Hey, some of us LIKED that rendition of "Maggie's Farm" on the Grammys!

It was a slow week for quality mailbag material until after the Brandon Rios-Miguel Acosta fight, at which point a solid email came in. So let's start with that for our mini mailbag (or, as it was known a few web ventures ago, "I'm Raskin, You're Askin'"), then dive into some Rants.

(By the way, a quick reminder, if you have a question or comment for the mini mailbag, you can hit me up at RaskinBoxing@yahoo.com.)

Hey Eric,

I just got done watching Rios beat up Acosta. You were right that Rios isn't trying to be the bad guy, he was very reserved and likeable in his interview after the fight, and I, for one, think he can make everyone forget all about that "shaky" Roach impression if he keeps going like this. It's been a long time since I've seen cojones like Rios showed, since it looked like he had no shot at winning after three or four rounds. When was the last time we've seen a young fighter dig that deep to win a big fight? And in light of what happened in the Marcos Maidana-Victor Ortiz fight, could Rios have done anything more perfect to distance himself from his bitter rival?

What a performance, what a win, "Bam Bam" thank you, man! Insensitive Freddie Roach impression or not, I'm rooting for this guy.

Thanks for your time,

Smackie

Hi Smackie,

Smackie? Where the heck do you get a nickname like that? If it's either drug-related or you earned it by beating your wife, I guess I don't want to know.

Your observation about Ortiz is a good one. Rios and manager Cameron Dunkin have very real disdain for Ortiz, they'll talk trash about him with no provocation whatsoever, and they especially like telling stories of how his behavior in the gym over the years made his surrender against Maidana entirely predictable.

And speaking of Maidana, you don't have to go back far at all to find a young fighter who showed cojones like Rios did. Amir Khan looked like a beaten man in the 10th round against Maidana last December and found a way to win. But your point is well taken. Whereas Khan knew he was in a position to win if he survived Maidana's assault, Rios' mission was starting to feel almost hopeless after four rounds. And that says very good things indeed about Rios, that it looked hopeless to the outside observer but never did to him.

Okay, let's get to the Rants, starting with a few more Rios-Acosta observations:

• My favorite random little moment from the fight was Rios trainer Robert Garcia giving himself a quick squirt from the water bottle in between the seventh and eighth rounds. Hey, a trainer has to stay hydrated too, I suppose.

• Rios-Acosta was a perfect example of why I don't bet on boxing. When Steve Albert and Al Bernstein explained that Rios was a 2-1 favorite in what I perceived to be a pick-'em fight, I was wishing I was in Vegas so I could jump all over that. Ten rounds later, I was delighted to be anywhere but Vegas.

• Just one minor criticism for Rios: The primal victory scream has got to go. Bob Dylan's present-day live vocals are easier on the ears than that.

• Speaking of famous singers, I thought Cyndi Lauper held her own nicely against Antonio DeMarco in the Rios-Acosta co-feature.

• Also, a fine job by Fred Rogers alongside Brian Kenny on the ESPN2 *Friday Nights Fights* studio this weekend. Yes, Bernard Hopkins, I will be your neighbor.

• According to *FNF's* Joe Tessitore, former 105-pound titlist Roberto Leyva threw his IBF belt in the ocean as a tribute to his late father, a fisherman who was lost at sea. Ladies and gentlemen, I have a new favorite fighter! Hopefully this can develop into a competition for which titlist can find the most creative way to dispose of his bogus alphabet trinket. I won't be satisfied until there's a belt tossed into the mouth of an active volcano.

• While on the subject of Leyva, what does it say about a guy when he looks chubby at bantamweight?

• I caught wind of an intriguing rumor last week that there was a conflict between Freddie Roach's reality-show deal with AMC and the Showtime/CBS *Fight Camp 360* series and that we might not see Roach on the latter, but it turns out it was untrue—or at least had become untrue by the time I asked a Showtime rep about it. "The rumors are false," I was told. "There are guidelines that both networks have discussed and agreed to, and Freddie Roach will appear on *Fight Camp 360*
on Showtime and CBS."

• If you thought the world of pay-per-view had bottomed out with Evander Holyfield vs. Sherman Williams, think again: Coming up March 11, it's Michael Grant vs. Tye Fields on pay-per-view! If that sells more than two dozen PPVs, government leaders should take it as a sign that the American public is not quite broke enough yet.

• Happy belated 34th birthday to Floyd Mayweather! Hey, remember when Roy Jones was 34, still on top of the world, and picking and choosing the fights he knew he could win? How did that turn out? Just sayin', Floyd, the window to take the toughest fights and actually win them doesn't stay open forever.

• I have to disagree with anyone who has opined that there's a double standard in play in HBO turning down Sergio Martinez vs. Sebastian Zbik but approving Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. vs. Zbik. Martinez-Zbik is a mismatch, whereas Chavez-Zbik is roughly an even fight. Martinez is the middleweight champion of the world and a top-five pound-for-pounder who should only face elite opponents; Chavez is little more than a prospect and should still face non-elite opponents. It's not a double standard. It's simple matchmaking logic.

• Let's wrap up Raskin's Rants with Raskin's Recommendations: The Adam Carolla Show (http://www.adamcarolla.com/ACPBlog/category/podcast/) featured Amir Khan last Thursday and is definitely worth checking out, as long as you're prepared for Carolla to annoy you at times with his casual-fan level of knowledge of the current boxing landscape; perhaps I'm a little late to this party, but I'm finding the opinionated musings of Carlos Acevedo in his "Sound & Fury" column (www.TheCruelestSport.com) to be some of the most entertaining boxing blogging out there (at least until he starts ragging on me); and, of course, there's a little podcast called Ring Theory (http://ringtheory.podbean.com/) that several inside sources have told me is the greatest thing in the history of boxing journalism. I guess maybe I'll check it out one of these days and see if they're right.

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Comment on this article

the Roast says:

Cyndi Lauper, that is funny! The Roast knows funny. That fight was so bad I hope we never see DeMarco or Lauper ever again. I hope Floyd reads TSS and takes that advice. Tick tock is more

than just a song from another colorful singer. Time keeps on slippin Moneyman. Even the greatest fighters of all time end up face down or knocked on their ass by someone they would have schooled. Go over to Dancing With the Stars and ask Sugar Ray about the Terry Norris fight or worse yet Hector Camacho. Know your history pal or you will repeat it.

Isaiah says:

Hey everybody! Just wanted to let you all know I'm still alive. Anyway... tick tock, tick, tock.... Mayweather. The sands in the hour glass are running down. Your boxing ability and reflexes won't be good enough forever. I truly believe Manny Pacquiao has your number. Will you ever MAN UP, stop with the excuses and let us find out? Even Sugar Ray Robinson wasn't the same at 35 as he was at 25 and believe me Floyd, you are no Ray Robinson. At 34 years of age and WAY TOO MUCH inactivity, NOW is the time to strike. This amount of money won't be around forever. It's 2011 or bust.

brownsugar says:

welcome back Isaiah ...you Floyd hatin' mutha..... just kidding. ...If I could compare Rios to anyone, it would be the incredibly tough and durable Ray Boom Boom Mancini... I believe he'll make a deep dent in the world of boxing over the next few years but there's a modern day version of Arguelo or Livinston Bramble just waiting for him around the corner... that's when strength, guts and heart fails in the unmerciful face of cold, harsh, technical professionalism... the sweet science you might say.... Just caught a video of his coach (former champ)Garcia losing his title to Corrales... Garcia had great skills but he fought with his heart in that war and went out like a warrior in 6. What ever happens with Rios it's guaranteed to be an exciting time for boxing and fans alike.

the Roast says:

B-Sug, surely you jest. Ray Mancini Has got to be one of the most overrated champions of all time. He was a made for TV white boy, face first brawler. He had a great back story with his father being a fighter and WW2 vet. If he wasnt white with that story he would have never got a title shot. He never beat anyone. Bobby Chacon was 50 years old when the fought. Jose Luis Ramirez was his best win. I never liked that dude as you can tell. Ricky Hatton laughs at Boom Boom's boxing skill!

Radam G says:

Wow! The Roast is gettin on his toast. That's cold, man. Ray Mancini was aight! He worked his arse off, even though he couldn't hit teeny Radam with a bucket of buckshots. He was one of my idols and we're still boys. I luv me some "Boom, Boom!" And he'd never take advantage of an old man. Bobby "The School Boy" Chacon was a few days short of 50 years old. Hehehehehe! And dat cat was a spicy, nasty, old sneaky dude, who would spit in your eye, knee your knee with his knee and whisper "Chicano Power" in one of your ears, while busting you upside da noggin and trying to burst your eyedrum by thumbing you in the ear hole. WHAT DA DOUBLE FUDGE! Chacon was part Native American, so he claimed, anyway, and loved

war drumming. That is the drums inside the ears on the sides of his opponents' noggins. Chacon and Sonny "The Night Train" Liston probably have the record for bursting the most opponents' eyedrums. Holla!

brownsugar says:

Ha ha ha ha....LOL,.. you got me Roast LOL..!! ha ha haaaa.

brownsugar says:

at least Radam G was a bit more respectful in his appraisal....lol..

the Roast says:

Maybe I was a little harsh on Boom squared but he was a lucky MFer. Title shot vs Art Frias? Lucky. Young Roast was jumping around the living room when Alexis whupped that ass. He hit Ray so hard right in the heart, I'm gonna have to go to the youtube later and watch that. Bobby Chacon was a real bad ass. I missed his prime but he was awesome on Sportsworld vs Boza Edwards and Bazooka Limon. That was some bangin. Damn I miss Tim Ryan and Gil Clancey.

the Roast says:

I'm mixing up my memories. Ryan and Clancey were on CBS and Ferdie and Marv Albert were on Sportsworld.

brownsugar says:

yeah I guess we were partial to Boom Boom because he was from Youngstown,.. just a stones throw from the home of the Buckeyes... we ate up the part when they put the camera on his WWII Veteran Father,... (could have sworn he was wearing his purple heart)... yep a War Hero and a champion... plus the fallen champ Harry Arroyo on the side lines letting us know he was passing the torch and his blessings onto Ray Boom Boom Manicini himself... the build up to the fight was almost as spiritual as going to church... How sad it was to see him get schooled, demolished and outclassed by Arguello,.. it was like Ohio had just ran fresh out of boxing heroes... we had to wait until uprising of Buster Douglas a decade later. lol..

the Roast says:

Wasnt Boom Boom before Arroyo?