

Tyson/Douglas bout nearly another boxing travesty

If you remember last week, I devised a foolproof method for tuning out annoying commentators. I should have mentioned to boxing fans that this method also proves very effective for has-been fighters who retire at will and attempt to to hide their ignorance by impersonating a boxing analyst.

So, last Saturday, after drowning out Ray Leonard's attempt to sound more intelligent that he actually is (*I used to love her/But I had to kill her*), HBO, believe it or not, had televised a very watchable, but unlistenable fight.

But who would have thought that prior to the opening bell?

Never mind that this was a bout that was so unhyped that it wasn't even granted the privilege of bearing one of those extravagant labels often tagged onto championship fights.

In fact, this was a fight that would take place in Tokyo, because no one in their right mind would touch this one with a ten foot leather glove. Never mind that the odds on this one were 35-to-1, and that most money was not bet on whether or not Tyson would win, but in what round, the third or fourth, he would destroy James "Buster" Douglas.

As usually is the case anytime Tyson steps into the ring, boxing fans balk at the notion to run to the refrigerator and grab a cold beer during the first or second round for fear of missing Iron Mike drop yet another human punching bag to the canvas.

Surprise. On that fateful Saturday in the Far East, fans found themselves waiting eight or nine extra rounds before reaching for that long-awaited cold beer.

Chip Lupo



Barely a minute into the 10th round, Tyson faithfuls found themselves drowning their sorrows by way of many cold beers.

The rest is boxing history. No need to replay the fight for you. The bottom line is this: Buster Douglas is the champ. Pay no mind to what Don King, the WBA or WBC says, Douglas is the champ. The controversy? There is none. Douglas is the champ.

What really bothers me about this fight, and with boxing in general, is the way these fights are decided. Had Douglas not knocked out the former heavyweight champ, it is very conceivable that Tyson, swollen eye and all, would have still won the fight. The fact that Douglas battered Tyson around the ring for nine out of ten rounds would have been thrown out the window.

Tyson was the favorite. That alone would have been enough to award him the decision, according to the judges. The fact that Tyson is still somewhat of a novelty in Japan played into the judging, I assure you. One judge scored the bout in favor of Tyson, and another scored it a draw. One American judge saw the bout in Douglas' favor.

A draw. Sounds like a would-be classic case of Sugar Ray Syndrome.

For those of you who don't know by now, Sugar Ray

Syndrome is a condition where a fighter (usually a media darling or crowd favorite) gets his clock cleaned for the duration of a fight. Then once he regains his senses, he finds out that, through the graciousness of the judges, he won the fight. The victim, however, is the opponent who throws the most punches and does the least showboating.

Notable victims of this disease that's crippling the boxing industry are Marvin Hagler and Thomas Hearns.

There's a similar version of Sugar Ray Syndrome currently plaguing the IBF ranks. His name is Jorge Paez, current champion of one of those lighter weight divisions.

The story goes something like this: In a fight nearly two weeks ago, Paez goes up against, of all things, the current kickboxing champion of the world.

Paez, sporting an awful haircut with the infamous Batman logo engraved into his skull, gets knocked around like a pinball for twelve rounds. He does, however, manage a few cute dances in between rounds, much to the delight of the crowd. The crowd, in turn, influences the judges, and the rest is boxing travesty: Paez wins by a split decision.

Goes to show you that haircuts, dances, and P.R. stunts win boxing matches, not superior boxing skills.

Fortunately for Douglas, Tyson had little or no time for flagwaving. Had the fight rolled on for another seven and a half minutes, Douglas may very well have become yet another victim. Not a victim of Mike Tyson, but of the system.

In any event, Douglas is the champ. Now we can all sit back

and count the days until Robin Givens, on the demand of her money-hungry mother, latches onto Douglas and drags him to the altar.

It's got all the makings for my new talk show. I can see it now: "Materialistic, money-grubbing goldiggers who prey on unsuspecting boxing champions.....on the next Chip Lupo Show."

EXTRA POINT: I would just like to say that I have never been named Sportswriter of the Year. Do you think that if I whine loudly enough, that the people who give out the Sportswriter of the Year award, out of sympathy, would grant me such an honor, whether I deserve it or not?

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