

Written by Randy Gordon
Tuesday, 01 July 2014 11:23



Last week, this column kind of just appeared out of nowhere, with no explanation of what the heck it is and when to expect it. It's like this: After signing with Al Haymon, I struck a multi-billion dollar deal with Dino DaVinci & Michael Woods to allow me to throw this column onto TSS every Monday. So, here is installment #2...Oh, I also said I'd remind you guys to call toll free into my show on SiriusXM later today. The number is 1-866-522-2846. We are on from 6-8pm (ET). You guys in other time zones, make the adjustments.

On Saturday night in Omaha, Nebraska, a boxing match—for a world championship—took place in the CenturyLink Center. Not since 1972, when heavyweight Ron Stander—who was from across the river in Council Bluffs, Iowa—took on heavyweight champion Smokin' Joe Frazier in Omaha, had a title fight taken place there.

On Saturday, a capacity crowd came out to cheer for Omaha native Terence Crawford, who was making the first defense of the WBO lightweight title he had won less than four months earlier.

The opponent across the ring was as tough an opponent as Crawford could have possibly selected: A Cuban refugee named Yuriorkis Gamboa. The challenger brought a 23-0 professional record—enhanced by over 250 amateur fights, most of them on the elite level—into the fight. Sixteen of his wins were by knockout. Oddly and ironically enough, Crawford had the same record.

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After falling behind in the first four rounds to the quick, shifty and talented Cuban, Crawford brought out his championship pedigree.

The right-hander switched to southpaw, a move which was questioned by many in the crowd and even by HBO announcers Jim Lampley, Roy Jones Jr. and Max Kellerman. However, it was really easy to see what Crawford was doing.

By switching to southpaw, his right jab began repeatedly finding the challenger. Not since switch-hitting middleweight champ Marvelous Marvin Hagler has any champion been able to switch boxing stances as easily as effectively as Crawford did. From the southpaw stance, he began to take Gamboa apart.

Crawford dropped Gamboa in the fifth and sixth rounds, only to have the Cuban come storming back each time. Finally, after two more knockdowns over a challenger who insisted on going out on his shield, referee Genaro Hernandez waved it off after 2:53 of the ninth round.

The incredibly game challenger later said he could have continued. He could NOT have. What he meant to say is that he WANTED to continue. He truly wanted to go down swinging. The fact is, he did exactly that.

He fought his heart out against probably the best lightweight on this planet and gave an amazing account of himself. A recommendation from this corner: Drop down to 130, Yuri. You'll probably be able to win another belt there.

The fight itself was memorable in its two-sidedness and in how the champion was able to kick-start his huge heart into turning it on when the champion found himself falling behind on the scorecards.

For me, I took four things from this fight:

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One: Yuri Gamboa needs to take the summer off, then get back in the ring before the end of the year. We want to see him again.

Two: Terence Crawford is the best lightweight in the world, perhaps far better than anyone else at 135 pounds.

Three: This fight might just beat out last week's Robert Guerrero- Yoshihiro Kamegai battle for 2014's "Fight of the Year." How can that be, you ask, when Guerrero was 10 rounds of non-stop you-hit-me-and-I'll-hit-you action? That's because, Guerrero-Kamegai was contested between two guys with very little defensive skills. They get insulted if you miss them with a punch. Crawford-Gamboa was nearly nine full rounds of amazing boxing ability, drama and will-to-win excitement.

Four: Omaha, Nebraska, has a world champion. He's one the city is in love with and who loves the city right back. His presence packed the arena on Saturday.

You can rest assured It won't be 42 years before Omaha, Nebraska, hosts its next world title fight!

WHERE'S HAROLD? : HBO's longtime ringside scorer, Harold Lederman, was conspicuous by his absence from the HBO telecast from Omaha. Sitting in, explaining the rules and giving us his scoring was **Steve Weisfeld**, who has been working in that capacity for over a year. Sometimes, HBO uses *both*

Weisfeld and Lederman. We like

Steve Weisfeld

a lot. When I was commissioner in New York, I gave Steve his judge's license. He turned into one of the finest judges in the world. In my mind, he's one of the Top-10 judges. As is another once of my N.Y. judges,

Julie Lederman

, Harold's daughter. Back to Harold. Here's a guy who is a pharmacist by trade. He may hold the Guinness Book of Records for getting fired from more jobs than anybody. That's because of

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fighters he was assigned to by HBO when the pharmacy expected him to work for them on that night. When it came to making a choice, there was no choice. Harold chose the HBO. Incredibly, early in his HBO career, Harold made more at his pharmacy job than at HBO. Harold has shown HBO nothing but respect. They should be proud they have an employee so loyal as Harold Lederman. You'd think the least they could do is show some loyalty back to him.

LIGHTWEIGHT RATINGS: With Terence Crawford's huge victory on Saturday night, I couldn't help but put my list together for the world's top 135-pounders. The list, with the title they hold in parentheses, looks like this:

1. Terence Crawford (WBO)—24-0 (17)
2. Miguel Vazquez (IBF)—34-3 (13)
3. Yuri Gamboa—23-1 (16)...*He'd help his cause if he dropped to 130*
4. Omar Figueroa—(WBC) 23-0 (17)
5. Ray Beltran—29-6-1 (17)
6. Richard Abril (WBA)—18-3-1 (8) *"The Road Runner"...Inactive since March 2013*
7. Dejan Zlaticanin—19-0 (13) *WBC International Champion*
8. Paulus Moses—33-2 (21) *WBO International Champion*

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9. Hank Lundy—25-3-1 (12)

10. Kevin Mitchell—38-2 (28)

MY TWEEKED PxP LIST: Last week *after* my column was posted, I realized I had omitted one of my favorite fighters, whom I believe absolutely belongs on the list. That man is

**Guillermo
Rigondeaux**

. So, here goes:

10. Leo Santa Cruz

9. Vasyl Lomachenko

8. Sergei Kovalev

7. Guillermo Rigondeaux

6. Mikey Garcia

5. Wladimir Klitschko

4. Gennady Golovkin

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3. Manny Pacquiao

2. Andre Ward

1. Floyd Mayweather

If you guys would like, do your own PxP list and either post your own ratings or in-box them to me by Friday at midnight (ET). I will compile them all, giving 10 points for first place down to one point for 10th place. That way, TSS can have its own PxP Top-10 List. I await your entries.

WEEKEND RESULTS: The boxing career of **Ricky Burns** lies in ruins, as he suffered a 12-round split decision loss on Saturday to Montenegro's **Dejan Zlaticanin**

. In front of a silent, stunned hometown crowd in Glasgow, Scotland, Burns was dropped by a left hook and was never in the fight, despite the scorecards (on which a British judge, naturally, gave it to Burns). In reality, he lost at least seven—perhaps eight—of the rounds. The fight, for the WBC International Lightweight Title, was Burns' second loss in a row. He lost his WBO lightweight title to Terence Crawford last March 1...In Kinshasa, Zaire, localite

Llunga Makabu

won the vacant WBC International Cruiserweight Title with a ninth-round stoppage of former world champion Glen "The Road Warrior" Johnson in the ninth round. The 45-year-old Johnson told me, when I saw him at the IBHOF weekend earlier this month, "I hope to get one more title shot." This loss should effectively end his career and begin his five-year countdown until he is inducted in the IBHOF. Johnson is 54-19-2. Makabu is now 17-1 with 15 KO's...Heavyweight

Shannon Briggs

was forced to go the distance for the first time in four comeback fights, taking a unanimous decision over

Raphael Zumbano Love

for the vacant NABA heavyweight title. Briggs is now 55-6-1 (48) and hoping to punch his way into a world title shot. He is 42...2012 U.S. Olympians

Errol Spence

and

Marcus Browne

scored impressive wins in Las Vegas on Saturday. Welterweight Spence took a unanimous 10-round decision over tough Ronald Cruz. It was Spence's 13

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win in as many fights. He has 10 KO's. On the same card, light heavyweight

Marcus "The Liver Killer" Browne

needed just 91 seconds to dispatch of last-minute replacement

Donta Woods

. Browne's original opponent,

Yusaf Mack

, failed a NSAC blood test and was scratched from the card. "The Liver Killer" is 11-0 with eight stoppages. It is expected he will be fighting again on the August 9

th

card at the Barclay's Center...Also on the card in Las Vegas, heavyweight prospect

Gerald Washington

went to 13-0 (10) with a second-round wipeout of veteran

Travis Walker

...Unbeaten junior welter

Ivan Redkach

labored to a 10-round unanimous decision against rugged veteran

Sergey Gulyakevich

on a Showtime-televised card in St. Charles, MO.

MY FAVORITE LOSER: British junior welterweight **Kristian Laight** dropped a four-round unanimous decision to Ryan Smith on the undercard to Dejan Zlaticanin-Ricky Burns. For Ryan, the win upped his record to 2-0. For Laight, the loss dropped his record to 9-176-7. In 2014, Laight is actually doing quite well—he has won two fights while only losing 12. He has two more fights scheduled in July. If he pushes, he may be able to reach that magical 20-loss circle this year. He has done it before. We just know he can do it again. Oh, in those 176 losses, he has only been stopped five times. In his nine wins, he has yet to record a knockout.

TWO MORE FOR AL: Junior middleweight **Vanes Martirosyan** recently signed with advisor **Al Haymon**

. So did IBF lightweight king

Miguel Vazquez.

If you're keeping track, here are some of the bigger names who have signed with the powerful but reclusive Haymon: \$\$\$May, Deontay Wilder, Marcos Maidana, Shawn Porter, Lucas Matthisse, Amir Khan, Adonis Stevenson, Robert Guerrero, Keith Thurman, Omar Figueroa, Peter Quillin and most of the 2012 U.S. Olympians.

FUNNY: On Saturday evening, a few hours before the HBO telecast of Crawford-Gamboa, my wife and I went to see "Jersey Boys" at a Long Island theatre. As I was about to pay for the tickets, I noticed a poster on a stand. "CANELO ALVAREZ vs ERISLANDY LARA" read

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the poster. "See it Here." Two female employees, one perhaps around 40 and the other in her early 20's, stood behind the counter and saw me looking at the poster and then heard me discussing it with my wife.

"Are you a boxing fan?" asked the older woman.

"I am indeed a boxing fan," I answered.

"Well, this is the second time we'll be showing a big boxing match," she replied.

"When was the first boxing match you showed? Who were the fighters?" I asked.

The older woman looked at the sign.

"We showed Alvarez," she said, pointing to the photo of Canelo. "He fought, uh, uh..."

She had to think of Alvarez' opponent's name. Then it came to her.

"He fought Mayflower," she said. I smiled. I knew who she meant.

Her younger colleague laughed and playfully said to her, "You dummy, it's not Mayflower."

"Well, it was something like that," she retorted.

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Before I could correct her on "Mayflower," her colleague said, "It's Merriweather."

"Oh, that's right," said the Mayflower girl. "Merriweather. I knew it was something like that."

I never bothered to correct her.

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brownsugar says:

Nice Read Commish, and since you updated your top ten P4P, the list is as perfect as a list based on personal opinion can be.

I remember when the 135 division was one of the most crowded and lethal divisions in boxing(Duran Dejesus etc...), just like the middleweight used to be.

but as I gaze upon the list of top rated lightweights, there are only a few fighters mentioned that I feel would make for an entertaining match against Terrence Crawford.

But it would be greatly appreciated if Terrence could rid the boxing world of Miguel Vasquez by removing him from his lightweight throne.

Terrence has faster feet, faster hands and a faster mind. it wouldn't be very pretty but afterwards, there would be no further justification for HBO to air any more of his dreadful Marathon/boxing/tap-fests again.

In fact Richard Abril and Miguel Vasquez could perform a public service to mankind by staging a fight at the Nation Center for Insomnia Research, to help find a cure for chronic sleeplessness.

Hank Lundy versus Crawford (if his team doesn't move him to junior Lightweight) would be cracking encounter, The boisterous and bombastic fighting fireman is never disappointing when he's fully trained and prepared. He's got a sweet jab and will fight anyone for a chance at glory and a decent paycheck. Similar to Gamboa, Hank will make a fight of it if he has to. I don't favor him winning, but it would be a good keep busy fight for Crawford...

Crawford versus Figueroa would be another fan friendly showcase fight. Figueroa would get

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eaten alive before the midway point of the fight, but he'd make it a fight to remember until that point.

By the way I see Mayweather on my facebook page every day. he's either opening a store, getting his fledgling IP "Selfies" into the public eye,... playing celebrity basket ball, showering strippers with cash, or accepting awards from a variety of benefactors and organizations. Everyday he's in the news but not a word about his next opponent. But when is he going to announce his next fight? Commissioner,.....Can you possibly ascertain this obviously protected and heavily encrypted information???

The Shadow says:

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Suge, a curveball is coming!!!! When Commish said there have been requests for drug testing, he wasn't joking.

From what I can gather, it went from a one-man race to a triple threat. Suspicions linger about two of them while one remains a sure bet. Clean, dependable, brings the numbers, won't cheat. But will he be ready, willing and able? That's the question.

I've insisted it was MMA but if a guy wants to fiddle with hematocrit, then, hey, it's on to the next. In fact, people from K. Brook's camp insist you-know-who is now the new Mayweather foe.

Either way, we may be in for a surprise!

@Commish, sweet sweet column. And nice to include Rigo Ortiz in there. Awesome. I can really dig this column.

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Reading between the lines I can feel the intensity heating up. I hope the boxing physicists at the Mayweather lab make a decision soon.

The Shadow says:

Also, awesome portion about Harold Lederman. He seems to be that one loyal trooper who's always there that everyone always takes for granted.

And nice piece on enhancement talent Kristian Laight. Wasn't aware of this guy. When you were the commissioner, were there ever guys you wouldn't approve because of their records?

Your love and passion for all things boxing really shines through. And nice to see you plugging

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the show, finally! Can't wait to listen in.

The Commish says:

Shadow, in NY, the rule during my regime was any fighter who had seven consecutive losses would be denied a license at the discretion of the commission. It's those last six words I liked, however: "At the discretion of the commission." I WAS the commission.

As we know, losses are not always losses and wins are not always wins. Boxing judges do their part to ensure that.

I always went along with the seven consecutive loss rule--except once.

The guy was brought into NY from down South. He had a winning record, but was clearly an opponent. He had lost his last seven fights. When the fight card was sent in by the MSG Boxing Department, MSG Boxing President Bobby Goodman said he knew of the seven-fight rule, but asked if I could make an exception. I looked at the guy's record. I especially looked at his last seven fights.

All seven losses were by decision. Three were by split decision. One was by majority decision. All were in the other guy's hometown. I decided to grant the guy a license. I discussed the move with my Medical Director. At first, he was opposed to it. I told him to hear me out, then make a decision. He listened. After he heard the guy's story, he agreed to go along with my decision.

The choice turned out to be the right one.

The fight went the full eight rounds. Under my leadership, judges did not play games in NY. The winner won. The loser lost. If you turned in a horrific, controversial, embarrassing score, I sat you down. For a long time. My judges didn't mess up.

The guy with the seven consecutive losses left the fight on a one-fight winning streak.

In the U.K., where the British Boxing Board of Control is the ruling regulatory body, they have very loose rules as to whom they approve and don't approve. With their career LOSSES in parentheses, guys like Kristian Laight (178), Sid Razak (125), Matt Seawright (95), Youssef Al Hamidi (69) and Jason Nesbitt (177) are still being approved to serve as opponents in the U.K. Hamidi has lost 13 straight. For Seawright, that number is 20. For Razak, it's 22. Isn't approving them to fight the same thing as approving a fixed fight? The BBBofC says no, it's not. These opponents occasionally win. Seawright is 5-95. Razak is 9-125.. Nesbitt is 10-177. So, argues the BBBofC, these guys don't always lose.

So, Bobcat, I hope that somewhat answers your question about a commission's approval of fights and fighters.

Oh, and thanks for the call to the show the other night. We hope you'll do it again.

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-Randy G.

oubobcat says:

Another great write up Commish.

I like your pound for pound entrants. My list is a little different and I will get that posted this week.

Glad to see you bring up Gerald Washington. Like Breazele, he is a former college football player turned heavyweight boxer. I even see some experts now thinking he may be a more promising prospect than Breazele. Time will tell but I will say when I first saw Washington fight he was very crude. He has improved by leaps and bound since and does appear to have a lot of upside still as he continues to learn the sport. We still don't know about the chin and that will determine if he's the next Seth Mitchell or has something more.

Great story you told about the theater. I am in the process of moving and have been doing quite a bit of traveling between Cleveland and Rochester the last few months. Since I have been in transit so much, have caught some fights at the theater or out at other establishments. For the Canelo-Angulo fight, I was in Buffalo at the time and stopped by a theater that was showing the card. I got there about 8:45 and when I purchased the tickets (my father in law tagged along) the guy who sold them to us told us we were the first people to buy for that event. All told, there ended up being a total of five people in the theater that night for the including the two of us and the other three didn't show up until after 10:00.

The Commish says:

Hmm...I guess Buffalo isn't the fight town we would like it to be, or that Mercedes Vazquez Simmons hoped it would be, when she put on her show last month. Only a few hundred loyalists showed up. I understand her next one will be in Rochester in mid-August.

We know Rochesterians love their boxing.

-Randy G.

the Roast says:

That was a nice job Saturday night by my man Genaro Hernandez. He used to work the Chicago Golden Gloves Finals every year until he hit the big time.

miguel1 says:

Brilliant. Thank you commish, a much needed read.

1 Floyd Mayweather Jr
2 Andre Ward

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- 3 Guillermo Rigondeaux
- 4 Danny Garcia
- 5 Manny Pacquiao
- 6 Juan Manuel Marquez
- 7 Mikey Garcia
- 8 Timothy Bradley
- 9 Nonito Donaire
- 10 Terrence Crawford

I dropped Cotto from 10 and moved Crawford in based on his performance. Skill wise, I always thought Gamboa was on the level of Rigondeaux, but whereas Willie is disciplined, Gamboa is a head case that allegedly hits women, so I'm not sure he will get as far. With his ego, a first loss might not sit well. I too would love to see him compete again in short order.

If anyone says your crazy for having Lomachenko on the list already, they are wrong, you are right lol. He is incredibly technical, and the questions you might have about a phenom type fighting hurt were all answered early in his career with the Salido fight, so I'm sold. He may even be 11 at this point, I opted for Crawford, mainly because I rate Gamboa a good bit higher than Gary Russell. Still not putting Klitschko on here.

oubobcat says:

That show was a tough sell for that particular area. I admire her for trying to put on shows in Western NY on a consistent basis. As with anything, there is trail and error and I think the important thing for her to take from that Buffalo show is to keep in mind that local fighters sell local shows. She had very few local fighters on the show and that hurt attendance.

As you know, I am a die hard. I absolutely loved the main event on that card between Jonathan Gonzalez and Mike Ruiz. It was a solid fight on paper and was an excellent competitive fight in the ring. The problem...they had no Buffalo or Western NY roots as one was from Puerto Rico and the other Mexico. The Cruiserweight co-feature fight as well did not feature fighters from the area.

I do see that she is planning a Rochester show in August (you know I will be there). I am also hearing that she is concentrating on getting local fighters on the show. Its in the early stages but is setting up to be a good card full of local fights and decent fights if it comes off. I think she learned from the Buffalo show and ultimately that will help her succeed in the future. I am pulling for her as I am moving to the area and would absolutely love to see boxing events on a consistent basis.

The Commish says:

That was a big lesson for Ms. Simmons to learn in Buffalo--local fighters sell tickets. I agree that the main event was a very enjoyable fight, but it meant nothing in terms of ticket sales.

I am hoping her Rochester card does fantastic. Packed house! If she does decent, I know

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she'll run again...and again.

To me, Rochester means going to "Bathtub Billy's" after the fights for the best "wings" I have ever had (and also a chance to hang with Willie Monroe Jr.).

-Randy G.

SouthPawFlo says:

Canelo
Tim Bradley
Juan Manuel Marquez
Bernard Hopkins

Definitely belong in the P4P top 10 in the world...

Radam G says:

My top super five are: 1. Money May, 2. B-Hop, 3. Da Manny, 4. Willie Rigo, 5. SOG Ward.
Holla!

deepwater2 says:

Cheers to the professional opponents. what away to make a living! The one guy Buckley from England was= won 32 (KO 8) + lost 256 (KO 10) . He only got stopped 10 times in 256 losses. That is impressive. He finally hung it up when they let him fight a 0-1 guy and he won.

As long as these guys don't take beatings and finish on their feet why not let em keep going.

The Commish says:

If a fighter has been stopped only 10 times in 256 losses, that means 246 times he has gone the distance in those losses. The question is, how many punches did he take in those 246 decisions as compared to the 10 when he was stopped. In distance fights, a lot more punches are thrown.

A lot more are landed, too. Two hundred eight-eight pro fights is an awful lot of fights, even if most are four-rounders.

Is the BBBofC really regulating boxing by letting these opponents climb in the ring?

-Randy G.

Radam G says:

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Amen! Buckley literally got robbed at least 30 fights that I saw with my own eyes. The youngish him was the British Emmanuel Augustus of boxing. Just thought of as a stepping stone, a trial horse and a piece of tough-testing meat. Holla!