Stevens. He did take a lot of punishment coming but he took it well. No head movement what so ever, but regardless I want to see a rematch.

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Over a year ago I was sparring with my buddy whose very good amateur, he caught me with a body shot with a little bit over a minute in the round. It was BAD, I was able to fight back and clinch to survive. After the round I took a knee though lol. I would clinch in general anyway on the inside sometimes just to practice, it is in fact one of the lost arts

amayseng says:

Yep the ref blew it, as usual the wonderful sport of boxing takes another hit.

Early stoppage.

The Shadow says:

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Great post. Falls in love with his power. We see that a bit. Donaire admits to falling in love with that vs. Rigo. Before you know it, the fight is over.

Let the knockout happen organically. Well put.

Carmine Cas says:

[QUOTE=The Shadow;48554]Great post. Falls in love with his power. We see that a bit. Donaire admits to falling in love with that vs. Rigo. Before you know it, the fight is over.

Let the knockout happen organically. Well put.[/QUOTE]

Thanks man,

Yes and it appeared Donaire fell in love with his power against Darchynian or he just looked out of it.