

Written by Eric Raskin
Monday, 06 June 2011 14:47



For this week's one-toe dip into the mailbag waters, I'm using an email sent not about last week's column, but about last week's Ring Theory podcast. Some quick background for those who haven't heard the show: We played the Fight Camp 360 clip of Shane Mosley trying to quit and Naazim Richardson trying to talk him out of it, and answered a listener's question about whether Richardson was right to do that. My co-host Bill Dettloff and I agreed that Richardson was just doing his job, that he was right to at least attempt to motivate his fighter in that instance. Now that you know that, here's the email:

Hey Eric,

Written by Eric Raskin
Monday, 06 June 2011 14:47

Enjoyed the show as usual, one comment I have to make: If you watched that clip of Shane saying he wanted to quit during the Pacquiao fight and couldn't see what a bad state he was in, I think, no offense, you may be in denial. I'm not talking about Naazim's decision to not stop the fight, I'm talking about the fact that so many knowledgeable boxing people were in such a freak-out over Shane's "lack of effort." He was clinging on by his fingernails. Arum was pissed off because Shane didn't sacrifice himself for the sake of Manny's fans.

He took a spoon to a gun fight and did everything he could to survive. If you thought Shane could have stood and punched with Pac, then you obviously think Shane's last two fights were anomalies? He clocked Floyd twice and, within that very same round, Floyd had turned it around and for every second onward Shane looked COMPLETELY defanged. Shane can't pull the trigger. Against Mora he'd have him against the ropes and STILL couldn't properly throw meaningful shots. Difference there was he could survive in the pocket against Mora even without having any real offense. He didn't have that luxury with Pacquiao.

Anyway, hopefully the dude retires. Keep up the great work on the show. Damn, you guys can babble on.

—Ponch

Hey Ponch,

I agree with the great majority of what you've written. I concur that Mosley's "lack of effort" was unsurprising, and as Bill and I discussed on the previous episode of Ring Theory, Arum deserved more blame for making the fight than Shane did for performing horribly. We said going in that we thought Mosley was a shot fighter (or very close to it), that he couldn't pull the trigger, that the fight was a complete mismatch. I like your phrasing—"he took a spoon to a gun fight." That sums it up.

So there's no disagreement on any of that. Where I don't see eye to eye with you is on the subject of how bad of a state Mosley was in late in the fight. He had been mentally defeated. He had long since abandoned any hope of winning. But he wasn't taking a harsh physical beating. His survivalist approach was preventing him from getting brutalized the way Antonio Margarito and Miguel Cotto did against Pacquiao. Mosley was taking punches, surely, but he wanted out because he had developed blisters that were bothering him, he knew he wasn't going to win, and like many fighters do when they get old (think Julio Cesar Chavez, for example), he permitted himself to look for an escape hatch, something he never would have done in his prime. Richardson was apparently delusional about whether his fighter could possibly execute the game plan and turn the fight around. But he was correct in his assessment that Mosley wasn't in particular physical danger and that he'd spend years regretting it if he quit. Maybe a truly compassionate trainer would have tried to cover up any evidence of Mosley trying to quit and would have stopped the fight himself, making it seem like he did so against the fighter's will. But that would have been tough for Richardson to pull off. The cameras see everything nowadays.

I stand by what I said on the show: Naazim was correct to try to motivate Mosley to finish

Written by Eric Raskin
Monday, 06 June 2011 14:47

strong. If Mosley had a fractured orbital bone and detached retina, like Margarito did, or appeared to be concussed and in a fog, it would have been another story. But Sugar Shane was quitting because he'd had the will beaten out of him. Part of a trainer's job is to attempt, at least for a few moments, to restore that will.

Now, let's get to the Rants, covering all of this past weekend's action, some news items, and, as always, shameless plugs for the only podcast in boxing so entertaining that people are willing to pay for it:

- Just when I thought it was impossible to find anything bad to say about Glen Johnson, he shows up for the Carl Froch fight dressed in Miami Heat gear. Inside scoop: Johnson actually had a tryout with the Heat a few years back, but he didn't make the team because it was just too inconvenient to stop the game after each possession so the towel boy could wipe pools of sweat off the court.
- Because I can't listen to Gus Johnson call a fight without criticizing his ineptitude: In the third round, he screamed that Froch was hurt (which he wasn't), then observed that Froch was tired (which he wasn't). New rule for Gus: Don't attempt to infer. Nothing good can come of it.
- As everybody knows, I'm a huge fan of Antonio Tarver as a commentator, but he's not exempt from my wrath either. In the eighth round, Tarver bellowed, "Did somebody say Fight of the Year?" No, Antonio, nobody said that. Nobody even thought it. Not unless they were watching Hernan Marquez-Luis Concepcion or perhaps Victor Ortiz-Andre Berto.
- And guest analyst Andre Ward gets some abuse too, in the form of a simple linguistic nitpick: Questions don't get "axed," Andre. They get "asked." Only Bernard Hopkins gets to pronounce it that way, because "The Executioner" can play it off as an attempt at a pun.
- As referee catch phrases go, Earl Brown's "Gentlemen, let's do it" is perhaps the least annoying I've ever heard. As such, he can kiss any hope of getting into the Hall of Fame goodbye.
- Solid win for Mikkel Kessler over the weekend, but I'm saying it right now: Lucian Bute massacres him.
- What, you don't trust my ability to predict outcomes? Allow me to quote myself, on last week's Ring Theory, regarding the Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.-Sebastian Zbik fight: "This feels like a fairly even fight to me. Chavez isn't as bad as his critics would have you believe, but he isn't all that good either, if that makes sense. And Zbik is right in the same vicinity, in terms of how ordinary his talent is. So I expect a close fight, but if it's close, it goes to Chavez. I mean, there's no way he loses a decision if there's any way at all to give it to him. So I like Chavez on points, but I think it could be a bit of a controversial decision." (And for what it's worth, I also had Kessler by knockout, Froch by decision, Mikey Garcia by knockout, and Yudel Jhonson by decision. Total amount of money won betting on those results: \$0.)
- Back to Kessler vs. Mehdi Bouadla: Penalizing a guy for spitting out the mouthpiece is all well

Written by Eric Raskin
Monday, 06 June 2011 14:47

and good, but these refs need to start doing it after the round has ended. Otherwise, you're rewarding a man for spitting it out by giving him exactly what he was looking for: extra time to recover.

- Good work by Showtime, giving us that shot of Kessler's bloody right hand after the fight. Too bad Christy Martin trumped them with the tweeted photo of her even more hideous broken hand. Christy is nothing if not squint-and-wince-worthy.
- Hard to ask for much more than that from Mikey Garcia, huh? His first HBO appearance was a tad underwhelming, but his second most definitely was not.
- I'm not a cruiserweight or light heavyweight looking to pad my record with a legendary name, but I'm going to pick a fight with Roy Jones anyway. At the end of Saturday's HBO telecast, Jones disputed Max Kellerman's claim that Chavez is "not the champion of anything except for that sanctioning body." Jones said, "Tonight, [Chavez] goes down as the world middleweight champion, so he is a world champion." First, let's point out that fighters are not necessarily unbiased with regard to this issue; in this case, Jones has to call Chavez a "world champion," or else Jones was never a "world heavyweight champion" by virtue of defeating John Ruiz when Lennox Lewis was the actual champion. Here's the thing, Roy: If you want to call Chavez "a world champion" instead of a "titlist," the term that I prefer, well, that's a matter of semantics and not something I'm going to wage war over. But when you use "the" instead of "a," and you call Chavez "the world champion," it's flat-out wrong. "The" means there's only one, and if you think Chavez is "the champ," it means you think Sergio Martinez isn't. So as far as I'm concerned, on Saturday night Roy Jones declared Martinez a mere contender to Chavez's legitimate middleweight crown.
- You thought it was dangerous to mess with 46-year-old boxers from Philly? Turns out they've got nothing on 67-year-old female pop singers from Philly. Classy move there, Patti LaBelle. Common folk can't go around thinking it's okay to talk harmlessly on their cell phones within a few feet of your limo; you have to nip a problem like that in the bud.
- The latest proof that life isn't fair: Cancer stricken Genaro Hernandez is in the final couple of weeks of his life at age 45. Here's hoping for a peaceful end for one of the most genuine, likeable people I've met in my time on the boxing beat.
- It seems everyone in boxing is "the fighting pride of" wherever they're from. Just once, I want to see a crappy fighter introduced as "the fighting shame of" wherever they're from.
- I interviewed Kathy Duva for my main TSS column this week, and we were talking about boxing families worthy of being on reality-TV shows when she gave me this priceless quote: "The Judahs beat the Mayweathers on crazy. It's not even close."
- As promised, here's your formal plug for Ring Theory (<http://ringtheory.podbean.com>), and I'm keeping it short and sweet: I think last week's episode was probably our best yet. If they get any better than this, Ring Theory is moving off the "want" list and onto the "need" list with food, clothing, and shelter.

RASKIN'S RANTS: Naazim Richardson, Patti LaBelle & Other Great Fight Motivators

Written by Eric Raskin

Monday, 06 June 2011 14:47

Eric Raskin can be contacted at RaskinBoxing@yahoo.com. You can follow him on Twitter @EricRaskin and listen to new episodes of his podcast, Ring Theory, at <http://ringtheory.podbean.com>