Maurice Harris back in heavyweight picture

NEW YORK (July 20, 2011) – USBA heavyweight champion **Maurice** “Sugar Moe” **Harris**’ often tumultuous boxing career is back in a good place, after he redeemed himself last Saturday in Atlantic City, when he stopped
Derric
“The Shaolin Fist”
Rossy
in the 12th round at Resorts Casino Hotel.

Harris (25-15-2, 11 KOs) was coming off of a disappointing loss by third round to Tony “The Tiger” Thompson (36-2, 24 KOs) in May, shown live on ESPN *Friday Night Fights* in their IBF Box-Off.

Rossy (25-5, 14 KOs), rated No. 15 by the IBF, served as a litmus test for Harris, a 35-year-old whose major claim to fame is winning the 2002 Thunderbox Heavyweight Tournament, defeating Thompson in the $100,000 finale, as well as defeating world champion Sergei Liakhovich. The New Jersey fighter found himself at the crossroads once again, facing possible retirement if he lost to Rossy, the former Boston College football standout who had previously defeated WBO champion and 1988 Olympic gold-medal winner Ray Mercer (DEC12) and world title challenger Carl David Drummond (DEC10).

“I never looked at the fight like that,” Harris said, “only as another challenge, another fight. I don’t focus on something like that (in a career-ending fight) because I always need to focus on my opponent and our fight. I did show resiliency when I needed to win. It was a good win, one of my top five, but I was only about 70-percent of what I can really be. I hadn’t been 12 rounds since last August. I was still a little rusty. You can do that (12 rounds) in the gym but it’s not the same as in a fight. I did feel good going into the fight and afterwards.”

Harris dropped Rossy in the sixth, led by two rounds going into the 12th, and finished the show in impressive style. The veteran had worn-down Rossy and eventually trapped his tiring opponent on the ropes in the 12th, decking him again with a three-punch combination, an overhand right to the chin serving as an exclamation point. Rossy got to his feet but Harris moved in to finish him, backing Derec onto the ropes again, and unloading a four-punch combination against his defenseless opponent. Referee Earl Morton halted the action at 1:35 of the final round.

“This fight proved that Maurice’s last one was a fluke.” Harris’ promoter Mario Yagobi (Boxing 360) commented. “He couldn’t respond right after getting hit with so many illegal hits behind the head. I said that before this fight and still believed in Maurice. He was the stronger, bigger guy who showed a lot more skills than his opponent. Rossy came to win. He was in great shape, at 225 pounds, and had a six-pack stomach. Maurice showed his experience, dropping him the sixth, and finishing with a 12th round knockout. Rossy was banged up; his face had a lot of bruises and welts. From the eighth or ninth round, he looked like a beaten fighter.”

“The last two rounds were my strongest,” Harris noted. “I caught my second wind. I knew one good assault would close the deal. I hadn’t had a knockout in a long time (2002 vs. Liahkovich).

I thought I had him out in the sixth, but he stayed right in there until the last round. I hit him with some good combinations. He fell and got up, but I knew he was finished.

"The Thompson fight is still in the back of my head. We've both won once and I'd like a third fight to settle things. I won't get over it until we do. I wish him luck in his fights but, even if it's sparring, I want to fight him again. He didn't fight the best Maurice Harris but, then again, neither did Rossy."

Because Harris, rated No. 9 by the IBF, fought an optional defense against Rossy, Maurice has a mandatory coming up against a challenger to be determined. Chazz Witherspoon is the No. 1 rated IBF challenger, followed in order by Steve Collins, Cedric Boswell, Antonio Tarver and Michael Grant.

Other members of Boxing 360's stable include WBC #5 super bantamweight Leon "Hurry Up" Moore, former IBF super middleweight champion Alejandro "Naco" Berrio, unbeaten welterweight prospect Vitaliy "Demyan"Demyanenko WBC Caribbean & NY State super middleweight champion Lennox "2 Sharpe" Allen, Dominican lightweight champion Eudy "AK47" Bernardo, KO king Tyrone Brunson, heavyweight Mike Mollo, unbeaten NABF featherweight champion Amanda "The Real Deal" Serrano, Nick "Hands of Gold" Casal, middleweight prospect DonYil Livingston, Joel Diaz Jr., and "King"David Estrada.

Go to www.Boxing360.com for more information about Harris, Boxing 360 or any of its other

fighters.