

Written by Eric Raskin

Sunday, 20 February 2011 21:00

As I noted in last week's TSS debut of Raskin's Rants, I'll be combining a one- or two-email mailbag with the traditional bullet-pointed nuggets of deep-fried ranting goodness. So here's the best email I received last week (a long one, but a good one), followed by my response, and then it's on to the Rants:

Hey Eric,

I've spoken to you before via twitter (@stonemclean). With recently subscribing to RT and now this email, I am borderline stalking you. Unfortunately for you it's quite tricky to get a handgun in Canada, so don't expect any John Lennon-esque love bullets. It's too bad because it was your best shot at trending on Twitter. (Has this joke gone too dark?) Why is Tavoris Cloud no longer knocking people out? He must share his strength and conditioning coach with Tim Bradley and Steve Cunningham. Three jacked fellas that might have trouble ringing your door bell. Golden Boy is talking about bringing Pascal-Hopkins to the U.S. BHop himself has been tweeting about the Staples Center. Is that not the worst market possible for a Philly fighter vs. a French Canadian? Speaking of conditioning coaches, now that Amir Khan has fired Alex Ariza maybe Jean Pascal can recruit him. Who let this guy out of four-round fights? He's like a black Butterbean. It's sad that the Jones vs. Soto-Karass / Donaire vs. Montiel card is being totally overshadowed by Pacquiao-Mosley, which will likely suck in comparison. Speaking of Pac-Mosley and John Lennon, there are some similarities there. Manny has his hair and Mosley has his reflexes ... Was that last one a stretch? Did I just pull a Teddy Atlas quality metaphor? Actually, if I read it back and insert an inappropriate volume swell, it's uncanny. Kudos to Tomasz Adamek for pulling the one move that legitimizes fighting Michael Grant, Vinny Maddalone, and Kevin McBride in direct succession. I was really happy to see Brian Vera upset Sergio Mora, like really happy. Was that wrong? Also, what are the chances that Bob goes through with the Pavlik-Vera fight now? I'd like to continue this but my eyes are burning due to too much scalp exposure. It's a rare disorder, only me and one other guy suffer from it.
—Jordan Stone-McLean

Jordan,

Lots of good stuff in there. As you know from listening to Ring Theory, I have a high opinion of Canadians in general and have long been impressed by the nation's per-capita production of quality comedic minds. You've done nothing to detract from that reputation. Some of your comments speak for themselves so I won't respond to everything you wrote, but here's a smattering of my thoughts on your thoughts:

The fact that Cloud has gone the distance his last three fights after starting his career with 18 knockouts in 19 bouts is not unusual; that often happens when a guy steps up from journeymen and fringe contenders to real world-class opponents. Failing to stop the trio of Clinton Woods, Glen Johnson, and Fulgencio Zuniga, who have four total kayo losses between them, is no

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disgrace. And as you correctly point out, punching power has little to do with the size of your pecs or biceps. It's mostly about leverage and technique. Cloud is a good puncher, but he's clearly not the second coming of Bob Foster.

Hopkins-Pascal belongs in your home country, but there's one American city I believe it would draw nicely in: Philadelphia. Not Atlantic City or Newark or Dover Downs, but actual downtown Philly, at the Wells Fargo Center. If they pick a date after the Flyers' and Sixers' postseasons will be over and a date that doesn't conflict with a home Phillies game, I believe Hopkins' pursuit of history could draw in Philly. Just a hunch, but I feel like BHop's hometown (and mine) is hungry for a meaningful fight.

You're quite correct that stamina is a major issue for Pascal (everyone conveniently forgets the degree to which Chad Dawson was coming on late in their fight before it got stopped on cuts), but I think you may have overreached using his name in conjunction with that of Butterbean. I prefer to think of Pascal as the black Dana Rosenblatt.

I don't think Pavlik has much to worry about in a fight against Vera; don't sleep on how good Pavlik can be if he's mentally and physically prepared and isn't fighting a supreme craftsman like Hopkins or Sergio Martinez (against whom Pavlik was competitive, by the way). Vera is a bit rough and tumble for Pavlik's first fight back, but I wouldn't be surprised to see Arum go with Vera for his second opponent.

I assume your last line is a reference to the one-of-a-kind scalp of Glen Johnson? As my Ring Theory partner Bill Dettloff likes to point out, that scalp seems to offer a peek inside his brain. Now here's a peek inside mine ... cue the Rants!

- Stat of the week: Fernando Montiel is 44-0-2 when he doesn't fight on HBO. He's 44-3-2 overall. You do the math.
- Before any morons go trotting out the "lucky punch" nonsense for Nonito Donaire's knockout of Montiel, they should watch the last three seconds before the kayo punch landed. Montiel threw a right cross, and Donaire avoided it but didn't counter; rather, he just studied the opening his opponent gave him. When the next right cross came a moment later, Donaire ended the fight with a counter left hook.
- Something tells me we'll be seeing a few more fighters working with Victor Conte now.
- Well, I have my first ever case of tweeter's remorse. Immediately after the Donaire-Montiel fight, I wrote, "What do those who criticized Donaire's P4P ranking in The Ring over the last couple of years have to say now? It's called an eye for talent." This was a case where 140 characters just weren't enough to say what I meant, and even in a friendly Twitter debate afterward, I didn't state my case effectively. So, to clarify: First, I wasn't crediting myself with recognizing talent; that was a compliment aimed at The Ring Editor-in-Chief Nigel Collins, who gets the final word on the magazine's rankings. And second, after further consideration, it was perfectly reasonable to criticize The Ring ranking Donaire in the top five prior to now, based on his quality of opposition. But the pound-for-pound list, unlike divisional rankings, is supposed to

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be heavily opinion-based, a subjective “who would beat whom if they were all the same size” debate. And in that regard, I guess what I meant to express (but failed to do so effectively on Twitter) is that Donaire’s back-to-back blowouts of Wladimir Sidorenko and Montiel have justified Collins’ ranking decision, that Donaire is every bit as magnificently talented as The Ring thought he was.

- Ref Russell Mora gets a mixed review for the way he handled the conclusion of the fight. On the one hand, I love that Mora finished his count and gave Montiel a chance to get up. A fighter is supposed to have until the count of 10 to show that he can continue, and sometimes a guy’s legs are screwy after five seconds but stable after another five. On the other hand, once Mora reached the count of nine and took a look into Montiel’s eyes, I can’t imagine what made him determine that “Cochulito” was fit to continue.

- Speaking of guys named Mora, I loved Sergio Mora’s use of the word “diminished” to describe Shane Mosley in Michael Woods’ article on TSS last week. Some people go overboard and play the “shot” card before it’s appropriate, but “diminished” is truly the perfect word to describe Mosley. (Just don’t be surprised if “shot” applies after Pacquiao is done with him.)

- I’m still on the fence about how far Mike Jones can go, but you have to admit, he throws the most textbook-perfect headbutt to the gonads in the sport.

- Has Joe Goossen started mailing it in? I wouldn’t have thought so, but what other excuse can there be for him not dropping F-bombs on Kenny Bayless after Bayless ruled that Jesus Soto-Karass’ cut came from a punch?

- Bob Arum’s attacks on HBO for televising Andre Berto vs. Victor Ortiz, instead of waiting so Berto could face the Jones-Soto-Karass winner, are completely unfair. Ortiz is a much bigger name than Jones, and physically, Berto-Ortiz is a competitive fight. (I do worry that it will be a mismatch in the mental-strength department, however.)

- Question I’d love to address in next week’s mailbag: Did anyone out there watch this past Friday’s ESPN2 broadcast on a 3D television? I have yet to find a review of the experience anywhere, so if you watched in 3D and have an opinion, please pipe up.

- Recommended reading: Chris Mannix’s piece on Kelly Pavlik on SI.com, <http://bit.ly/goFIX9>

- And that’s enough plugging other writers; time to plug myself. Make sure to check out a new episode of my podcast, Ring Theory, this week. Dettloff and I will break down Donaire-Montiel in detail, I’ll launch a non-personal, strictly-business attack on a web site that once employed me, and we’ll preview Miguel Acosta vs. Brandon Rios, Saul “Canelo” Alvarez vs. Matthew Hatton, Daniel Ponce DeLeon vs. Adrien Broner, and Zab Judah vs. Kaizer Mabuza. You can find the show at <http://ringtheory.podbean.com/>, and as always, you can scroll down just below the full episode if you’d like to first take it for a two-minute test drive.

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and listen to new episodes of his podcast, Ring Theory, at <http://ringtheory.podbean.com>

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FighterforJC says:

Donaire landed almost the exact same punch in the first round at about the 2-minute mark. Donaire's been setting up Montiel, that was 100% planned, not luck. Also, Montiel made the mistake of doubling up with that right. He first feinted with a right before throwing the right. That was too big an opening against a counter puncher of Donaire's caliber.

BoxAnne says:

Having got lucky to find a friend who'd loan me the glasses, I watched FNF in 3D on ESPN3 and found it moderately enhancing. Generally fun, but no big deal. The borrowed glasses may not have been top class, and I recently read that greater than 1 in 10 people can't see things in 3D no matter what kind of glasses they wear. I have trouble with my right eye (MD), which may have diluted the effect. Nonetheless, there [I]was[I] an effect, and it added to the enjoyment. You wouldn't watch a ham & eggs fight instead of an elite one just to see it in 3D, though.

jselth says:

It was certainly courageous for Montiel to get up from that knockdown, but when he stood and faced Referee Russell Mora, Mora made the "get the gloves up" gesture, and Montiel didn't move his arms. After a few seconds, Mora reached down for Montiel's gloves, pulled them up to his own shirt and wiped them off, then sent him back in to fight. It still took Montiel a few extra seconds to bring his gloves up before Donaire strafed him with the two punches that ended the fight. I was suprised Mora allowed the fight to continue when Montiel couldn't/wouldn't obey his instructions to get the gloves up. In any event, a wonderful KO punch by Donaire.

brownsugar says:

jselth,.. well said, Montiel was on back doing the moon-walk,.. as if he were in a waking dream. his face was serenely peaceful as if he hardly knew that he was in a fight. thankfull Mora was quick to wave it off once Donaire trapped him in the corner.