

"The Fight Game" Recap: Manny Testing, Love For Steward, More

Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 25 October 2013 20:27



A half-hour flurry of fact, opinion and insight unfolded on the Oct. 25, 2013 edition of Jim Lampley's "The Fight Game," on HBO.

Lampley led off with a look at Ruslan Provodnikov, the Siberian gangsta who broke down Mike Alvarado last Saturday night, on HBO, in California. Lampley correctly noted that Provo was the B side to Alvie, but by round eight, the worm totally turned, and the hometown hero was sent twice to the mat in that frame. He called Alvarado's decision not to continue to round 11 "intelligent," for the record.

We saw Provo and sub trainer Marvin Somodio, in a photo, doing Face Time with Freddie Roach after the win. Maybe next for Provo is a sequel with Tim Bradley, Lampley said, but Bradley "defied doubts" to get the better of Juan Manuel Marquez. Lampley threw an uppercut at Marquez and trainer Nacho Beristain, for whining after close losses, as they did after the Bradley loss. Be like Manny, Lampley extolled, and to Marquez, he suggested he take a loss like a man.

Lampley surged into the issue of PED usage, and the testing scene, in the fight game. Andre Ward didn't do VADA testing, Lampley said, because Nov. 16 foe Edwin Rodriguez sought VADA testing for "publicity" purposes. We didn't hear how Ward came to that determination. Lampley then welcomed VADA founder and head Dr. Margaret Goodman to the show. She said she wasn't sure if VADA would be able to stay afloat during the entities' two year existence, especially when Lamont Peterson and Andre Berto tested positive while VADA screened them. She was asked about Victor Conte's relationship with VADA; she said Conte has only sent athletes to do screening via VADA, and sponsored their testing protocol. She said she thinks Conte, the notorious BALCO boss, is now on the side of good. VADA has no ties, and acts on their own authority, she noted. Lampley brought up the Nevada Commission's decision to not go with VADA for testing. She expressed disappointment that the commission, for whom she worked for many years, didn't go outside their own sphere to handle an anti-doping program. She likes her protocol more than any other for its stringency.

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Manny Pacquiao and Brandon Rios are using VADA for their Nov. 23 fight, and Goodman thinks Manny's testing for this fight will be the strictest he's ever experienced, she said, in closing.

Lampley next touched on Vasyl Lomachenko, the Ukrainian with a 395-1 amateur record, who debuted two weeks ago for Top Rank. We saw Loma's skill against Jose Luis Ramirez, and his KO shot in round four. Next? A title crack against Orlando Salido, the host said.

Lampley touched on HBO's upcoming fare, a jam-packed schedule to delight fight fans in November.

Max Kellerman joined Lampley via a remote shot. He said Lomachenko was immensely impressive in his debut, and he's not sure Salido can go into the late rounds with Loma. "Can Salido stick around? Lomachenko is devastating," Max enthused.

Lampley said that Gary Russell is the No. 1 contender for that Salido belt, the WBO feather version, but he referred to the talented Russell's resume as "comical." That would be a fine fight, but he'd love to see Loma-Rigo more.

The return of Miguel Cotto was touched upon. Is he all the way back? Delvin Rodriguez wasn't of the caliber to prove that...but Cotto hasn't looked this good in eons, Max said. How about Cotto vs. Sergio Martinez, or a rematch with Floyd, he said. If Cotto loses to Sergio, no sweat, go back to 154 and beat a Delvin type, and then get a megafight at 154. "He's must see TV again," Max said.

Cotto-Martinez, who's the favorite? Sergio, Max said. He's mobile and a sneaky puncher and Cotto's not a real middleweight. Wladimir Klitschko's clinching and resting was no fun to watch, Lampley said. Max said warnings should have been rendered, and then points should have been taken, and if it continued, he should have been DQ'd. He looked like John Ruiz, he said.

Is there a beef between Brandon Rios and Max, Lampley asked. Max said he texted Rios after

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he saw a video of Rios cursing out Max, for not believing in him. Brandon said he wasn't singling out Max and they hugged it out via text, Kellerman stated.

Lampley dropped Wlad from his pound for pound top five, for his "ugly tactics" versus Povetkin and Vitali is out too, because he's headed to politics full-time. Floyd is No. 1, Lampley said, and he will likely meet Amir Khan next, as a beyond prohibitive favorite. Andre Ward is No. 2, and Lampley expects no layoff dropoff. Sergio Martinez is No. 3, and Gennady Golovkin is No. 4. Tim Bradley came next on the Lamps list.

The death of Mexican Franky Leal, age 26, was discussed. That reminds us, Lampley said, that most boxers campaign off big stages, and take huge risks. He sent heartfelt condolences to his family.

Provo topped "The Gatti List." Leo Santa Cruz came next. Sergey Kovalev followed. Adonis Stevenson came behind Kovalev. Manny Pacquiao returned to the list.

Lampley paid homage to Emanuel Steward, one year after his death. His legacy lives, Lampley said, as his students racked up and continue to notch wins after he left this plane. He said Manny lives on in Detroit, and "where-ever there is boxing, Emanuel Steward lives." Superbly summarised kicker, sir.

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Radam G says:

J-Lamp is da MAN with da PLAN! He's taking no jive. He is crushing and a alive. And now these crooks and bytches and weasels in da game don't want to give a HIGH FIVE!

Strut ON, J-Lamp! These shady and shifty characters are ready to jump over a ramp. Let 'em fall to their demise. On what you are doing, don't compromise. It is about time for someone to make a stance. And be not afraid. Holla!

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amayseng says:

I missed the show but hell of a write up to review it.

top 4 list of lb4lb is legit. bradley is not top 10, not with 2 losses gifted as wins.

Salido is a stud but he may have too many wars to hang with a fresh and overall better Loma.

All a sudden Rios, Who makes fun of the handicapped and challenged, is now sensitive to criticism. Rios is not morally correct let alone politically correct.

Rios may be on my personal list to fight behind the turtle Ellerbe.

I think Cotto vs MARTINEZ is a great matchup, even tho SM is fading, he may still have enough to stop cotto. Dont forget the power he showed against PWILL.

Floyd vs Khan is blah...

is there any chance for khan to get in the ring by January and have an impressive showing?

Im out

kidcanvas says:

good one jim.....

brownsugar says:

I want to see Leo Santa Cruz face a name I recognize. Like Donaire, Abrego, Rigondeaux, Mares or the guy who conquered Mares.

Klitschko could sell out an open air arena in Siberia...but next time get a ref who has the cojones to keep control in the ring.

Lomachenko will look better as he adapts to the pro style..and he will eventually punch harder.

Cotto vs anybody is good business but a healthy Sergio could reduce Cotto to a back peddling survivor if he gets his groove back.