



# THE ANGER OF ANDRE WARD

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# BOXING NEWS

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## YOU WANT SOME?

- TEAM EUBANK call out DeGale and co after latest adventure
- 'I AM NOT CRAZY!' – Snr exclusively explains why his son is the rightful king
- THE VERDICT from ringside and the screen – the whole event in review

*Plus* WHEN ALIENS INVADE WHY 'PLAYING' AT BOXING IS NOT ADVISED





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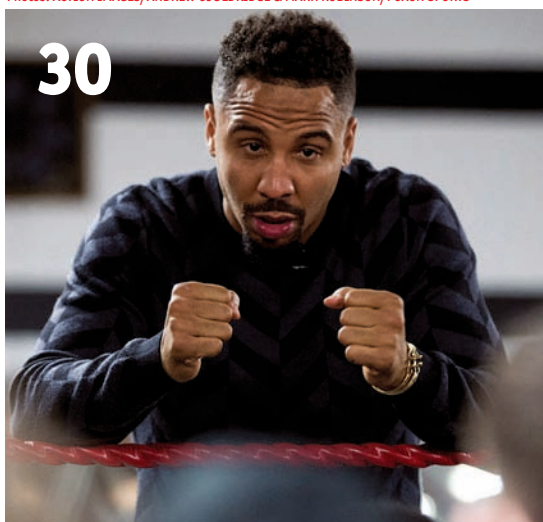
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Photos: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE & MARK ROBINSON/POXON SPORTS

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'MY FAVOURITE MEAL? I'M NOT GOING TO LIE, I DO LIKE FAST FOOD!'

Lee Redpath

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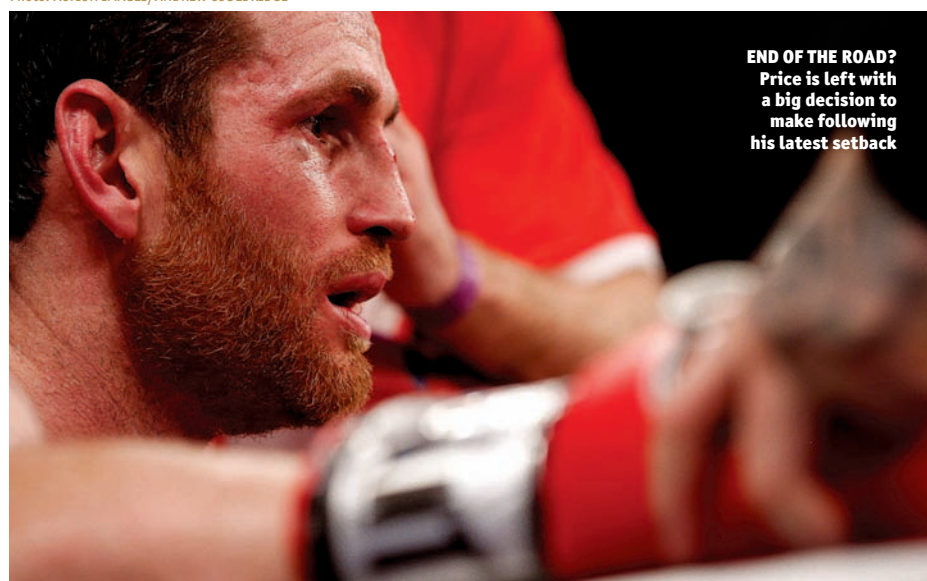
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# BOXING NEWS





Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



**END OF THE ROAD?**  
Price is left with a big decision to make following his latest setback



Cover photography  
MARK ROBINSON/  
POXON SPORTS

# THE PUNCH FROM HELL

The moment it started going wrong for Price should inadvertently lead to when it starts to go right



**Matt Christie**  
@MattCBoxingNews  
Editor

**T**HE turnaround was sudden, shocking, and irreversible. Few saw it coming, least of all David Price, who moments before was a world champion in the making. The Scouser had been tipped for the top by many fighters and experts; he had already claimed an Olympic bronze medal, and British and Commonwealth

titles in the professional ranks. And Tony Thompson – expected to be Price's 16th straight victim – was being handled confidently until he hurled a punch that landed behind the ear, and first wrecked David's equilibrium, then his career. Price did not recover. Not on the night when he rose on disobedient legs, not in the rematch when desperation ruined him, nor in any of the bouts he's had since.

The most recent of which illustrated in detail the extent of the heavyweight's problems. On Saturday night, against Christian Hammer – a fringe contender of limited skill – Price had the look of a beaten man, despite clearly having superior talent, long before he almost rescued victory with a right uppercut in the fifth round. As Hammer found his feet to comfortably beat the count,

any energy within the 33-year-old Englishman seemed to disappear immediately. And what followed, in the minutes before he was rescued by the referee in the seventh, was exceptionally hard to watch. The sense of inevitability about the finish was suffocating as Dave Coldwell, his talented trainer, hammered on the ring apron and screamed for his charge to perform as he'd seen him do behind closed doors. But out in the open, under the glare of the lights and numerous television cameras, Price gave in to the immense pressure – not the pressure from others or his opponent, but the pressure he puts on himself. Boxing is indeed the hardest game, but throw in a battle with your own mind, and it becomes an impossible fight.

The parallels to his rematch with Thompson were clear. Back then, Price had looked uneasy from the opening bell, as he overthought every punch he threw, and second, third and fourth guessed what might come back in return. He managed to score a knockdown then too, but the killer instinct that had previously accounted for the likes of Audley Harrison, Matt Skelton and Sam Sexton, had been replaced by anxiety. When Thompson regained his feet, Price effectively lost the fight. It later emerged that the American veteran had failed a drug test, just like Erkan Teper who, with a cocktail of PEDs in his system in 2015, knocked

out the Englishman in two rounds.

The fact his rivals had cheated gave him hope, but also provided yet more questions to analyse in the heat of battle. For Price, who has dedicated his life to boxing, it's time to take the pressure off, and it seems the only way to do that is to step away from the ring. Amicable and wise, Price deserves to be proud of himself, of his stance against drugs, and what he achieved as a clean athlete – he went further in his trade than the vast majority. Not only that, and this should be his grandest achievement, he repeatedly drew on

immense courage to face his fears. The consequences of those battles should not be deemed as failures, but as a realisation that his future lies elsewhere. Finding the right path in life is difficult, and Price should be applauded –

not ridiculed – for having the strength to keep picking himself back up.

The Liverpool star is among the most well-liked figures in the entire industry, whose skill, expertise and experience would be an asset for anyone, be it as a trainer, analyst or a mentor.

Boxing needs people like him in its corner. This should not be the end, and once the dust has settled, I'm certain it won't be.

For David Price, the future starts here.

**THROW IN  
A BATTLE WITH  
YOUR OWN MIND  
AND IT BECOMES  
IMPOSSIBLE**

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## Coming next time

● **SUDDENLY** boxing is everywhere. It's on our TV screens, on our phones, and we're being asked to pay for it more and more. How does this affect the sport in the long-term? Will fans keep paying at the door if they can stay at home? We investigate if the pay-per-view craze within boxing is an enemy, or friend.

● **WE** talk to one of the best fighters in the sport as he makes his welcome return. Meet Mikey Garcia, the talent who was almost forced out of boxing by its murky politics.

● **ADRIEN BRONER'S** next bout is previewed, while Lenny Daws' effort to win the European title will be reviewed.

● **AVAILABLE** to download via iTunes and Google Play from February 14, 2017, and the print edition is in stores on February 16, 2017.





# IT MAY SOUND CRAZY, BUT LET ME EXPLAIN

Photo: MARK ROBINSON/POXON SPORTS

**HIGHER THAN EVER BEFORE:**  
Eubank Snr says this photograph captures the happiest moment of his entire life



And I invite the *Boxing News* readers to tell me where I am wrong

I



**Chris Eubank Snr**

**Ex-two-weight world champion**

REALISED on Saturday night, as I celebrated with my son, that I had never before been truly happy at any point in my life. When I won the world title for the first time, the novelty wore off after 12 hours, as I realised quickly I had created a work schedule

for myself by winning. Already, having that WBO title meant nothing, so from that point, up until I lost in 1995, true enjoyment and appreciation was impossible because of work – even though everyone else was enjoying it.

So when Junior won the title it was the first time I was truly happy. It wasn't about me, it was about what my son had achieved, and

I have never been happier, never been so elated, so delighted.

The IBO world super-middleweight title is the most important championship of them all. Now that may sound crazy to the readers, but let me justify. What you will notice over the next two or three months is that no other sanctioning body at super-middleweight will be given more coverage in the media, than Chris Eubank Jnr's IBO world championship.

What makes me think this? The IBO have been criticised less than the WBO were criticised when I held that title. That criticism made me a superstar. Controversy, and that's how it works. You have many champions who are not spoken about because they are allowing the belts to carry them; Junior will never allow the belt to carry him, he will carry the belt. Champions make belts, belts don't make champions. So the more people criticise the belt, the bigger it becomes. We are seeking the other belt-holders, we are going to take

the other belts. Who else is saying that? You will not find another champion who is as enthusiastic for domination as the IBO world champion. That is why the IBO is the most important of them all, and I invite anyone of reasonable intelligence to come back at me, *Boxing News* readers, to tell me where I'm wrong.

There is only one world champion, and it is the one who is making the biggest noise, the one who is calling all the others out. In a nutshell, the other champions who will not come forward and fight, and accept our challenges, their organisations are being put to shame. Anyone can criticise us, but what should not be criticised is the fact we are asking to take on the other champions. We are asking them to bring their belts, and if they will not, that exposes the meaning of their belts, and their claim to be 'world' champion.

Junior beat Quinlan comfortably because he trains like a maniac, and it is all to do with the work ethic he has exhibited over the

last 10 years, and his DNA. It all makes him the superior champion and anyone who disagrees should call upon the other title holders to come forward. What are they going to do about it? Also consider this: Someone challenging Junior will get more money because it is on ITV, it's on pay-per-view, so the deals will be better, than dealing with the promoters of old. If you want a better percentage of your purse, come to us. Protect your rights, no one should own them but you. We have the new money platform in ITV, everything we have been working towards is now happening.

Junior does not have to play second fiddle to anyone, he is own man. No one is in front of him. I am not in front of him, but what I will do, and what I have always done, is protect his rights, as I will do for any fighter that I look after. The reason I do that is because I have been a fighter. I have felt that pressure, and I could not be as elated as I am right now, and be the person I am right now, if I had not emerged from that pressure.





TWEETS

@CHRISEUBANKJR

Big shout out to everyone that supported the event last night, and big respect to Renold Quinlan, who showed the heart of a true champion.

CHRIS EUBANK  
JNR thanks his fans after dominating an overmatched Renold Quinlan.

@JAMIECOXPRO

You want a fight @ChrisEubankJr? I'm 21-0, let's go. No novice here. Unbeaten super-middleweight JAMIE COX calls out Eubank.

@

MARTINMURRAYBOX

Congrats on the win @ChrisEubankJr. You know where I am if you want a REAL fight.

Four-time world title challenger MARTIN MURRAY, who recently dropped back to middleweight from 168lbs, also throws his name into the mix for a fight with Eubank.

@DAVIDCOLDWELL

Absolutely gutted we lost tonight. But the bigger picture is that @DavidPrice\_1 gets to go home to see his lovely family safe and sound.

Trainer DAVE COLDWELL puts things into perspective after his charge, David Price, suffers another devastating stoppage loss.

@

RIGOECHACAL305

Never give up on your dreams no matter how many things get in the way.

GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX keeps his spirits up after his next fight is scuppered due to the Miguel Cotto-James Kirkland show being cancelled.

LETTER OF THE WEEK

# THE CASE FOR NELSON AND DUKE

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ALEX MORTON



I RECENTLY wrote to Edward Brophy, the Executive Director of the International Boxing Hall of Fame, asking why Duke McKenzie and Johnny Nelson have not been considered for entry. He replied by saying that he would forward my letter to their screening committee for consideration. In my opinion, both of these boxers' records were outstanding. Nelson had 59 fights with 12 losses. He defended his world cruiserweight title 13 times, and was also a two-time British and European cruiser champion. McKenzie had 46 fights with seven losses. He was a world title-holder at three different weights - flyweight, bantamweight and super-bantam. He also held British (flyweight and featherweight) and European (flyweight) belts. I'm not sure how the nominations for inclusion in the IBHOF are conducted, but if there's any way the British Boxing Board of Control could assist in getting these fighters the recognition they deserve, I urge them to do so.

**Mervyn Gee, Paignton**

## LIKE GENTLEMEN OF YESTERYEAR

I MUST say what a refreshing change it was to see two men at the top of their game presenting themselves like gentlemen of yesteryear. Carl Frampton and Leo Santa Cruz take a bow. The two featherweights put on another great display in their rematch, and behaved impeccably both pre-fight and post-fight. I think a number of fighters should take notice of their behaviour and start to realise it's the fights that sell - not press conference violence.

**David Bourne, Burnopfield**

Photo: ACTION IMAGES



**CORONATION:**  
Nelson [right]  
stops Carl Thompson  
in March 1999 to  
win the WBC belt

## TIME FOR THE TRILOGY

WELL, Leo Santa Cruz did what he said he would by regaining his world featherweight title by defeating Carl Frampton on points in their rematch. Santa Cruz looked much more invigorated this time, and made good use of his long jab. It's always nice to see respect between fighters, both inside and outside the ring. Santa Cruz and Frampton were a perfect example of this. A third fight, this time in Belfast, would be the icing on the cake. These two fighters'

styles will always make for a great contest, and it'll always be tight.

**Patch Hammond, Norwich**

## MEXICAN SUPERFIGHT

ONE of the most interesting fights coming up is the Canelo Alvarez-Julio Cesar Chavez Jr matchup, which is scheduled for May 6 in Las Vegas. Despite his stop-start career, Julio is still a good fighter, but I believe Canelo will be too good for his fellow Mexican on the night.

**Ian Owen, Wallington**

## WE ASKED...



**PERFECT PAIR:**  
Joe [left] and Enzo  
Calzaghe celebrate  
yet another win



## WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE FATHER AND SON BOXING TEAM?



### CALLAN HEWITT

Enzo and Joe Calzaghe! Done it all together and retired with that 'O'!

### CHACHO RODRIGUEZ

Guty Espadas Snr and Jnr. Both were solid professionals who were overlooked because they didn't feel the need to be idiots for the sake of publicity.

### DIDS OLDHAM

Floyd and Tracy Harris Patterson. Great way to show your love for a

non-biological offspring. A two-time world champion guiding his adopted son to become a two-time world champion also.

### GENERIO SAYLO

Floyd Mayweather Jr and Snr.

### SHANE BOOSH

Muhammad Ali and his daughter, Laila. Two greats of the sport.

### DEAN BANKS

Enzo and Joe Calzaghe. Legends.





## HEAD-2-HEAD

### JAMES DeGALE VS CHRIS EUBANK JNR

Who wins this meeting of British super-middles?

#### BRAD CLARKE

DeGale schools Eubank. Eubank is aggressive but not a big puncher. DeGale is very slick and has boxed genuine world-class lads.

#### SCOTT McCALLUM

You've got to think DeGale can replicate what Billy Joe Saunders did during the first half of the fight, where he made Eubank look very crude. But can DeGale handle the intensity down the stretch? Great fight, but you've got to give the edge to DeGale in terms of proven ability.

#### DEAN WRIGHT

I like both boxers, but I think Eubank could be too strong and powerful for DeGale. Would be a good fight to watch, though.

#### DINNY MORZOD

DeGale is quality but overhyped – he lacks killer instinct, in my opinion. He's class, but very beatable. Eubank is more talented, tougher and nastier. Eubank on points. Great fight!

#### MARK ELLIOT

DeGale would have to fight for the whole 12 rounds against Eubank. This would be a classic – a hyper-aggressive, come-forward fighter like Eubank versus a great counter-puncher like DeGale. DeGale's mid-round inactivity may cost him a points win, though.

## THE PANEL

### WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE CHRIS EUBANK JNR FIGHT NEXT?



#### Peter Fury

*Respected coach*

He's a talented fighter, but he needs to back up what he's saying now. James DeGale, George Groves, these are fighters who would fight him. He needs a test now.



#### Carl Greaves

*Manager/trainer/promoter*

I'd like to see him have a rematch with Billy Joe Saunders. There's a lot of money there, a world title as well. I just think it's a great fight.



#### Kieran Farrell

*Ex-English 135lb title challenger*

It depends what weight he campaigns at. At middleweight, it should be Gennady Golovkin, but at super-middle, I'd like to see him fight James DeGale.



#### Rendall Munroe

*Former EBU 122lb titlist*

His dad says he wants him to make the most amount of money in the least amount of fights. I'm not sure he's ready for Gennady Golovkin, but he needs big fights now.

### IS THERE ANY WAY BACK FOR DAVID PRICE?

#### Peter Fury

*Respected coach*

There's a problem there, but God loves a trier, and he's tried everything he can. I think maybe he should look at punditry. He speaks well and has a lot of knowledge.

#### Carl Greaves

*Manager/trainer/promoter*

No, I think he should retire. It's sad to see, he's such a good bloke, but it doesn't look like pro boxing is suited to him. He's not had the success he had as an amateur.

#### Kieran Farrell

*Ex-English 135lb title challenger*

To be honest, I don't think there's a way back, not to the top anyway. He can obviously still fight professionally, but I don't think he'll get to the world titles that he wants.

#### Rendall Munroe

*Former EBU 122lb titlist*

It's a really difficult one for him. Does he just stick around for a bit of money or does he walk away? Personally, I don't think he'll carry on boxing, but he has a tough decision now.

**'HE SHOULD LOOK AT PUNDITRY.  
HE HAS A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE'**

## 10 COUNT

### LOTS OF GLOVE

Only 10 'world' title fights have ever taken place on Valentine's Day, writes Paul Wheeler

#### 1. JIMMY WILDE W RTD 12 JOE SYMONDS (1916)

Wales' Wilde claimed IBU flyweight honours in Covent Garden in his second win over Plymouth's Symonds.

#### 2. SUGAR RAY ROBINSON W RSF 13 JAKE LaMOTTA (1951)

Robinson battered old rival LaMotta to become middleweight champion in Chicago's St. Valentine's Day Massacre.

#### 3. JOSE NAPOLES W RSF 15 ERNIE LOPEZ (1970)

Cuban Napoles retained his WBC and WBA welter belts for a third time by halting L.A.'s Lopez in Inglewood.

#### 4. LUIS ESTABA W UD 15 LEO PALACIOS (1976)

In the second of 11 successful WBA light-flyweight title defences for Estaba, the Venezuelan triumphed in his home country.

#### 5. EUSEBIO PEDROZA W KO 13 PAT FORD (1981)

In his hometown of Panama City, Pedroza kept hold of his WBA featherweight strap for an 11th time after dominating Guyana's Ford.

#### 6. EVANDER HOLYFIELD W RSF 7 HENRY TILLMAN (1987)

Holyfield retained his WBA cruiser crown by hammering his 1984 US Olympic team-mate in Reno, Nevada.

#### 7. BUDDY MCGIRT W RSF 12 FRANKIE WARREN (1988)

Fighting in Warren's Texas backyard, New Yorker McGirt secured a revenge win, as well as the vacant IBF super-lightweight belt.

#### 8. ROBERT QUIROGA W UD 12 CARLOS MERCADO (1992)

Italy was the setting as Texan Quiroga made the fourth triumphant defence of his IBF super-flyweight title.

#### 9. NATE CAMPBELL W MD 12 ALI FUNEKA (2009)

Floridian Campbell lost his WBA, IBF and WBO lightweight straps on the scales, but won in his home state against South Africa's Funeka.

#### 10. CRISTOBAL CRUZ W UD 12 CYRIL THOMAS (2009)

On away turf in France, Mexico's Cruz successfully defended his IBF feather crown for the first time.



# THE WEEK

What's been going  
on in the boxing world  
over the last seven days

 **TRENDING** #EUBANKQUINLAN / #PARKERFURY / #BROOKCOTTO / #HAMMERPRICE

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



**BRING IT HOME:**  
Fury will have to  
travel for his  
title shot

## FURY'S TITLE SHOT

WEDNESDAY February 1, 2017

**JOSEPH PARKER** will defend his WBO heavyweight title against mandatory challenger **Hughie Fury** on April 1 in Auckland, New Zealand.

The fight goes to purse bids and Parker's promoters, Duco Events, won with a bid just north of \$3m. They will stage the fight in Parker's home country.

Due to the WBO's rulings on purse splits, Parker will receive \$1,806,600 (60 per cent) and Fury will get \$1,204,400 (40 per cent), before deductions.

Frank Warren, who was representing Fury, had hoped to get the fight in Manchester, though

unbeaten Hughie will have no hesitation about travelling for his chance.

According to the WBO, Warren's bid came in at \$2.8m.

As well as in the UK, the 22-year-old has fought in Canada, America, Romania and Monaco. His last outing came in April 2016 when he beat **Fred Kassi** on a technical decision in London.

"We know it's a serious challenge, we've got a lot of respect for Hughie," says Parker's trainer, Kevin Barry.

"He's a young guy who's getting better all the time and he will be looking to make a name for himself."

Parker won the vacant title when he defeated **Andy Ruiz Jr** in December.

## KIRKLAND PULLS OUT

THURSDAY February 2, 2017

**MIGUEL COTTO'S** next fight, which had been scheduled for February 25 in Texas, is cancelled. He was due to take on **James Kirkland** in what would have been Cotto's first fight back since losing the WBC middleweight title to **Canelo Alvarez** in November 2015.

After sitting out the entirety of 2016 Cotto has said that this will be his last year in boxing. It remains to be seen how missing out on this fight will disrupt his plans.

Kirkland has withdrawn from the fight, citing a fractured nose.

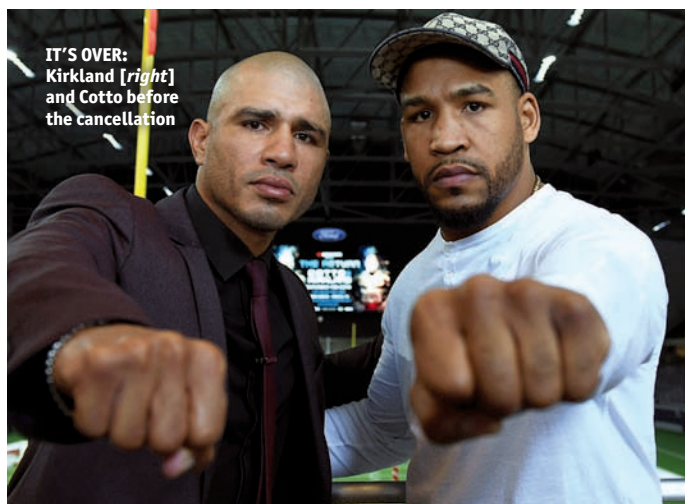
In a statement promoter Roc Nation said, "Roc Nation Sports today received notification from James Kirkland's team that Kirkland has suffered an injury which will force him to withdraw from his match against five-time world champion Miguel Cotto."

"The reported injury is a fractured nose."

"Unfortunately, the entire HBO pay-per-view show at Ford Center at The Star in Frisco, Texas is cancelled."

The cancellation triggers rumours about what the Puerto Rican will do now – with British duo **Kell Brook** and **Billy Joe Saunders** thought to be keen to face him.

Photo: STACEY VERBEEK



**IT'S OVER:**  
Kirkland [right]  
and Cotto before  
the cancellation

Photo: VASILY MAXIMOV/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



**GUILTY?**  
Povetkin's future  
is in the balance

## POVETKIN FACES BAN

FRIDAY February 3, 2017

VADA confirm that **Alexander Povetkin's** 'B' sample is positive, seven weeks after the Russian's December 17 WBC heavyweight eliminator with **Bernard Stiverne** was scrapped after ostarine was found in the Russian's system.

Povetkin's promoter, Andrey Ryabinsky, still proclaims his charge's innocence: "An American laboratory confirmed ostarine was found in Povetkin's 'B' sample. [But] The tests given in an independent

laboratory in Lausanne [Switzerland] are clean," he says.

When Povetkin tested positive for ostarine, the WBC withdrew their recognition of the bout, and **Johann Duhaupas** stepped in to fight Povetkin but was knocked out.

Povetkin also failed a test in May of last year, with his shot at WBC boss **Deontay Wilder** scuppered when he tested positive for meldonium. After an appeal process, Povetkin was ultimately cleared to box again but ordered to undergo strict testing for 12 months, at his own expense.



## “QUOTE OF THE WEEK”

# ‘I HAVE NOT SEEN SUCH A FAST AND GOOD HEAVYWEIGHT FOR A LONG TIME. HE WILL FIGHT FOR THE WORLD TITLE’

Former Muhammad Ali opponent, Juergen Blin, has high praise for new European heavyweight king, Agit Kabayel

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA



## NEW EBU HEAVY KING

SATURDAY February 4, 2017

UNBEATEN German, **Agit Kabayel**, is the new European heavyweight champion after beating Belgian **Herve Hubeaux** for the vacant title inside the Maritim Hotel in Magdeburg, Germany.

The 24-year-old is superior to his rival from the start. Hubeaux manages some success on the counter, but by the seventh, there is only one winner as Kabayel starts to dominate. The scores are 119-109, 117-111 and 117-112 in his favour.

"I have been training for this fight for so long," says Kabayel. "The European title is a great reward, and now I will go even further. The atmosphere was great, and my fans and supporters were great."

Hubeaux can now count himself among those fans, and turns up to the post-fight press conference wearing a Kabayel t-shirt.

"I made some mistakes," he admits. "Agit is the deserved winner. Congratulations!"

There is also high praise from former EBU champion, Juergen Blin, who held the title in 1972 after defeating Jose Manuel Urtain, before losing it to Joe Bugner. Blin also lost to Muhammad Ali.

"I have not seen such a fast and good heavyweight for a long time," Blin says of Kabayel. "He certainly has the potential to fight for the world championship in the next two years."

## LIVE ON CHANNEL 5

SUNDAY February 5, 2017

CYCLONE PROMOTIONS announce that Cardiff's undefeated **Craig Kennedy** will box Blackpool's former British and Commonwealth title challenger **Matty Askin** for the vacant British cruiserweight title at Motorpoint Arena Cardiff on Saturday March 11, with live television coverage from Channel 5. "This is a massive fight, a proper British title fight between two of the best cruiserweights in the UK," says Kennedy. "I've worked hard to get this shot and I'm going to do everything I can to win the British title on March 11."

Kennedy, 31, is 16-0 (8) and can boast victories over **Wadi Camacho** and **Joel Tambwe Djeko**, but is yet to meet anyone on Askin's level, who is coming off victories over previously unbeaten duo, **Simon Barclay** and **Tommy McCarthy**.

"I'm delighted to be fighting for the British title live on Channel 5," says the 28-year-old.

"I've not reached my potential yet as a pro but March 11 is going to be my time, I'm coming to Cardiff to win that belt and silence his fans."

Promoter Barry McGuigan adds: "This fight is a brilliant advert for the sport of boxing. Two respectful guys who, with the exception of WBC champion **Tony Bellew**, genuinely are the best in the land at their weight division."

## HANDHELD SCANNERS

MONDAY February 6, 2017

THE British and Irish Boxing Authority (BIBA) – an organisation formed from the Malta Boxing Commission's British division – announce the introduction of handheld scanners in an effort to detect bleeding on the brain.

BIBA have purchased two of the scanners at a cost of £12,000 each and plan to use them before and after fights, from February 22.

The British Boxing Board of Control have no immediate plans to introduce the technology, but do not rule it out in the future.

"We've looked into it and we're still looking into it," Robert Smith tells *Boxing News*. "We want to make sure they are accurate, and ensure the people using them are qualified to do so. We have asked many doctors, and received many opinions. Ultimately, it seems it is too early to tell if this technology will be suitable for boxing. We will continue to look into the possibility of implementing them because safety has been paramount to us for many years, and will continue to be so."

"Nobody has said to me that this is definitely the way to go, because at this time, it's just too early to say. In the future, after further research, they might be. It will be discussed in detail at our medical seminar in the summer."

Photo: MARK J REBILAS/USA TODAY SPORTS



## LOMA GETS NEW RIVAL

TUESDAY February 7, 2017

**VASYL LOMACHENKO** gets an opponent for his April 8 outing in the form of secondary WBA super-feather title-holder **Jason Sosa**.

The supremely talented Ukrainian has been scheduled to make his next appearance on that date by his promoter, Top Rank, and broadcaster HBO.

Fully-fledged WBA super-featherweight champion **Jezreel Corrales** was the desired opponent for Lomachenko but according to Bob Arum he "turned it down."

Attention then turned to Sosa, who needs no time to mull it over.

"Not even for a second. He didn't argue, at all. He's looking forward to the opportunity," his promoter, Russell Peltz, says. "I know that we're 20/1 but hey, listen, I'd rather be a 20/1 underdog than a 20/1 favourite. We'll have the best chance of anyone on April 8 of beating Lomachenko because we'll be in there."

Sosa is on a decent run of form, having stunned **Javier Fortuna** last year, before seeing off **Stephen Smith** in a barnstormer.

Lomachenko, meanwhile, is coming off of two emphatic early wins over **Roman Martinez** and **Nicholas Walters**. No venue is confirmed yet, though the MGM National Harbor in Oxon Hill, Maryland has been mooted.



Photo: ACTION IMAGES/LEE SMITH



**BEATING CAMACHO:**  
Chamberlain  
celebrates after his  
astounding victory

## ISAAC'S NEXT STEPS

Chamberlain  
has vacated  
the Southern  
Area title,  
writes  
George Gigney

UNBEATEN cruiserweight prospect **Isaac Chamberlain** is ready to push on after recovering from a shoulder injury he suffered in his last fight.

The popular Brixton man dislocated his shoulder while outpointing **Wadi Camacho** for the Southern Area title in one of the best British fights of last year.

Having brought in a specialist to aid his rehabilitation, Chamberlain is back in full training as he looks to resume his promising career.

"It's been great. I'm back punching properly, I've been sparring a lot as well, just trying to get confident again with the right hand," he told *Boxing News*.

"I just couldn't be denied. When you work so hard for something, you can't just quit at the first hurdle, otherwise everything just falls down the drain. Boxing is a hard game, you just have to carry on and push through."

Chamberlain's fight with Camacho – a former *Prizefighter* winner – was a marked step up in class for the 22-year-old. However he relishes the chance to prove himself against more seasoned opposition, and expects his career to continue in the same vein.

"Even the fight before that, **Russ**

**Henshaw** didn't stop coming. I knocked him down in the first round but he didn't stop coming. I cracked my rib two weeks before the right and he hit me there in the first round, I was gasping for air," he said. "So far, so good. I've gone straight into the deep end with these tough tests. These fights are bringing out the best in me and that's why I'm number eight in the country now. With only six fights, that's saying something. I'm just looking to prove myself. I've had these gut checks, being in the ring as a pro is

different to being in the ring as an amateur."

His next fight will be on March 17 when he headlines another show at York Hall in London. He recently vacated the Southern Area title

**'I NEED THAT  
MARVIN HAGLER  
MENTALITY, THAT  
MINDSET TO KEEP  
PUSHING ON'**

after the British Boxing Board of Control ordered a rematch with Camacho after an appeal from Wadi's team.

While an opponent has not yet been confirmed, Chamberlain will be boxing for a ranking with a world governing body. There was a chance he would appear on the **David Haye-Tony Bellew** card in London on March 4, though he is pleased to once again be topping a bill of his own.

"Before, at the time, I was so up for

being on the Haye-Bellew show but everything happens for a reason," he said.

"It'll come, as long as I keep winning. Even if I have to do it the hard way. Most prospects only have step-ups at 12, 13 fights and I'm there already. The cream always rises to the top. It's motivating, knowing that these other prospects get that treatment already, they get on the big shows, and I've got to work and work our way in. Just keep winning, keep grafting. That's the kind of mentality I have, work on my craft every day, watch boxing every day. Just carry on like that Marvin Hagler mentality, he didn't get his title shot until 50 fights in. Just keep that mindset, keep pushing, keep winning and they can't deny me.

"I'll get there soon, I just have to graft."

Chamberlain admits that the shoulder injury he suffered during the Camacho fight was actually a recurring problem from an incident a few weeks before the fight.

Though those issues are behind him, he continues to toil away in the gym to prevent further injuries and ensure he is in top condition for his next outing.

He said: "It's non-stop, it's really hard. Every day you're putting in 100 per cent and sometimes you don't feel up to it because you've been in the work the day before, and the day before that, and the week before that. I believe it will pay off. It has to."



# SMITH-DIRRELL AT ANFIELD?

Callum could get world title shot at Liverpool FC's ground, writes George Gigney

**CALLUM SMITH** could see his shot at the vacant WBC world super-middleweight title against **Anthony Dirrell** land at Anfield, home of Liverpool Football Club.

Merseysider Smith has been mandatory challenger for the title since April of last year and was expected to fight the **James DeGale-Badou Jack** winner.

Jack vacated his title after drawing with DeGale, setting up a fight with former champion Dirrell, who is the next available contender in line.

"It's looking like it'll go to purse bids, which are on February 17. I'm not sure we'll come to a deal before then. Dirrell is backed by [AI] Haymon, and the last time we went up against Haymon for a Dirrell fight we got spanked. We bid two million [dollars] and they came in with about three, so we'll see what happens," Eddie Hearn, Smith's promoter, told *Boxing News*.

He is referring to DeGale's fight with **Andre Dirrell**, Anthony's brother, in 2015 for the vacant IBF title. Dirrell's team won the purse bids, meaning DeGale had to travel to America for his chance – though he still prevailed.

Should he win this round of bids, Hearn would like to bring the fight to

Smith's hometown of Liverpool.

He said: "I'd like to do it at Anfield, I think it's possible and that'd be huge. Either way, Callum's got his shot and that's what's important."

One fight that looks set to avoid going to purse bids is **Kell Brook's** mandated IBF welterweight title defence against **Errol Spence**. Negotiations were originally supposed to go to bids earlier this week on Tuesday, however the IBF confirmed to us that they granted the two teams a week's extension.

"I feel we're very close to making a deal," Hearn told *BN*.

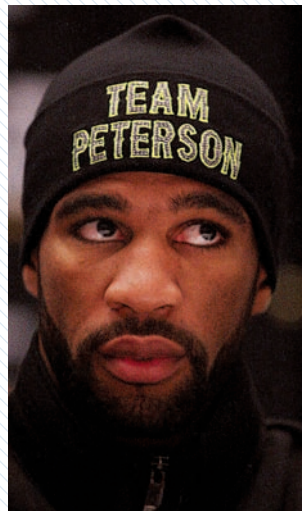
Unbeaten heavyweight **Luis Ortiz** is awaiting news on his next fight as the WBA have named him one of the contenders in line to face the **Anthony**

## 'LAST TIME WE WENT UP AGAINST HAYMON IN PURSE BIDS WE GOT SPANKED'

**Joshua-Wladimir Klitschko** winner.

In the interim, he could fight outspoken American **Jarrell Miller** in America as a part of Hearn's plans to stage more international shows.

"We're looking to hopefully do something in America against Miller toward the end of April, but we're still sorting through things. The American broadcaster is one, and of course we still need to sort out the American broadcaster for Joshua-Klitschko," Hearn said.



## TOP PREP

**DAVID AVANESYAN** is leaving no stone unturned in the preparations for his fight with former world champion **Lamont Peterson** [above] next week.

The 28-year-old Russian, who is trained by Carl Greaves in the UK, is coming off a win over Shane Mosley and will meet Peterson in Cincinnati, Ohio on February 18.

Avanesyan will soon flight out to America to finalise his camp, and Greaves is excited about where his charge's career is headed.

"We've been doing a lot of work sparring **Ohara Davies** down at Tony Sims' gym," he told *Boxing News*.

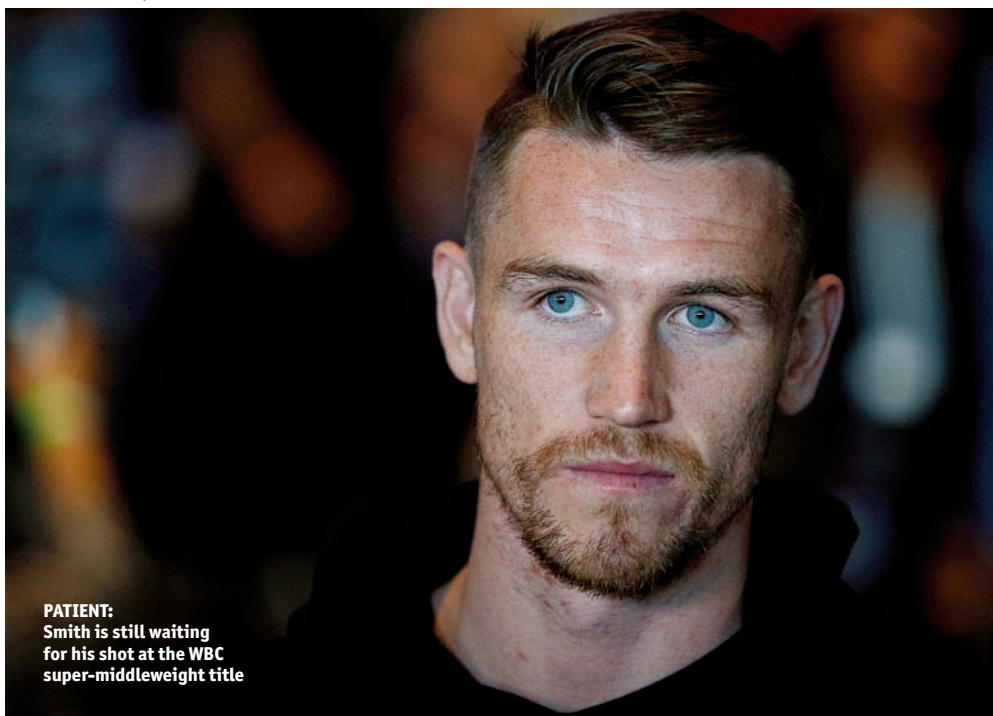
"We've also done some stuff with **Sam Eggington**. It's all been great sparring, David's feeling really good at the moment and we can't wait for the fight. It's a big fight."

Avanesyan will be putting his lofty WBA ranking on the line against Peterson, a former world super-lightweight belt-holder who has not yet fought at the full welterweight limit of 147lbs.

He weighed 144lbs for his last fight, a controversial points win over **Felix Diaz** in 2015. Whoever prevails in Ohio will be in line to fight the **Keith Thurman-Danny Garcia** victor, as they contest the WBA and WBC welterweight titles on March 4.

"There are some huge, huge fights if we get through this," Greaves said. "So it's a big deal."

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



**PATIENT:** Smith is still waiting for his shot at the WBC super-middleweight title





**THE GAFFER:**  
Eames [second  
from right]  
poses alongside  
the now-retired  
Tommy Martin, who  
he used to manage



# 'BACK IN THE DAY, I'D HAVE ABOUT 25 FIGHTERS AT A TIME'

Veteran trainer Johnny Eames talks to Paul Wheeler about his storied career



*TOP trainer and manager. A dedicated charity worker. A cancer survivor. Johnny Eames, 58, is many things. Here, the renowned British fight figure discusses his life in boxing, as well as the various trials and tribulations he has had to overcome, both inside and outside the ring.*

**Tell us about your fighting career.**

As an amateur, I boxed for Broad Street ABC in Stepney. Later on, when I thought about turning pro, I was up at the Thomas A Becket [gym], and I was going to sign for a geezer called Harry "The Growler" Burgess. I was a mediocre amateur – nothing special. I got talking to a few of the pros up there at the Thomas A Becket, who were very much like myself, standard-wise. They were all punch-drunk, so I just thought to myself, 'You know what, this ain't for me.' So that's why I decided to become a trainer instead of turning pro.

**How long were you an amateur boxing trainer for?**

I was an amateur coach for about 18 years, or probably a bit longer. I started off as a coach back at Broad Street. I then left there and started my own club up, called Lansbury ABC, which is still going now. I was really close with Bradley Stone at the time. When he died after his British [super-bantamweight] title fight [from a blood cut on the brain], I quit boxing. I just thought, 'This ain't right. Why should kids get killed in a sport?' It took me a bit of a while to come to terms with that. Then, Jimmy Murphy from West Ham [Boys Club Boxing Academy] asked me if I wanted to be a coach at the club. I ended up spending about 15 years there. That was alongside the likes of Micky May and Terry Abbott. Between the three of us, we had over 100 national champions. We had no Senior ABA finalists, but they all got beat in the final. I got my pro trainer's licence in 2001 or 2002. I was training Kevin Lear at the time. He was one of my kids who got to the ABA final. He was such a talent, so when he went pro, I decided to go with him.

**Who would you rate as the best all-round fighter that you've trained?**

The most talented fighter I've ever trained in my life is a kid called Michael Maguire. His natural talent and ability was

unbelievable, but he wouldn't train. Kevin Lear was much the same, although he won a world title against Michael Gomez in only his 13th fight – albeit a WBU [super-featherweight] title, but they were more important in those days. I had other good fighters too, like Tony Oakey and Matthew Marsh. My first British champion was Pat Mullings, the super-bantamweight. Overall, when you count the number of pros I've trained over the years, it's got to go into the hundreds. Back in the days when I was working with [promoter] Frank [now Kellie] Maloney, I'd have about 25 fighters at a time.

**You founded the TKO Boxing Gym, which is due to open again soon.**

We're relocating at the moment. We should be opening within the next two weeks. It's in the old Abbey Sports Centre in Barking. I finished up at the old gym in Canning Town a couple of years ago now. Since then, I've been using Newham Boxing Club, but I've only got two fighters at the moment – all my fighters jumped ship when I lost the gym. The kids I've got are Mickey O'Rourke – a very good lightweight who's 6-0, and a young super-bantamweight called Danny Arnold, who's 1-0. When my other fighters jumped ship, it hurt me big time, as I'm a very loyal person. Being brought up on the streets of East London, loyalty is a very big thing. A few of the trainers who I brought into the game also jumped ship and stabbed me in the back. S\*\*t happens, but you get on with it, don't ya. When the new gym opens, it's going to be me only. I'm not bringing any other trainers in and helping them get their careers going. They can do it themselves. It's going to be about me and my fighters.

**Outside of boxing, you do a lot of work for the Indee Rose Trust – a charity that helps children who have been diagnosed with brain and spinal tumours. How much money have you raised over the years?**

Close to £80,000 or £85,000, I'd think.

Once I'm in the new gym, I'm going to

restart the charity football tournaments [featuring boxers and celebrities]. I haven't been able to do it since I've been without a premises – I'd lost my heart in everything. I'll definitely be starting the football up again, as it's a charity that's close to me, having come through cancer myself. Health-wise I've got no problems whatsoever now. Money-wise – skint, health-wise – lovely!



**HIGH PRAISE:** Eames describes Maguire as the most talented fighter he has ever trained

## 'THE THREE OF US HAD OVER 100 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS'



# ACTION

Reports from the best fights around the world

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ GOOD ★★★ FAIR ★★ DISAPPOINTING ★ RUBBISH

Reporters' star ratings for main events and undercards are based on in-ring entertainment, competitiveness and whether overall expectation was met

Photos: MARK ROBINSON/POXON SPORTS



**SWINGING HARD:** Eubank (left) takes aim at Quinlan, who can find no escape

KENSINGTON

FEBRUARY 4

★★★★☆ EUBANK JNR-QUINLAN

★★★★☆ ATMOSPHERE



**Matt Christie**

@MattCBoxingNews

RINGSIDE



T all went to plan for the Eubanks inside the Olympia. Flashy entrance: Check. Flashy performance: Check. Flashy belt paraded: Check. But

while expectations about thrashing the overmatched **Renold Quinlan** were met when referee Howard Foster put the Aussie out of his misery at 2-07 of the 10th round, questions about what **Chris Eubank Jnr** can really achieve remain

unanswered. Following the victory, Eubank and his father insisted the likes of James DeGale, Billy Joe Saunders and even Gennady Golovkin will flock to pose trickier tests than the one set by Quinlan.

"This is my passport to all the titles," Junior said while pointing to the super-middleweight prize gained here. But, in truth, the IBO strap Eubank Jnr referred to has never before been targeted by the leading names in the sport – even if it has been awarded to some over the years as a matter of courtesy. What does have drawing power, though, is the Eubank name, which generates interest just by doing its thing: Senior has long insisted they thrive on being hated, that the extremes of such emotion guarantees attention, and such thinking might explain the at times outlandish behaviour. Certainly, the father and son team do

appear to attract more spite than praise. It's a curious business model for sure, but Floyd Mayweather Jnr recently retired on the richest bounty in sporting history after building a career from driving boxing fans round the bend.

Plenty bought tickets wanting to see Floyd flattened, but due his proven talent, it was only in hope; should Eubank Jnr entice the likes of Golovkin into battle, his demise would not only be hoped for by the 'haters', it would be expected by almost everyone. Which is why the names of DeGale and Saunders – who edged Junior in a 2014 thriller – are more sensible options for the time being.

"If we can make this fight with James DeGale, that we shall do," said Eubank Snr, who hopes his son is back in the ring in April. "We have been marinating him," he added. Certainly, Junior is far too tasty for

## MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Eubank Jnr thrashes game Quinlan, but there is a feeling we've been here before



# 'THE PROBLEM WITH FIGHTING EUBANK IS NOT THE POWER BUT THE HIGH VOLUME OF PUNCHES. HE DIDN'T HURT ME'

the likes of Renold Quinlan.

The controversial ITV Box Office platform had a far more difficult evening [see pages 18-19] than Eubank Jr, but hammering the likes of Quinlan or pummelling a punch bag in the gym, is not going to tell us if he can deliver at the highest level. That aforementioned defeat to Saunders offered clues about his potential, his late rally down the stretch exhibited his astonishing grittiness and strength, but ultimately he lost the biggest fight of his career. But, after some frustrating times, the path should now be clear for this engrossing journey to really gather pace.

What began with the signature hop over the rope – a nod to his father's career – ended with a rapid barrage of looping hooks and uppercuts for which Junior is capable of making his own name. Quinlan proved his toughness along the way, but was wobbled regularly, and was dangerously out of his depth by the time the stoppage came.

"I was disappointed it was stopped because Chris never hurt me," he countered. "Not once. The problem with fighting him is the high volume of punches, not his power. To be honest I did not feel any real power."

It's a familiar tale of bravado, one that many fighters spin in the aftermath of defeat. Eubank Jr may not be the one-punch savage that has been advertised, but his speed and spite combined to cause obvious damage to the Aussie.

Yet the underdog started brightly, having moderate success over the opening two rounds with his lead before Eubank – back in the ring after an eight-month absence – established total control in the third. Shoulder rolling, and jabbing



**PRIDE AND JOY:** Eubank Sr screams in delight as his son shows off his new title

while on the move bewitched the visitor, before hooks and uppercuts rocked him back. And that, pretty much, was the pattern of the fight.

It appeared through rounds four and five – as Quinlan stood tall under countless barrages to head and body – that this would go the distance. But in the sixth, the visitor was in trouble when a

right uppercut landed flush, arcing hooks followed, and he teetered into the ropes. From that point on, it was target practice.

Eubank's aim was mostly good, his energy level exemplary (as per), though his wild swings occasionally sailed into the air – a habit that could prove costly against better opposition. But Quinlan just couldn't compete, and might have been hauled out as early as the eighth such was the hopelessness of his cause, as his attacks went from sporadic to non-existent. The pressure increased through the ninth before the end came in the 10th, with Quinlan – bloodied and bedraggled – too willing to soak up punch after punch, and Junior only too happy to throw them.

So here we are again after the latest episode of The Eubank Show. We're entertained, but the wow factor is disappearing, and the storyline is becoming too predictable. There is undoubted talent here that may fly high; but it's time to take things up a notch right now, before the interest fades.

**THE VERDICT** Entertaining enough, but Eubank hammering this level of opposition is quickly losing its appeal.

## RINGSIDE NOTES

● WHILE several people at home struggled with ITV's new Box Office platform, it must be noted that the organisation of the Poxon Sports event within the arena was faultless, despite it being beset by problems almost from the moment it was announced.

● AS was the case in all three UK shows, 10 bells were rung in memory of Hannah Lyson, the daughter of top referee Mark Lyson, who lost her battle with bowel cancer at the end of January.



**SPITEFUL ATTACKS:** Quinlan [white shorts] displays a solid chin throughout, but he was never really a threat against Eubank, who was landing at will by the end of the bout





# HAMMER BLOW

Price's career in serious jeopardy after fourth inside-schedule loss



**Paul Wheeler**

@paulwheelerBN

**RINGSIDE**

## ★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

**I**T could be the end for **David Price**. Back in 2012, the towering Liverpoolian cut a swathe through the domestic heavyweight scene, demolishing the likes of Sam Sexton and Audley Harrison to cement himself as the British and Commonwealth king.

However, three early defeats in nine fights since 2013 – albeit against men who subsequently tested positive for banned substances – made Price's 12-rounder with **Christian Hammer** on the Chris Eubank Jnr undercard a truly make-or-break fight in terms of his career. Unfortunately for the affable

Scouse giant, disaster struck once again.

Pawing out his jab, Price started well enough in the opener, if not a little tentatively. Hammer – who himself had three inside-the-distance losses on his record heading into the bout – seemed to gain confidence in the second, as he trundled forward and flung wide hooks. David boxed effectively with his long jab in the third and fourth, although he seemed unsettled and flustered whenever his shorter, stocky adversary forced him into corners.

In round five, Hammer pushed Price back to the ropes, only to be decked by a booming right uppercut from the heavy-handed Merseysider. The same shot hit the target a further three times in the sixth, but Hammer stayed upright this time. Towards the end of the session, the mental and physical intensity of the

battle began to take its toll on Price, who inexplicably sagged forward, allowing his Romanian-German rival to land a couple of free punches to the head. This proved to be a worrying sign of what was to come for David in the next frame.

With Price now completely shattered and spent, Hammer, 29, bullied him into the corner, before unloading with powerful hooks from both hands. David attempted in vain to cover up as he lolloped along the ropes, and he was given a brief respite when referee Phil Edwards warned Hammer for holding and hitting. However, seeing that Price was still all over the place despite the momentary break, the official correctly decided to call time on the contest at the 1-22 mark. Slumped on his stool after the fight, a distraught Price, 33, clearly realised that he now has a very difficult

**DELIGHT AND DESPAIR:** After bludgeoning his way to victory [below], an ecstatic Hammer celebrates [bottom], while Price contemplates his loss [right]

Photos: MARK ROBINSON/POXON SPORTS





decision to make regarding his future in the sport.

The clash between Sheffield's **Adam Etches** and Islington southpaw **John Ryder** pitted two men against each other who were both moving up from middleweight to super-middle, following sketchy recent form at 160lbs. After 12 rounds, it was plainly obvious which fighter the new division suited best – Ryder looked revitalised at 168lbs, while the usually explosive Etches was sluggish and laboured.

The first four stanzas were relatively close, with Etches pressing forward, but Ryder scoring with sharp counters. In the fifth, Adam was forced to ship some hefty punishment, as clean left hooks and right uppercuts zoomed in from the sprightly Ryder, who caused significant swelling and bruising around Etches' left eye.

Exhibiting impressive upper-body movement and smart shot selection, Ryder continued to pepper his brave but too-open opponent with an array of accurate attacks in the remaining rounds, with referee Marcus McDonnell

seemingly pondering whether to stop the bout in the one-sided 10th. Nevertheless, the tough Etches commendably made it to the final bell, where he lost unanimously on points – 117-111 (Massimiliano Bianco), 116-112 (Dave Parris) and 118-109 (Soren Saugmann).

Barry's British flyweight champion **Andrew Selby** secured shutout scores of 100-90 across the board (Massimo Barrovecchio, Robin Dolpierre and John Keane) against former WBO title challenger **Ardin Diale**, of the Philippines. The switch-hitting Welshman dazzled with his fast flurries and precise punch-picking to move closer to a potential world championship challenge. Ian John Lewis officiated.

Slick Sheffield featherweight **Kid Galahad** had been due to face ex-two-time IBF bantam boss Joseph Agbeko over 12. However, after Agbeko pulled out due to illness on the day of the fight, Galahad had to settle for unheralded Barcelona-based Nicaraguan **Leonel Hernandez** in an eight-rounder. Switching stances throughout, the former

British, Commonwealth and European super-bantamweight titlist marked up Hernandez's right eye with stiff straight strikes in the second. The damage to his optic led the outgunned visitor to retire after the third frame. Mr Edwards refereed.

Lively Bermondsey welter **Chris Kongo**, who boxed for Team GB as an amateur, wasted no time against Lithuania's **Edvinas Puplauskas**. It took Kongo just 1-28 to earn a stoppage victory from official Lee Every, with a right hook to the solar plexus doing the business. A left hook to the same part of the body had earlier floored Puplauskas. It had been set for four rounds.

Mr Every also refereed **Lucas Ballingall's** impressive showing against Yate's **Harvey Hemsley**. The flashy Portsmouth youngster dominated to such an extent in the eyes of judge Robert Williams that he was awarded a 40-34 points win, despite not scoring any knockdowns.

Two more four-rounders completed the card. Chatham's **Jordan Dennis** and Banbury's **Joe Jackson Brown** each registered 40-36 successes over Telford veteran **Kieron Gray** and Lithuania's **Vaidas Balciauskas** respectively. Mr Williams, who scored the Dennis-Gray bout for referee Every, officiated the Brown-Balcauskas contest.

**THE VERDICT** It is difficult to see how Price's career can recover from this latest damaging defeat.

## FULL RESULTS

**Chris Eubank Jnr** (167 1/4lbs), 24-1 (19), w rsf 10 **Renold Quinlan** (167lbs), 11-2 (7); **Christian Hammer** (264lbs), 21-4 (12), w rsf 7 **David Price** (275lbs), 21-4 (18); **John Ryder** (166lbs 7oz), 24-3 (12), w pts 12 **Adam Etches** (167lbs 9oz), 20-2 (17); **Andrew Selby** (111 1/4lbs), 8-0 (5), w pts 10 **Ardin Diale** (111lbs 2oz), 32-11-4 (15); **Kid Galahad** (125lbs 7oz), 22-0 (13), w rtd 3 **Leonel Hernandez** (129lbs 5oz), 10-19-2 (1) 1NC; **Chris Kongo** (149lbs 6oz), 3-0 (2), w rsf 1 **Edvinas Puplauskas** (148 1/4lbs), 4-5 (3); **Lucas Ballingall** (132lbs 5oz), 6-0 (1), w pts 4 **Harvey Hemsley** (133 1/4lbs), 3-33-1 (2); **Jordan Dennis** (164lbs), 2-0 (1), w pts 4 **Kieron Gray** (163lbs 7oz), 8-58-2 (1); **Joe Jackson Brown** (172lbs 7oz), 4-0 (2), w pts 4 **Vaidas Balciauskas** (177lbs 3oz), 3-10 (2).



**ON THE WAY UP:** Selby [left, on right] impresses against Diale, and can now look towards a prospective world title shot in the near future



**A NEW MAN:** Ryder [right, on right] looks brilliant against Etches, while Ballingall [above, on left] shines against Hemsley





**Tris Dixon,** who watched the action at home, reviews the early successes and failures of ITV Box Office from the point of view of the consumer



MUCH of the talk before Saturday's bill at the Olympia surrounded the merits of the evening as a pay-per-view attraction.

Many believed a fight between a big-name challenger and a little-known 'champion' did not warrant the platform. Some said it deserved it because it was a 'world' title fight. Of course, not many in the trade recognised it as such. Yes, fighters like Roy Jones Jnr and Lennox Lewis have won IBO titles, but so have far lesser boxers.

What ultimately would decide whether it was value for money or not would be whether those who paid for it enjoyed it and, if they did, whether they would spend again, giving ITV the repeat business they will need to build this new

and updated Eubank brand. With the announcement of a sturdy undercard, pockets of boxing enthusiasts would have signed up. Sheffield fight fans would have engaged to watch Etches and Galahad, while a Liverpool contingent apparently (if you look on Twitter) reluctantly bought in to watch Price. Hardcore fans might have tuned in for Ryder-Etches, and to see the emerging talents of gifted Welshman Selby.

ITV produced a squad of recognisable names to analyse the action. Lennox Lewis, Andre Ward, Duke McKenzie and Richie Woodhall formed part of a team that delivered analysis at both basic and more advanced levels. Ward's insight to fights was strong and independent but, of course, he was not

familiar with many on the bill. Lennox, having been around during some of the Eubank Snr years, added a nostalgic voice. And the bill traded on nostalgia which, of course, sells.

As a viewer, I subscribed to watch online. My Safari browser wouldn't stream it, but when advised on social media (by a fight fan) to download Google Chrome and watch it through that, it worked. I caught up on the Selby fight I'd missed later on.

By the time I was live, news had broken that Agbeko was out of the Galahad bout, though fortunately a replacement was brought in.

But Etches-Ryder – and those in the trade would have known this – was always likely to deliver, which it did.

## THE BILL TRADED ON EUBANK NOSTALGIA, WHICH SELLS

# Building platform



NAME VALUE:  
[From left]  
McKenzie, Ward  
and Lewis provide  
their analysis





Etches, wearing what Eubank Snr used to call a "badge of honour" in the form of a swollen left eye, toiled through the closing rounds, though Woodhall had it about even going into the last. I didn't share that view, but scoring is subjective, regardless of promotion or platform. It's also debated every week.

The Price roller coaster followed, an enthralling, infuriating and engrossing scrap, and then it was time for Eubank Jnr. He had informed his Twitter followers he would be in the ring at "approximately 9.30pm."

It was gone 11pm by the time he started fighting, and nearly midnight by the time he stopped.

In the history of time, the odd hour-and-a-half is neither here nor there. But as far as an evening is concerned, those kept waiting more than 90 minutes – albeit with Price and Hammer dishing out thrills and spills – might have felt aggrieved.

Still, the main event was better than many feared or suspected (and possibly

many hoped) it would be.

Of course, there had been teething problems. My Safari issue was a theme, while others tweeted of delays between purchase and activation. Some, trying to buy via Sky on the night, were left with a blue screen, though they would not have been charged.

"We have been looking into why some Sky customers experienced a 'blue screen' whilst attempting to view [the show]," an ITV spokesman said. "This event was available on the Sky platform, as well as online, for customers who had pre-registered via the ITV Box Office website. Any Sky customers who attempted to purchase via their remote would not have been able to and would have encountered a 'blue screen'. They will not have been charged. A number of Sky viewers experienced a slight delay last night in the feed being established

immediately after they had subscribed to watch the Box Office coverage. This was an issue outside of our control and was resolved a few minutes after customers had completed the transaction. This issue did not arise with those watching on Virgin or on ITV Box Office. Virgin

customers were able to access the event on ITV Box Office directly through their remote."

Plenty to learn from, then, and it's important to get it right before the shows grow in size, grandeur and importance.

There have been worse pay-per-views, and

there will be worse ones in the future. Something is only worth what someone is willing to pay, although one can't help but feel that had the evening been held on ITV1, public sentiment in the Eubanks' favour would be greater, and it would have served as a fantastic platform from which to launch further PPV offerings.

## THE MAIN EVENT WAS BETTER THAN MANY FEARED

**LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON:** The Eubanks embrace the limelight

Photos: MARK ROBINSON/  
POXON SPORTS



# HYPE TRAIN

Verdejo exhibits flaws in his armour as he struggles against Flores, writes Jack Hirsch

## FULL RESULTS

**Felix Verdejo** (135lbs), 23-0 (15), w pts 10 **Oliver Flores** (134lbs), 27-3-2 (17); **Christopher Diaz** (127lbs), 20-0 (11), w rsf 7 **Efrain Esquivias** (130lbs), 17-6-1 (10); **Juan Carlos Rivera** (125lbs), 9-0 (8), w rsf 4 **Roberto Correa** (126 3/4lbs), 9-13-4 (4); **Henry Lebron** (130lbs), 1-0 (1), w rsf 3 **Jesus Feliciano** (130lbs), 0-2.

Photos: TOP RANK



**DISJOINTED:** Verdejo [left] does not shine, but gets the job done

 SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

**FEBRUARY 3**

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT

★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

ON paper, **Felix Verdejo's** 10-round unanimous decision win over **Oliver Flores** by scores of 99-91, 98-92 and 96-94 did not look bad, but there were red flags in his performance that are reason for concern. Puerto Rican Verdejo, who has been hailed in many quarters as the next Felix Trinidad, now seems destined to have a career somewhere along the lines of Juan Manuel Lopez, who did win a world title, but never fulfilled his island's prophecy of greatness. And with the way that Verdejo faltered in the later rounds against the ordinary Flores, there are no guarantees he will even achieve the heights of Lopez.

Perhaps we are being a bit harsh on Verdejo. It was his first fight in close to eight months after being injured in a motorcycle accident. Even his promoter, Bob Arum, admitted beforehand to not being sure how Verdejo would look. It is also possible that Verdejo just had a bad night. In any event, Felix would no longer be a clear favourite to defeat WBO

lightweight champion Terry Flanagan if they box this June in New York, as has been mooted.

Flores was more inactive than Verdejo, last having boxed 13 months ago when he unsuccessfully challenged for Takashi Uchiyama's WBA super-featherweight title, being halted in three rounds. His only other loss had been to newly crowned WBC super-feather champion Miguel Berchelt back in 2012, when he was halted in two rounds. The Nicaraguan has defeated moderate opposition, but was completely outclassed in his only two contests against world-level foes. And that is how it panned out for the first seven rounds against Verdejo.

The man from San Juan did not look impressive, but nevertheless displayed enough ring generalship to thwart southpaw Flores as he moved forward. Flores' aggression was rather tepid, which allowed Verdejo's jabs to look more effective than they actually were. Verdejo targeted the body from time to time, but

never made a commitment to working downstairs.

Verdejo was winning rounds, but showing little spark. By the fifth round, the crowd at the Roberto Clemente Coliseum were getting restless, and in the sixth they started to boo their favourite son. Verdejo tried to respond, but outside of landing one good sweeping right, simply was unable to pull the trigger on any meaningful punches.

When Verdejo [inset] stumbled a couple of times from mid-ring in the seventh, it was thought that a wet canvas was the reason, but in the following session it was plain to see that Felix's legs were starting to betray him. Flores started to cut the distance between the two and was able to land straight lefts that hurt Verdejo and put him in a survival mode.

Flores did not press his advantage against a tired Verdejo in the ninth, and was hit with a smashing right at the bell. However, in the 10th he wasted no time, going for broke, throwing haymakers soon after the bell rang, resulting in the two getting tangled up and going down. Flores continued to pursue Verdejo and would shake him up with a blow now and then, but Felix wisely held tightly until told to break by referee Jose Rivera. By the end of the fight Verdejo was punching back. He showed the heart of a champion by weathering adversity. Beyond that there were not many positives he could take from this fight.

**Christopher Diaz**, from Puerto Rico, dropped **Efrain Esquivias** in the third and fourth rounds of a scheduled 10, eventually stopping him at 2-18 of the seventh. Diaz was bigger and much more talented. He worked off the jab, completely controlling the action from long range. If anything, it was a mild surprise that the match lasted as long as it did.

In the seventh, Esquivias desperately bobbed and weaved when he was against the ropes, as Diaz kept punching. Few of the blows landed, but Carson, California's Esquivias, boxing outside of his home state for the first time, had taken substantial punishment throughout the match, making the stoppage by referee Ramon Pena a viable one.

**THE VERDICT** Warning signs aplenty that Verdejo must not ignore.



Photo: MORNE DE KLERK/GETTY IMAGES



**NO LOVE LOST:**  
Veteran rivals Green  
[left] and Mundine  
exchange blows

# CURIOUS EVENTS

**Neil Devey**  
watches Green  
edge Mundine  
on a night of  
controversy

NORTH ADELAIDE

**FEBRUARY 3**

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT

**DANNY GREEN** took the spoils, **Anthony Mundine** won over the haters, and boxing found another judge whose scoring bordered on the bonkers.

After almost 11 years, Australian sport's bitterest rivals finally had their rematch at the Adelaide Oval, a venue more accustomed to Ashes cricket battles and Aussie Rules ding-dongs.

Fittingly, this grudge match ended in acrimony. While Green claimed a controversial majority decision win in contrast to his more clear-cut unanimous points loss in 2006, Mundine claimed robbery.

He had a case, too, certainly where judge Hubert Minn was concerned. The Hawaiian astounded everyone by scoring the 10-rounder 98-90 to Green, giving the Perth man every round but the seventh, where he was deducted a point for twice punching Mundine while holding the back of his head. What fight was Minn watching?

Another judge, Californian Steve Morrow, went 96-94 for Green. Even that was confusing, after he recorded the seventh a 10-10 round despite Green's point deduction. The one Aussie official, Tom Ferrauto, had it 94-apiece.

Mundine, from Sydney, seemed to have done enough in the latter rounds of a scrappy encounter to have narrowly won, albeit after risking being thrown out inside the opening minute. The first of endless tangles saw American referee Frank Garza clumsily try to split them. At no stage did he tell the fighters to break or stop boxing, but he did call out, "Let him go." Green duly released Mundine's head from under his arm, Mundine fired in a short but telling left hook which turned his opponent's legs to jelly.

There was a danger the fight was going to be called off there and then as Green slumped to the deck.

Instead, he regained his senses enough to reassure the referee and ringside doctor that he was okay to continue. Mundine had a point taken off and the feud which dates back to when Green turned pro after the 2000 Olympics had another twist.

That two past-their-prime 40-somethings could still attract 27,000 fans for a rematch which belonged in a previous decade, and that Main Event was able to charge \$A60 (a touch under £37!) for pay-per-view, underlined the duo's unique appeal Down Under and their undeniable marketing savvy.

Throw in Mundine stepping up a ludicrous four weight divisions from super-welter for this cruiserweight pension-booster – the two met at super-middle in Sydney first time around – and still the public lapped it up.

## UNDERCARD

**MIDDLEWEIGHT Tim Tszyu**, the 22-year-old son of Hall of Famer Kostya Tszyu, stopped fellow Aussie **Mark Dalby**, 38, in the third of a scheduled four-rounder.

Green, 44 next month, had weighed in at 183lbs, while Mundine, 41, had bulked up to 174lbs. Green appeared strong, Mundine, while not flabby, was not as tight. After his early scare, Green tried to use his extra weight to wear down his foe, while always looking for the right hand. Mundine, who appeared nervous at the start, settled from around the fifth and worked his jab. At times he made Green look clumsy, but there was little flow.

As the fight went on, Green's impact was receding. Perhaps Mundine's early foul – described on social media by Aussie heavyweight Lucas Browne as a "massive dog shot" – had taken its toll on the former WBA light-heavyweight champion. More likely, age had caught up with them both. Going into the last, Green raised Mundine's hand in a sign of respect for their shared history. Neither threatened a stoppage, but Mundine finished the stronger.

The general consensus at the bell was that Mundine had got it. Not by much, but enough. I had him up by two. The judges disagreed, and that's when matters took possibly the unlikeliest turn of all.

Mundine, so often portrayed as the villain in Australia, and who had angered many by insisting he wouldn't stand for the "racist" national anthem, received genuine sympathy across the board. People saw a man who had not been given a fair go, definitely where one judge was concerned. As the enormity of the result sunk in, he looked crestfallen and said he would consider an appeal. Green, who had waited so long for redemption, insisted he had rightly been declared the winner, but acknowledged that Minn's scoring was "bulls\*\*t".

The cynics will see the fallout as the opportunity for them to head straight into a third fight. Let's hope not. They pulled this one off, just. The quality was in short supply, but in terms of drama it delivered. There is no need for Green-Mundine III.

**THE VERDICT** Puzzling scoring and rigours of time blight this sequel.

## FULL RESULTS

**Danny Green** (183lbs), 36-5 (28), w pts 10  
**Anthony Mundine** (174lbs), 47-8 (27); **Andrew Moloney** (117 3/4lbs), 12-0 (7), w pts 8 **Renoel Pael** (117 1/2lbs), 21-5-1 (11); **Jason Moloney** (121 3/4lbs), 12-0 (10), w pts 8 **Marco Demecillo** (123 1/4lbs), 21-5-1 (17); **Trent Broadhurst** (176lbs), 20-1 (12), w rsf 4 **Nader Hamdan** (173lbs), 44-14-1 (19); **David Aloua** (205lbs), 12-2 (8), w pts 6 **Filipo Fonoti Masoe** (207 1/4lbs), 3-12 (1); **Quade Cooper** (200lbs), 3-0 (3), w rsf 2 **Jack McInnes** (212 1/2lbs), 0-3; **Shane Tuck** (193 1/4lbs), 1-1, w pts 4 **Ivan Kolar** (193lbs), 1-6; **Tim Tszyu** (157 1/2lbs), 2-0 (1), w rsf 3 **Mark Dalby** (158 1/4lbs), 4-13 (1); **Antonio Caruso** (166 1/2lbs), 2-0-1, w pts 4 **Friday Nwaiwu** (161 3/4lbs), 3-8-1.



## Hyland Jnr closes in on a British title tilt with another victory



**Steve Wellings**

**RINGSIDE**

**BELFAST**

**FEBRUARY 4**

★★★☆☆ **WHOLE SHOW**

★★★★☆ **ATMOSPHERE**

**PAUL HYLAND JNR** is on the hunt for titles after making light work of another opponent at the Europa Hotel. Headlining once again in front of an appreciative audience, Hyland Jnr was too big and too strong for Hungarian import **Karoly Gallovich**. The visitor came out quickly, but was buckled by a solid right uppercut and eased to the canvas courtesy of a follow-up flurry. Rising tentatively, Gallovich got stopped by referee Hugh Russell Jnr just 41 seconds into the opening round of a scheduled 10. Paul turned down a slot on the Eubank Jnr card, taking place the same night in London, to fight in front of his own fans. The British lightweight title is now on the radar as the Belfast man pushes into the domestic top 10.

"I was expecting to go 10 hard rounds and we didn't want to take any chances, as he was undefeated," said Hyland Jnr.

"[Rivals] say they want to fight Paul but they don't," added manager Mark Dunlop, who is eyeing a British title eliminator. "It's up to me to put Paul into a position where they can't avoid him."

Dundee's **Ronnie Clark** was last seen pushing Martin J Ward close in a British super-feather title effort. He kept sharp here with a 60-57 success over Barcelona-based Nicaraguan **Rafael Castillo**. Aggressive switch-hitter Castillo belied his journeyman tag, coming to have a go rather than cover up and take punishment. Ronnie shipped a couple of right hands in the first round as he warmed up, but was slipping and sliding out of range by the end of the contest as Castillo repeatedly swung for head and body. Ronnie was in phenomenal condition as usual; not an ounce of fat could be seen on his lean torso. Eamonn Magill officiated, with Mr Russell Jnr scoring from ringside.

Belfast lightweight **Joe Fitzpatrick** outpointed Hungary's **Tamas Laska** 60-54. Slight of frame but with plenty of ability, Fitzpatrick worked his man out quickly, poking southpaw leads and straight left hands through Laska's guard. Fitzpatrick, a 2014 Commonwealth Games silver medallist, used Laska as target practice for the final rounds, as the visitor shelled up to try to avoid

Photo: PRESS EYE BELFAST



**DOWN YOU GO:**  
Hyland Jnr sends  
Gallovich to the mat

## THE CHASE

being knocked out. Ex-pro Jason McKay refereed the bout, with Mr Russell Jnr scoring from ringside. Joe is signed to Frank Warren's Queensberry Promotions and is eager for some TV exposure over the coming year, with an Irish title shot hopefully at the end of it.

**Feargal McCrory** earned a disqualification win over Hungary's **Gyula Tallosi**. The Coalisland southpaw roughed Tallosi up in round one, knocking him out of the ring. Once Tallosi clambered back in he was being beaten around before suffering a point deduction in round two for various indiscretions. Dropped heavily in round three, Gyula's misery was compounded in the fourth and final session when referee McKay disqualified him for persistent holding at 1-03. Trained by veteran coach John Breen, Feargal looks to be a decent prospect who can also shift tickets.

Kilbarrack's **Lynn Harvey** bounced back from a shock loss late last year to pummel **Agnes Draxler** into a first-round defeat. Harvey started strongly from the opening bell, whipping in a cavalcade of shots from various angles, pinning Draxler in the corner. The

overmatched young Hungarian was unable to withstand the barrage and unceremoniously slumped to the canvas. She rose tentatively but Mr Russell Jnr was unimpressed and called the bout off after just 37 seconds. It was scheduled for four.

**Jay Byrne** recorded a 40-36 win over **Sandor Jozsa**. Dubliner Byrne landed a right hand off the break in round one that stunned Jozsa and he was ready to milk the opportunity, but no-nonsense referee Magill was having

none of it and pushed him back out. The Hungarian visitor was admonished several times for holding, but the portly portsider did manage to land some sneaky left hands as the contest developed.

Jay fought through a left shoulder problem, sustained early on, and was showboating at the end, while his adversary huffed and puffed towards defeat. Mr Russell Jnr scored the bout.

Midway through the evening, the 10 bells rang out in memory of Hannah Lyson, daughter of referee Mark, who sadly passed away recently.

**THE VERDICT** Too easy for Hyland Jnr, but tougher tests await.

## FULL RESULTS

**Paul Hyland Jnr** (135lbs), 14-0 (5), w rsf 1 **Karoly Gallovich** (129 1/4lbs), 7-1; **Joe Fitzpatrick** (137 1/4lbs), 7-0 (4), w pts 6 **Tamas Laska** (134lbs), 16-13-1 (8); **Ronnie Clark** (132 1/4lbs), 18-4-2 (10), w pts 6 **Rafael Castillo** (133 1/4lbs), 14-30-3 (6); **Feargal McCrory** (134 1/4lbs), 4-0 (1), w dq 4 **Gyula Tallosi** (136 1/4lbs), 12-18 (8); **Jay Byrne** (159lbs), 3-0 (1), w pts 4 **Sandor Jozsa** (157 1/2lbs), 3-2-1 (2); **Lynn Harvey** (109 1/4lbs), 2-1 (1), w rsf 1 **Agnes Draxler** (102 1/2lbs), 9-14 (1).

## TALKING POINT

**SCOTT CARDLE** is the current British champion at lightweight. He is pencilled in to defend his belt in Glasgow on April 15. Hyland Jnr will have a keen eye on the fight.



# SEVENTH HEAVEN

Kirk's body shots prove Boyanov's undoing



**Andy Whittle**

**RINGSIDE**

NOTTINGHAM

FEBRUARY 4

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT

★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

★★★☆☆ ATMOSPHERE

STAPLEFORD lightweight **Nathan Kirk** took a little while to settle in his scheduled eight-threes against **Ivailo Boyanov** at Bingham Leisure Centre, but having overcome any early nerves and ignoring a bloody nose, he finished in style, flooring the Bulgarian four times. Three of those knockdowns came in the 95 seconds before a right to the referee-for-the-night Shaun Messer rightly adjudged that enough was enough.

The visitor might just have done enough to nick a close opener, but he came off second best towards the end of the next as both men threw caution to the wind and let fly with a feisty exchange to the body. Nathan, starting to sit down on his shots, took the third on my card too, but it wasn't all one way stuff, as Boyanov got through with single, clubbing hooks on a couple of occasions.

The real breakthrough for Kirk came towards the end of the fifth, when rights

to both head and body, delivered in quick succession, saw Ivailo pitch forward onto all fours. He was up at a count of 'eight', and hung on to see out the remainder of the session, but the end, after a fairly uneventful sixth, wasn't long in coming.

Dumped in a neutral corner not long into the seventh, Boyanov rose for only a few seconds before a right to the body returned him to the deck, and the yo-yoing continued apace when a follow-up attack saw him crumble again.

Rusington's **Dan Cooper** maintained his 100 per cent record by halting game yet still somewhat raw London-based Pole **Jarek Prusak** 50 seconds from the end of a scheduled four-threes. Jarek's third visit to the canvas proved the trigger for the referee's intervention.

Prusak, with ex-pro Chris McDonagh in his corner, had found the target with a pair of rights in the opening seconds, but any thoughts of an upset were quickly vanquished when a left to the head only moments later sent him backside first, halfway out between the ropes, and almost onto the ringside medics' table.

His nose slightly bloodied, the Pole, who had certainly come to fight, was sent to his knees again early in the third by a left cross-right uppercut combination, and despite him rising and surviving an ensuing spell of heavy pressure from the confident favourite, there were no complaints when he was duly halted

having been toppled once more with the end almost in sight.

Two four-threes which saw novices triumphing over vastly experienced opposition resulted in shutout wins for Nottingham's **Ekow Essuman** and Derby's **Sahib Mann**. Botswana-born Ekow came out on top against Stourbridge's **Kevin McCauley**, while Mann did likewise against Sheffield's **Qasim Hussain**.

The evening's entertainment had begun with a quick-fire four-twos between one-fight Nottingham novice **Ciaran Hayes** and Dinnington's heavier-by-some-margin **Darren Snow**, who had stepped in at a late stage. The winner was the lighter southpaw who, busier throughout, took every round on the referee's scorecard.

**THE VERDICT** Nathan turns up the heat in a venue that was more than a little chilly.

## FULL RESULTS

**Nathan Kirk** (134lbs 14oz), 9-2 (3), w rsf 7 **Ivailo Boyanov** (136lbs 14oz), 3-9-1 (1); **Dan Cooper** (197 1/4lbs), 3-0 (1), w rsf 4 **Jarek Prusak** (197 1/4lbs), 8-3 (8); **Sahib Mann** (137lbs 14oz), 11-0 (4), w pts 4 **Qasim Hussain** (143lbs 10oz), 4-73-2; **Ekow Essuman** (153 1/4lbs), 2-0, w pts 4 **Kevin McCauley** (154 1/2lbs), 11-134-10; **Ciaran Hayes** (174lbs 10oz), 2-0, w pts 4 **Darren Snow** (187lbs), 4-9-1.

**ON THE BUTTON:** Kirk [left] lands a clean jab on Boyanov

Photo: MARK JONES





SHOT OF THE WEEK



Photo: RYAN GREENE/PREMIER BOXING CHAMPIONS



## STUNNING FINISHER

ONLOOKERS gasp as Queens veteran Luis Collazo dumps fellow southpaw Sammy Vasquez, of Monessen, Pennsylvania, to the mat in Tunica, Mississippi last Thursday (February 2). After the sixth-round KO victory, Collazo called out welter contender Shawn Porter





# PREVIEWS

Previewing the best  
upcoming fights  
around the world

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ GOOD ★★★★★ FAIR ★★ DISAPPOINTING ★ RUBBISH

The star ratings indicate how well the writer believes the fighters match up, the fight(s)' contextual significance, and how good the fight(s) will be

Daws gets a deserved third crack at the European 140lb title, writes **George Gigney**

★★★★★ MAIN EVENT

If you make your own luck, then **Lenny Daws** needs a new recipe. The likeable 38-year-old has plied his trade since 2003, twice winning the British super-lightweight belt, but has not yet been able to progress beyond that. However, that ceiling was not entirely of his own making, as he has twice lost in European title fights thanks to some questionable – and downright farcical – officiating.

On Saturday (February 11), he gets a third chance at the EBU strap against unbeaten Swede **Anthony Yigit** at the Westcroft Leisure Centre in Carshalton (Hennessy Sports promote). Daws was due to fight Yigit in December last year, but a back injury suffered by Lenny forced the match to be postponed.

Daws won his first British crown in 2006 – seven years before Yigit made his debut – when he outpointed Nigel Wright, though

lost the belt in his first defence against Barry Morrison on a split verdict. He gained revenge in 2009, knocking Morrison out inside 10 rounds to reclaim his title. A draw with Jason Cook and a retirement win over Stevie Williams followed, before Ashley Theophane dropped and outpointed Daws to end his second reign as British champion. That came in 2011, and the following year Daws claimed the lightly-regarded EU title, before making his first attempt at the European strap in 2013.

He travelled to Italy, home country of Michele Di Rocco, for the opportunity. With a solid game plan against the slippery veteran, Daws turned in a terrific performance, nailing Di Rocco with straight shots all night. However, Michele was named the winner with a unanimous decision. It was a close fight, but one that Daws deserved the nod for.

He regrouped and in 2014 once again lifted the EU title, but it was the European belt he really wanted. His second chance at it came in December 2015, and Daws even had home advantage at the same venue he boxes in this weekend. Spain's

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA



**LUCKLESS LENNY:**  
Daws is due some good fortune

## TALE OF THE TAPE

LENNY DAWS	ANTHONY YIGIT
@lennydaws	n/a
Dec 29, 1978/38	DOB/AGE Sep 1, 1991/25
Morden	HOMETOWN Stockholm
English	NATIONALITY Swedish
5ft 10 1/2ins	HEIGHT 5ft 7 1/2ins
30-4-2 (11)	RECORD 18-0-1 (7)
Orthodox	STANCE Southpaw
Apr 16, 2003/24	DEBUT/AGE Apr 13, 2013/21
31	KO PERCENTAGE 37
6/2	12-ROUNDERS COMPLETED/WON 0/0

## THIRD TIME LUCKY?

Ruben Nieto was the man in the other corner, but once again Daws was sharp and always first to the punch. Going into the 10th Daws was ahead on the cards. Then an accidental head clash changed

Sutcliffe Jnr over eight rounds, before defeating Armando Robles.

A classy amateur who boxed at London 2012, Yigit is particularly accurate with his left hand, though does not sit down on his punches enough. He stays busy and likes to remain in the pocket, eluding punches with upper-body movement, although his defence is not brilliant. He makes up for his lack of power with a high workrate, rarely moving out of range and always ensuring his opponent is on his

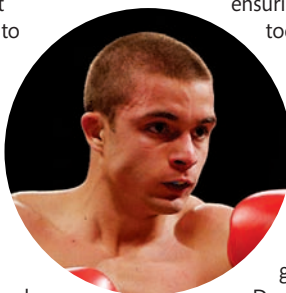
toes. However, this is his first fight scheduled for 12, whereas Daws is vastly experienced in going the championship distance.

Similarly to his adversary, one of Daws' best attributes is how industrious he is. A very good front-foot boxer,

Daws likes to break opponents down with the traditional one-two, though more often than not he will string shots together into four or five-punch combinations. However, having had over a year out and approaching 40, Daws' engine is unlikely to be what it once was.

Their styles should mesh for an engaging affair, and should he stick to the plan and find the stamina required, Daws can earn a close decision to finally get his hands on the European title.

**THE VERDICT** Daws can see off Yigit to finally conquer Europe.



everything. Nieto was left with a nasty gash that meant he couldn't continue and the bout had to end – referee Freddy Rafn ludicrously deemed the head clash intentional and disqualified Daws, who should have been given the win on a technical decision.

A rematch was a necessity and terms were agreed, until Nieto announced his retirement from boxing. With his plans once again delayed, Daws has had to wait until now to get his chance at the vacant belt.

In his way is 25-year-old Yigit [above], a talented southpaw who will be contesting his first major title. Boxing around the continent – predominantly in Denmark – Yigit has been progressing well, gradually stepping up his level of opposition over the past couple of years. In 2015 he scalped Tony Owen, Chaquib Fadli and the shell of DeMarcus Corley. Earlier last year, he outpointed Phil



### EXPERT VIEW

**PAUL McCLOSKEY**  
EX-BRITISH & EBU SUPER-LIGHT CHAMP

It all depends how much Lenny has got left in the tank. He's been a boxer all his life. His inactivity could be a good or bad thing. He may be rusty, or he may be fresh after a break. Fighting in his hometown, it's a massive opportunity for Lenny, although there's pressure there too. He's a textbook, upright boxer with great technique. If he uses his boxing skills, he's got a good chance.





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# DREAMLAND

Improving world lightweight champ Easter gets hometown defence, writes George Gigney

★★★★★ MAIN EVENT

★★★★★ UNDERCARD

W

INNING a world title is a dream for all young fighters, while defending said title in their hometown is an even wilder fantasy. Twenty-six-year-old **Robert Easter Jr** achieved the former last year, and on Friday (February 10) will do the latter.

At the Huntington Center in Toledo, Ohio, he defends his IBF lightweight belt against Puerto Rico's **Luis Cruz** over 12 rounds. Adrien Broner's About Billions Promotions will stage the show, while

Bounce TV (US) and BoxNation (UK) air.

Back in September, Easter rose from an eighth-round knockdown to outpoint Richard Commey in a classic. It was one of the best fights of last year, both men tearing lumps out of each other in Reading, Pennsylvania, but Easter had his hand raised on a split decision. It was a very close fight and the verdict could have gone either way – plenty felt Commey had done enough.

It was the first time Easter had gone the distance since December 2014, when he beat Angel Hernandez over 10.

## TALKING POINT

IF Easter retains his IBF lightweight title this weekend, his next defence could well be against the organisation's No. 1-ranked contender – Denis Shafikov. The Russian southpaw has twice unsuccessfully challenged for the IBF 135lb belt in the past.

"Being able to headline a big fight in my hometown after winning a championship is a dream come true,"

Easter said. "My first dream was to win the world title, and now I get to defend it in front of my people."

"I had great fan support at my last fight in Pennsylvania, and I know everybody is even more excited to see me at home."

A lot of people felt involved in helping me win that world title, and now

we get to have a homecoming celebration. This is going to be big for the city. I can't wait to showcase my skills."

Photo: ANDY SAMUELSON/PBC



**DREAMCATCHER:**  
Easter celebrates his world title win in September



Cruz is not the most inspired choice of opponent for a maiden world title defence, though the 31-year-old has mixed with decent opposition, and is coming off a draw with the once highly touted Ivan Redkach, though that was in March of last year.

Prior to that, he had been well beaten any time he stepped up in class. Edner Cherry stopped him inside nine rounds in 2015, while Jose Felix Jnr and Juan Carlos Burgos have both outpointed him in 10-rounders.

"I am going to fight for my home of Puerto Rico and become another world champion from the island," Cruz said.

"I know that Easter is a good fighter and he will have the fan support, but I am already training harder than I ever have. This is going to be an exciting fight, but I don't expect it to go the distance."

Unbeaten Easter is still developing, despite being a world champion, but should have things his own way against

## 'I DON'T EXPECT THE FIGHT TO GO THE DISTANCE'

Cruz. Robert is an aggressive, exciting fighter who likes to drag opponents into firefights. Though this means he leaves himself open, he is a better technician than Cruz and should stop him inside six rounds.

**Rau'shee Warren**, 14-1 (4), will defend his WBA bantamweight title against **Zhanat Zhakiyanov**, 26-1 (18), in chief support on the bill. Warren had been ordered to box Jamie McDonnell, who holds the WBA secondary strap, though a deal could not be hashed out in time, so the WBA enforced mandatory challenger Zhakiyanov upon him.

The American – a three-time Olympian – won the title in June when he edged out Juan Carlos Payano in a rematch.

Kazakh Zhakiyanov, trained by Ricky Hatton, has not fought since his decision win over Yonfrez Parejo in November 2015, which earned the former European champion the WBA's pointless Interim belt.

### TALE OF THE TAPE

ROBERT EASTER JNR		LUIS CRUZ	
@RobertEaster_Jr			n/a
Jan 26, 1991/26	DOB/AGE	Oct 10, 1985/31	
Toledo, OH	HOMETOWN	Las Piedras	
American	NATIONALITY	Puerto Rican	
5ft 11ins	HEIGHT	5ft 9ins	
76ins	REACH	72ins	
18-0 (14)	RECORD	22-4-1 (16)	
Orthodox	STANCE	Orthodox	
Nov 10, 2012/21	DEBUT/AGE	Mar 3, 2007/21	
78	KO PERCENTAGE	59	

Photos: PREMIER BOXING CHAMPIONS



**LOCAL SUPPORT:** Easter is looking forward to fighting in front of his home fans



**PARTY POOPER:** Cruz [pictured] wants to wreck Easter's homecoming

The 33-year-old challenger has boxed all over the world – 12 different countries in total – though this will be his first outing in America. Industrious and strong, he will certainly ask questions of slick stylist Warren, 29.

Rau'shee likes to fight at his own, rather slow pace, but Zhakiyanov has gone the distance just twice in his last 14 outings, while his only loss came back in 2008.

It's a tough call, but the pick is for Warren to retain his world title on the cards. With impressive hand speed and sharp reflexes, the Cincinnati man should be able to produce the cleaner work – provided he can keep Zhakiyanov at bay.


**THE VERDICT** Easter should Cruz past Luis in front of an adoring home crowd.



**CAN YOU HEAR ME?**  
Ward is often left  
frustrated when  
dealing with the  
American media  
Photo: STACEY VERBEEK







# “IT’S FIGHT OR FLIGHT. IF YOU PANIC, YOU GET KNOCKED OUT”

Andre Ward didn't panic, and tells John Dennen why knocking him down was the worst mistake Sergey Kovalev made

**W**

**AS the Sergey Kovalev fight the best performance or the best win of your career?**

I definitely feel, I'd go on the record to say, it was

probably the most significant. Just at the stage of my career just, where it was at, moving up in weight, everything that went into that fight. Personally I like that fight as my favourite of my career. Simply because I had to win a different kind of fight. I won in such a way that nobody thought I was going to. Here was this big, bad guy, that everybody says was invincible and I had a slow start. But I got myself back into that fight and really took his heart from him and nobody saw "The Krusher" from the fourth

round on and that was a for a reason. So I was pleased with myself.

Obviously I'm a perfectionist so I'm kicking myself for the slow start, kicking myself for the knockdown but boxing, it's not if you're going to face adversity, it's when you're going to face adversity, and the key is how do you respond. I was pleased with my response and the response from my trainer. 'Verg' [Virgil Hunter] coached the tail off me. But I give him so much credit. He had an urgency about him. He never panicked and I take my hat off to him.

**Would it have been easy for you to panic?**

Of course. It's fight or flight. It's fight or flight. You can panic and then start pressing and get caught again. It's a snowball effect and then you get knocked out. But everything that I've been taught my ➤

**ANDRE  
★ WARD ★  
BIG INTERVIEW  
BOXING NEWS**





**KEEP SMILING:**  
Ward addresses the media  
in Dallas ahead of the  
Kovalev showdown

► whole career, everything that I experienced to me, it came back to me in that moment. I think there was probably about 20 or 30 seconds left in the round. I kind of cleared my head, then I got angry. That was like the worst mistake he could have made, was knocking me down, because then I quit thinking so much and I just went to work. I knew I had that in me because I've had adversity before in my career. Of course you never want to go through that kind of stuff. But when you do, you want to respond the right way and I think we did as a team.

**We were surprised at the reaction of the American media, very hostile to the decision, how do you feel about that?**

I understand. I don't have the best relationship with the American media. It's just what it is. I'll give you an example. Even in the build-up to the fight, in Dallas, we had a big round table. All the questions that I kept getting from the American media were about layoffs and the two years off and me and team were looking at each other and we had to remind that that's behind us, we've had two or three fights since then. Let's talk about this Kovalev fight. And then I went and did a more personal in-depth with four or five media members from the UK and it was just totally different. The respect, the type of questions that were asked. So I haven't the best relationship with those guys. Those

were the same guys that said I bit off too much. Why did I choose Kovalev? He's going to knock me out. If it's a close fight, do you think those same guys are going to go back on the record and say, 'Man, we were wrong. Close fight, could have gone either way but Ward got it, we give him credit.' That's just not going to happen. One telling thing was that at the post-fight press conference, I've never seen this in all my years, the looks on some of those guys faces, it was unbelievable.

I wasn't supposed to win the fight. I've been around the sport long enough where if I'm doing an interview with someone, or even in the fight arena, the looks on their face was 'We hear you talking but this is going to be the guy to get you. You bit off too much this time.' I could feel it. All that did was just motivate me. But I could feel that. I could feel that in situations where I fought [Mikkel] Kessler, they had the same look on their face. When I fought [Chad] Dawson, pre-fight they had the same look on their face. I feel like the right thing to do is give credit where credit's due. It was a close fight but Ward won. The reality is how can you have polarising opinion about a decision when there's a one point difference and argument over one point. You can't.

You can say this is my opinion. So you mean to tell me that you saw every close round just right. It just doesn't make sense. But I'm used to that kind of treatment and the reality is that's why Kovalev won't beat me. It's not physical. It's because I've dealt with that kind of stuff my whole career and that gives you a drive and a determination where you'll do anything to get that win. Because you have to have it. He's always given the benefit of the doubt and therefore he didn't develop the mentality he needed when that fight got tough and that fight got close. And that's what he doesn't understand, even right now, he's still making excuses, he's not looking at the man in the mirror and saying 'I've got to make some adjustments' and that's why in the rematch it's going to go the same way.

**Do you expect the rematch to happen?**

I hope it happens. The situation has to be right. I think my team is working on it and hopefully they come up with something that makes sense. His team, they can keep talking. We're not interested in going back and forth with them. We like to speak as a team, we like to speak in one fell swoop and deal with it all at one time and then be done with it. For us it's about getting in that ring and taking care business. He made a lot of promises that he broke leading up to that fight and he didn't come through. And my thing is why aren't guys asking him questions about where was 'The Krusher'? How did you lose seven, eight straight rounds? What happened? Where was the power? Where was this big tough guy? They should be asking him those kind of questions but unfortunately they're not.

**But the controversy will make the rematch even bigger.**

You can't make this kind of stuff up. The tension that's there. We were very respectful, I'm going to continue to be respectful, that's just how I am. But there's natural tension there that wasn't there the first fight. There's controversy there, that wasn't there the first fight. You're absolutely right. If there's a rematch it's going to be twice as big.

**So has it affected your motivation? Have you been considering retiring?**

I've been doing this a long time. I would never let things that are written run me off from the sport. I just wouldn't do it. It's deeper than that. I've been at it a long time. My body's got a lot of wear and tear on it. Furthermore, I just want the right situation presented to me so I can move forward with the rematch. I think my team is working on that. I've been enjoying my family, taking trips like this, coming out to the UK, enjoying the fans, getting the chance to get behind the mic again. I'm excited about what's next.

I don't know what's next but whatever it is, it's going to be the right decision.

**Beyond Kovalev, are there other fights, like Golovkin or James DeGale or big names at light-heavyweight that appeal?**

If I fight again that's the only fight I want. It's the only fight that makes sense. **BN**

**UNCERTAIN FUTURE:**  
Ward admits he has been  
thinking about retirement



“

**KOVALEV IS NOT LOOKING AT THE MAN IN THE MIRROR AND SAYING, 'I'VE GOT TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS' - THAT'S WHY THE REMATCH WILL BE THE SAME"**





**BELT UP:**  
Ward [left] celebrates with his belts after winning what will soon become a highly controversial decision over Kovalev. The pair face off [below] at the weigh-in, and Ward is hopeful they will do it again this year, but is far from certain the sequel will happen

Photos: TOM HOGAN/HOGAN  
PHOTOS/ROC NATION SPORTS



“  
IN BOXING, IT'S NOT IF YOU FACE  
ADVERSITY, IT'S WHEN YOU FACE  
ADVERSITY - AND HOW YOU REACT”



★ BOXING ★  
STRANGERS

SPECIAL FEATURE

BOXING  
NEWS

# THE

Conor McGregor's desire to invade the boxing world is nothing new. Don Stradley investigates the craze, and unearths a motley crew of boxing aliens

B

Y the time this story appears, UFC star Conor McGregor will have probably teased us a few more times about a possible bout with Floyd Mayweather Jr. Just when we were dismissing the idea, McGregor applied for and

was granted a California boxing licence. Then UFC President Dana White offered \$25 million to each fellow (plus a cut of the pay-per-view profits), an offer at which Mayweather sneered. Manny Pacquiao piped in and said he'd be willing to fight McGregor, but the Irishman has remained focused on Mayweather. "It's a fight the people want," McGregor said most recently. "It's the fight I want."

It's just about enough to keep our imaginations tweaked.

McGregor, of course, is hardly the first thrill seeker with some boxing in his background to think about trying his luck at the professional level. The worst of them, and by no means is he comparable to McGregor, was probably Arthur Cravan, an eccentric poet and magazine publisher. In the spring of 1916, Cravan gloved up in a Barcelona bullring to meet no less than former world heavyweight champion Jack Johnson. Cravan, who was strongly built and had received a bit of boxing training, spent five farcical rounds covered up in a kind of standing fetal position. When Johnson grew bored, he dropped Cravan in the sixth. A peer of Cravan's, poet Blaise Cendrars, wrote that Johnson "stretched him out cold with a formidable punch to the left ear, a blow worthy of a slaughterhouse."

McGregor might fare a little better than some poet with a death wish. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Reports of McGregor sparring at the Wild Card gym in Los Angeles were not exactly glowing; clips of him hitting a heavy bag weren't inspiring, either. He's brilliant in MMA, and he's more of a puncher than most cage grapplers, but his days of being an All-Ireland boxing champion at the youth level were long ago.

Professional athletes from various sports ➤

**THE HOLY GRAIL:**  
Fighting Mayweather  
guarantees big money  
for an opponent

Photos: MARK J. REBILAS/USA TODAY SPORTS



# IMPOSTERS

**GAME CHANGER:**  
UFC star McGregor  
is exploring the possibility  
of a foray into boxing

“  
IT’S A FIGHT  
THE PEOPLE WANT.  
IT’S THE FIGHT  
I WANT”



► have tried boxing. Some did well. Others flopped. Here are five examples from a list that is much longer than you think.



### FRANK GOTCH

WRESTLER | **Boxing record: 0-1-1**

BUILT like a gorilla and nearly as hairy, Gotch was to wrestling in the early 1900s what the great John L. Sullivan had been to boxing. Gotch rose to incredible popularity as the undisputed freestyle heavyweight wrestling champion of the world; it wasn't unusual for his bouts to be held in Major League Baseball parks, so high was the demand to see him tie opponents in knots.

During an exhibition tour of the Klondike in 1901, Gotch was talked into facing veteran heavyweight contender Frank Slavin of Australia. Interest in Gotch was so hot that pitting him against anyone, even a 40-year-old boxer, was a worthwhile commercial venture. But Gotch learned the hard way not to tangle with boxers on their own turf.

The bout, held at the New Savoy Theater in Dawson City, was a disaster for Gotch. Varying accounts, usually told years after the fact, had Slavin needing only a few rounds to jab Gotch into near blindness. In the fourth, the bloodied Gotch grew so frustrated that he grabbed Slavin and, according to some versions of the story, tossed him out of the ring. Gotch's poor sportsmanship earned him a disqualification, not to mention police intervention.

Gotch maintained his boxing interest; he supposedly took part in a few "private" bouts, tried to enlist Tommy Ryan as a trainer, and even threw down challenges to the likes of "Philadelphia" Jack O'Brien. During America's search for a great white hope to unseat Jack Johnson as heavyweight champion, former champ James J. Corbett offered to train Gotch for a shot at Johnson's title. But Gotch's only other bout of record was a 1905 12-rounder in Spokane, Washington against a novice named Boomer Weeks. Gotch injured his right hand early in the bout and fought the rest of the way one-armed. The verdict was a draw, though a Nevada journal claimed Gotch "got the worst of the argument."



### ED "TOO TALL" JONES

AMERICAN FOOTBALL |

**Boxing record: 6-0 (5)**

JONES was a star defensive end for the Dallas Cowboys when he interrupted his career to try pugilism. Though he'd been a popular player, fans and the press viewed his

ring adventure in purely negative terms. There was a feeling that he'd forsaken a great football career to toil in, what Jimmy Cannon once called, "the red light district of sports."

He barely survived his first bout against journeyman Abraham Meneses. A hook to the head in the final round left Jones dazed; inspired, Meneses charged in and knocked Jones to the canvas and then smacked "Too Tall" in the head while he was down. Jones survived the chaos and escaped with a majority decision win, but impressed no one. Red Smith, of *The New York Times*, wrote of Jones' boxing debut, "He cannot box, he cannot punch, and his chin gives off a musical tinkle when tapped."

Jones put his gloves away after his sixth bout, claiming that his mother wanted him to stop. She was probably tired of seeing him fight tomato cans.



### MARK GASTINEAU

AMERICAN FOOTBALL |

**Boxing record: 15-2 (15)**

GASTINEAU'S boxing career, filled with accusations of fixed fights that hold more than a little weight, was a poor example of an NFL player-

turned-fighter. After retiring from American football in 1990, former New York Jets star Gastineau ventured into boxing. Though he created a small amount of interest based on his name, he never convinced anyone that his ring work was anything more than a joke.

The charade ended when Gastineau travelled to Chiba, Japan to face another ex-NFL player, Alonzo Highsmith. Gastineau was stopped at 0-20 of the second round. He never fought again.

Highsmith, after being knocked out by the unheralded Terry Verner, and struggling to a draw with journeyman Reggie Gross, followed Gastineau into retirement.



### ART SHIRES

BASEBALL | **Boxing record:**

**5-2 (5)**

ALONG with a lifetime batting average of .291, Chicago White Sox first baseman Shires took swings at team-mates, the club secretary, hotel detectives, opposing players,

umpires, and even his manager. *The United Press* reported in February 1929, "Shires is rated as the best man in the league with his fists." After being suspended for his umpteenth hotel brawl, Shires scrambled for ways to supplement his baseball income. A chance encounter with Jack Dempsey's trainer, Teddy Hayes, inspired Shires to bring his itching fists into the ring.

After an easy debut win, Shires was matched against American football star George Trafton, a player once described by Red Smith with a single word: "carnivorous". At Chicago's White City Arena, the much fatter Trafton dropped Shires three times and won a five-round decision. The bout was described 15 years later in *The Nebraska State Journal* as being "as vicious and spectacular as it was hilarious."

Shires fought on until baseball commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis ruled against baseball players doubling as prizefighters. There was also a sense that Shires' bouts weren't exactly on the level.

In 1935, Shires returned to boxing and was promptly stopped in two rounds by a Dallas farmhand named Sid Hunter. A few weeks later, Shires was in Fort Worth, Texas scoring a third-round KO of the unknown Joe Daley. Shires made some noise about fighting world heavyweight champion Max Baer, but he soon took a job managing a Minor League Baseball club. His boxing career was over, but he never strayed too far from the headlines.



### CHARLIE POWELL

AMERICAN FOOTBALL |

**Boxing record: 25-11-3 (17)**

POWELL will probably go down in history as the best American football player-turned-fighter. During the 1950s, he split his time between

playing for the San Francisco 49ers and campaigning in the heavyweight division. At one point he was good enough to score an eighth-round stoppage over the highly regarded Nino Valdez. Powell had been a 4-1 underdog; however, his victory over Valdez boosted his confidence. "Now I can concentrate on boxing alone," he said.

Unfortunately, poor management and inconsistency in the ring prevented Powell from becoming an elite heavyweight. By his early 30s he'd attained "trial horse" status and was losing more often than he won. His final appearance resulted in a controversial KO loss to Londoner Billy Walker. Many ringsiders called the bout, which ended at 2-32 of the second round, a fraud.





**SO NEAR AND  
YET SO FAR:  
NBA legend  
Chamberlain  
[right] and Ali  
tease the  
possibility of a  
boxing match**

Photo: GETTY IMAGES

Chaos. Fraud. Embarrassment. That's usually what happens when athletes from another sport get into boxing. Granted, there have been some sunny exceptions. Vitali Klitschko, for instance, came from the world of kickboxing to become one of the most highly regarded heavyweights of the post Mike Tyson-Evander Holyfield era. But there's a nagging suspicion that McGregor isn't going to put the work in to become another Vitali Klitschko. In fact, if McGregor's flirtation with boxing reminds us of anyone, it would be Wilt Chamberlain, the legendary NBA player. Wilt "The Stilt" never came close to putting on gloves, but he sure had fun with the idea; he had a willing co-conspirator in Muhammad Ali.

Older fight fans may recall that an Ali-Chamberlain bout was on the verge of being signed for the summer of 1971 at the Houston Astrodome. The gigantic Chamberlain balked at the last minute over money issues. After more than an hour of backroom discussion, Astrodome executive Jack O'Connell sheepishly told the awaiting press, "We do not have a fight to announce."

Was Ali-Chamberlain even remotely close to happening, or was it just hype? NBA commissioner Walter Kennedy was against it, saying that NBA

club contracts prohibited players from taking part in boxing or wrestling contests. Chamberlain's boss, Los Angeles Lakers owner Jack Kent Cooke, disapproved because Chamberlain might be injured and jeopardise his team's season. Many years later, promoter Bob Arum said that Chamberlain pulled out because Ali intimidated him. The non-event certainly helped to keep Ali's name in the news. The rub didn't hurt Chamberlain, either.

Is McGregor just a contemporary version of Chamberlain? Is he merely, as most believe, enjoying the publicity that comes with taunting Mayweather? Or maybe he's another Frank Gotch, likely to lose his temper and throw Mayweather out of the ring. We just don't know.

McGregor has some obvious advantages over some of his predecessors. He is, after all, a fighter already. Chances are his punches may lack the snap of an experienced professional boxer, but he has plenty of toughness, and his ego won't let him give up without a fight. He also has enough personality to light up a dozen press conferences, even without Mayweather.

And it will certainly be interesting to see how McGregor reacts when Nevada boxing officials tell him to trim his beard. **BN**



**HEAVYWEIGHT**

over 200lbs/14st 4lbs

1. **DEONTAY WILDER** 37-0 (USA)
2. **KUBRAT PULEV** 24-1 (BGR)
3. **LUIS ORTIZ** 27-0 (CUB)
4. **ANTHONY JOSHUA** 18-0 (ENG)
5. **JOSEPH PARKER** 22-0 (NZL)
6. **ANDY RUIZ JNR** 29-1 (USA)
7. **CARLOS TAKAM** 34-3-1 (CMR)
8. **DAVID HAYE** 28-2 (ENG) [*above*]
9. **ARTUR SZPILKA** 20-2 (POL)
10. **DILLIAN WHYTE** 20-1 (ENG)

**CRUISERWEIGHT**

200lbs/14st 4lbs

1. **OLEKSANDR USYK** 11-0 (UKR)
2. **KRZYSZTOF GLOWACKI** 26-1 (POL)
3. **MARCO HUCK** 40-3-1 (GER)
4. **MURAT GASSIEV** 24-0 (RUS)
5. **DENIS LEBEDEV** 29-3 (RUS)
6. **TONY BELLEW** 28-2-1 (ENG)
7. **KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK** 52-3-1 (POL)
8. **FIRAT ARSLAN** 38-8-2 (GER)
9. **ILUNGA MAKABU** 19-2 (COD)
10. **MAKSIM VLASOV** 37-2 (RUS)

**LIGHT-HEAVYWEIGHT**

175lbs/12st 7lbs

1. **ANDRE WARD** 31-0 (USA)
2. **SERGEY KOVALEV** 30-1-1 (RUS)
3. **ADONIS STEVENSON** 28-1 (CAN)
4. **NATHAN CLEVERLY** 30-3 (WAL)
5. **JUERGEN BRAEHMER** 48-3 (GER)
6. **ARTUR BETERBIEV** 11-0 (RUS)
7. **ELEIDER ALVAREZ** 21-0 (COL)
8. **JOE SMITH JNR** 23-1 (USA)
9. **JEAN PASCAL** 31-4-1 (CAN)
10. **OLEKSANDR GVOZDYK** 12-0 (UKR)

**SUPER-MIDDLEWEIGHT**

168lbs/12st

1. **JAMES DeGALE** 23-1-1 (ENG)
2. **BADOU JACK** 20-1-3 (SWE)
3. **GILBERTO RAMIREZ** 34-0 (MEX)
4. **ARTHUR ABRAHAM** 45-5 (GER)
5. **GEORGE GROVES** 25-3 (ENG)
6. **ANTHONY DIRRELL** 30-1-1 (USA)
7. **FEDOR CHUDINOV** 14-1 (RUS)
8. **ANDRE DIRRELL** 25-2 (USA)
9. **CALLUM SMITH** 22-0 (ENG)
10. **MARTIN MURRAY** 34-4-1 (ENG)

**MIDDLEWEIGHT**

160lbs/11st 6lbs

1. **GENNADY GOLOVKIN** 36-0 (KAZ)
2. **DANIEL JACOBS** 32-1 (USA)
3. **BILLY JOE SAUNDERS** 24-0 (ENG)
4. **DAVID LEMIEUX** 36-3 (CAN)
5. **HASSAN N'DAM N'JIKAM** 35-2 (FRA)
6. **WILLIE MONROE JNR** 21-2 (USA)
7. **AVTANDIL KHURTSIDZE** 32-2-2 (GEO)
8. **MACIEJ SULECKI** 23-0 (POL)
9. **SERGIY DEREVYANCHENKO** 9-0 (UKR)
10. **CURTIS STEVENS** 29-5 (USA)

**SUPER-WELTERWEIGHT**

154lbs/11st

1. **CANELO ALVAREZ** 48-1-1 (MEX)
2. **ERISLANDY LARA** 24-2-2 (CUB)
3. **JERMALL CHARLO** 25-0 (USA)
4. **AUSTIN TROUT** 30-3 (USA)
5. **JERMELL CHARLO** 28-0 (USA)
6. **DEMETRIUS ANDRADE** 23-0 (USA)
7. **VANES MARTIROSYAN** 36-3-1 (USA)
8. **ISHE SMITH** 29-8 (USA)
9. **LIAM SMITH** 23-1-1 (ENG)
10. **WILLIE NELSON** 25-3-1 (USA)

**WELTERWEIGHT**

147lbs/10st 7lbs

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO** 59-6-2 (PHL)
2. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY** 33-2-1 (USA) [*above*]
3. **KEITH THURMAN** 27-0 (USA)
4. **SHAWN PORTER** 26-2-1 (USA)
5. **DANNY GARCIA** 33-0 (USA)
6. **JESSIE VARGAS** 27-2 (USA)
7. **ERROL SPENCE** 21-0 (USA)
8. **FRANKIE GOMEZ** 21-0 (USA)
9. **KONSTANTIN PONOMAREV** 31-0 (RUS)
10. **DAVID AVANESYAN** 22-1-1 (RUS)

**SUPER-LIGHTWEIGHT**

140lbs/10st

1. **TERENCE CRAWFORD** 30-0 (USA)
2. **VIKTOR POSTOL** 28-1 (UKR)
3. **ADRIEN BRONER** 32-2 (USA)
4. **JULIUS INDONGO** 21-0 (NAM)
5. **RICKY BURNS** 41-5-1 (SCO)
6. **ANTONIO OROZCO** 25-0 (MEX)
7. **ADRIAN GRANADOS** 18-4-2 (USA)
8. **JOHN MOLINA JNR** 29-7 (USA)
9. **RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV** 25-5 (RUS)
10. **THOMAS DULORME** 24-2 (PRI)

**LIGHTWEIGHT**

135lbs/9st 9lbs

1. **JORGE LINARES** 41-3 (VEN)
2. **MIKEY GARCIA** 36-0 (USA)
3. **ANTHONY CROLLA** 31-5-3 (ENG)
4. **TERRY FLANAGAN** 32-0 (ENG)
5. **ISMAEL BARROSO** 19-1-2 (VEN)
6. **RANCES BARTHELEMY** 25-0 (CUB)
7. **ROBERT EASTER JNR** 18-0 (USA)
8. **DEJAN ZLATICANIN** 22-1 (MNE)
9. **MICKEY BEY** 22-2-1 (USA)
10. **VVAN MENDY** 36-4-1 (FRA)

**SUPER-FEATHERWEIGHT**

130lbs/9st 4lbs

1. **VASYL LOMACHENKO** 7-1 (UKR)
2. **JEZREEL CORRALES** 21-1 (PAN)
3. **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA** 24-2-1 (JPN)
4. **MIGUEL BERCHELT** 31-1 (MEX)
5. **FRANCISCO VARGAS** 23-1-2 (MEX)
6. **TAKASHI MIURA** 31-3-2 (JPN)
7. **GERVONTA DAVIS** 17-0 (USA)
8. **JASON SOSA** 20-1-4 (USA)
9. **BRYAN VASQUEZ** 35-2 (CRI)
10. **ROMAN MARTINEZ** 29-3-3 (PRI)

**FEATHERWEIGHT**

126lbs/9st

1. **GARY RUSSELL JNR** 27-1 (USA)
2. **LEO SANTA CRUZ** 33-1-1 (MEX)
3. **CARL FRAMPTON** 23-1 (NIR)
4. **SIMPIWE VETYEKA** 29-3 (RSA)
5. **LEE SELBY** 23-1 (WAL)
6. **ABNER MARES** 30-2-1 (MEX)
7. **JESUS CUELLAR** 28-2 (ARG)
8. **OSCAR VALDEZ** 21-0 (MEX)
9. **EVGENY GRADOVICH** 22-2-1 (RUS)
10. **RONNY RIOS** 27-1 (USA)

**SUPER-BANTAMWEIGHT**

122lbs/8st 10lbs

1. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX** 17-0 (CUB) [*above*]
2. **JESSIE MAGDALENO** 24-0 (USA)
3. **NONITO DONAIRE** 37-4 (PHL)
4. **GENESIS SERVANIA** 28-0 (PHL)
5. **CESAR JUAREZ** 19-5 (MEX)
6. **REY VARGAS** 28-0 (MEX)
7. **HUGO RUIZ** 36-4 (MEX)
8. **MOISES FLORES** 25-0 (MEX)
9. **YUKINORI OGUNI** 19-1-1 (JPN)
10. **NEHOMAR CERMENO** 26-5-1 (VEN)

**BANTAMWEIGHT**

118lbs/8st 6lbs

1. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA** 26-0-2 (JPN)
2. **RAU'SHEE WARREN** 14-1 (USA)
3. **JUAN CARLOS PAYANO** 18-1 (DOM)
4. **ANSELMO MORENO** 36-5-1 (PAN)
5. **JAMIE McDONNELL** 29-2-1 (ENG)
6. **LEE HASKINS** 34-3 (ENG)
7. **MARLON TAPALES** 29-2 (PHL)
8. **STUART HALL** 20-5-2 (ENG)
9. **PUNGLUANG SOR SINGYU** 52-4 (THA)
10. **LUIS NERY** 22-0 (MEX)

**SUPER-FLYWEIGHT**

115lbs/8st 3lbs

1. **NAOYA INOUE** 12-0 (JPN)
2. **ROMAN GONZALEZ** 46-0 (NIC)
3. **CARLOS CUADRAS** 35-1-1 (MEX)
4. **SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI** 41-4-1 (THA)
5. **KAL YAFAI** 21-0 (ENG)
6. **KOHEI KONO** 32-10-1 (JPN)
7. **JERWIN ANCAJAS** 26-1-1 (PHL)
8. **McJOE ARROYO** 17-1 (PRI)
9. **GIDEON BUTHELEZI** 18-5 (RSA)
10. **JONAS SULTAN** 12-3 (PHL)

**FLYWEIGHT**

112lbs/8st

1. **JOHN RIEL CASIMERO** 23-3 (PHL)
2. **AMNAT RUENROENG** 17-1 (THA)
3. **KAZUTO IOKA** 21-1 (JPN)
4. **JUAN CARLOS REVECO** 37-3 (ARG)
5. **DONNIE NIETES** 39-1-4 (PHL)
6. **McWILLIAMS ARROYO** 16-3 (PRI)
7. **NAWAPHON POR CHOKCHAI** 36-0 (THA)
8. **DAIGO HIGA** 12-0 (JPN)
9. **JUAN HERNANDEZ NAVARRETE** 33-2 (MEX)
10. **ZOU SHIMING** 9-1 (CHN)

**LIGHT-FLYWEIGHT**

108lbs/7st 10lbs

1. **GANIGAN LOPEZ** 28-6 (MEX)
2. **YU KIMURA** 18-3-1 (JPN)
3. **PEDRO GUEVARA** 29-2-1 (MEX)
4. **RYOICHI TAGUCHI** 25-2-2 (JPN)
5. **AKIRA YAEHASHI** 25-5 (JPN)
6. **REY LORETO** 23-13 (PHL)
7. **JESSE ESPINAS** 16-2 (PHL)
8. **KOSEI TANAKA** 8-0 (JPN)
9. **OMARI KIMWERI** 16-3 (AUS)
10. **RANDY PETALCORIN** 25-2-1 (PHL)

**STRAWWEIGHT**

105lbs/7st 7lbs

1. **KNOCKOUT CP FRESHMART** 14-0 (THA)
2. **BYRON ROJAS** 18-3-3 (NIC)
3. **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN** 45-0 (THA)
4. **JOSE ARGUMEDO** 19-3-1 (MEX)
5. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA** 31-8 (JPN)
6. **CARLOS BUITRAGO** 30-2-1 (NIC)
7. **JOSE ANTONIO JIMENEZ** 17-6-1 (COL)
8. **XIONG ZHAO ZHONG** 26-7-1 (CHN)
9. **SIMPHIWE KHONCO** 17-5 (RSA)
10. **SAUL JUAREZ** 23-5-1 (MEX)

**POUND-FOR-POUND**

The best of the best

1. **ROMAN GONZALEZ** 46-0 (NIC)
2. **ANDRE WARD** 31-0 (USA) [*above*]
3. **SERGEY KOVALEV** 30-1-1 (RUS)
4. **MANNY PACQUIAO** 59-6-2 (PHL)
5. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY** 33-2-1 (USA)
6. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX** 17-0 (CUB)
7. **CANELO ALVAREZ** 48-1-1 (MEX)
8. **GENNADY GOLOVKIN** 36-0 (KAZ)
9. **TERENCE CRAWFORD** 30-0 (USA)
10. **VASYL LOMACHENKO** 7-1 (UKR)

● If a fighter has been inactive for over a year, he will not be included in the rankings, unless he has a fight officially scheduled.

● Each fighter is ranked on the results they have achieved in their own specific weight division (excluding the pound-for-pound list).

● A fighter cannot be ranked in a specific weight division until he has competed in that division.



## FEBRUARY

## FRIDAY 10

**Bowlers Exhibition Centre, Manchester**

Osman Aslam v s/o; Jack Sellars v Chris Jenkinson; Danny Craven v Nathan Hardy; George Brennan v Jordan Turner; Lee Clayton v Dmitrijs Gutmans; Ryan Watson v Joe Beeden; Reece MacMillan v Fonz Alexander; Zahid Hussain v Khvicha Gigolashvili; Jay Carney v Russ Midgley; Reece Cartwright v Giorgi Kandelaki. (Promoter: Kieran Farrell).

**Huntington Center, Toledo, Ohio (BoxNation & Bounce TV)**

Robert Easter Jnr (holder) v Luis Cruz (IBF lightweight title); Rau'shee Warren (holder) v Zhanat Zhakiyanov (WBA bantamweight title); Jamel Herring v Art Hovhannisyan. (Promoter: About Billions Promotions).

**Marck en Calais, France**

Thomas Masson v Josefat Reyes.

**Belleheide Center, Pamel-Roosdaal, Belgium**

Bilal Laggoun v Doudou Ngumbu. (Promoter: Belgian Fighting Competition).

**General Mathieu Kerekou Stadium, Cotonou, Benin**

John Amuzu v Yaqub Kareem. (Promoter: Super Entertainment Promotion).

## SATURDAY 11

**Westcroft Leisure Centre, Carshalton**

Lenny Daws v Anthony Yigit (vacant European super-lightweight title); Craig Whyatt v Josh Thorne; Thomas Kindon v s/o; Kirk Garvey v s/o; Peter McDonagh v s/o; Tony Bange v s/o; Jamie Carley v s/o; Fabio Wardley v s/o. (Promoter: Hennessy Sports).

**York Hall, Bethnal Green**

Tom Little v Tom Dallas; Ashley Bailey Dumetz v Tey Lynn Jones; Spiros Demetriou v s/o; Dominic Akinlade v Josh Sandland; Mark Williams v Krzysztof Golec; Scott Saward v s/o; Steven Andrews v Richard Harrison; Celal Ozturk v Youssef Al Hamidi; Barney Joe Jones v Iain Jackson; John Harding v Strieby Margai; Matty Parr v Jacob Lucas; Billy Underwood v Marcin Cybulski; Daniel Khan v Antonio Horvatic;

Ricky Coker v Devidas Sajauka; Georgie Wright v Anto Nakic; Liam Desmond v Edgars Sniedze. (Promoter: Dove Box Promotions).

**Guildhall, Plymouth**

Des Newton v Jamie Quinn; Darren Townley v Matt Seawright; Chris Adaway v Ben Owen; Faheem Khan v Kevin McCauley; Marcus Hodgson v s/o; Dean Riley v s/o. (Promoter: Black Country Boxing Promotion).

**Tudor Grange Leisure Centre, Solihull**

James Beech Jnr v Qasim Hussain; Carl Dickens v Robert Studzinski; Ishmael Ellis v Ibrar Riyaz; Sammy Tails v Paul Cummings; Aaron Lovell v Kristian Laight. (Promoter: Sam Kynoch).

**Hard Rock Casino, Biloxi, Mississippi**

Regis Prograis v Wilfrido Buevas. (Promoter: DiBella Entertainment).

**Chattanooga, Tennessee**

Alonzo Butler v Jamal Woods. (Promoter: Grind Nation Promotions).

**Arena Coliseo, Mexico City, Mexico**

Daniel Rosas v Enrique Angeles Jnr. (Promoter: Promociones del Pueblo).

**Kankaanpaa Sport Hall, Finland**

Jarkko Putkonen v Giorgi Gviniasvili. (Promoter: Joonas Kymalainen & Alexan Manvelyan).

## THURSDAY 16

**The Hangar, Costa Mesa, California**

Mike Lee v Justin Thomas. (Promoter: Roy Englebrecht Events).

## FRIDAY 17

**Stadium Suite, Bank's Stadium, Walsall**

Lennox Clarke v Bartlomiej Grafka; Brad Foster v s/o; Connor Parker v Liam Richards; Josh Stokes v Mitch Mitchell. (Promoter: Black Country Boxing Promotion).

**Fusion Nightclub, Liverpool**

Artif Ali v Jack Summers; Byron Abiru v Sigitas Lengvenis; Marcel Braithwaite v Jules Phillips; Mason Cartwright v Darryl Sharp. (Promoter: Black Flash Promotions).

**Don Haskins Convention Center, El Paso, Texas (UniMas)**

Jose Felix Jnr v Jonathan Maicelo; Esquiva Falcao v Tony Jeter; Arturo Marquez v Jamykle Wade; James Leija Jnr v s/o; Jennifer Han (holder) v Olivia Gerula (IBF female featherweight title). (Promoter: Top Rank).

**Chase Center, Wilmington, Delaware**

Roy Jones Jnr v Bobby Gunn; Frank De Alba v Ivan Najera. (Promoter: David Feldman Promotions).

**Belasco Theater, Los Angeles, California (Estrella TV)**

Robert Manzanarez v Gamaliel Diaz. (Promoter: Golden Boy Promotions).

## SATURDAY 18

**Waterfront Hall, Belfast (BoxNation)**

Jamie Conlan v Yader Cardoza; Declan Geraghty v James Tennyson (vacant Irish super-featherweight title); Paddy Barnes v s/o; Marco McCullough v s/o; Kevin Satchell v s/o; Steven Ward v s/o; Phillip Sutcliffe Jnr v s/o; Tyrone McKenna v Jake Hanney; Con Sheehan v s/o; Lewis Crocker v s/o. (Promoter: Queensberry Promotions).

**York Hall, Bethnal Green**

Asinia Byfield v John Brennan (vacant Southern Area welterweight title); Zack Davies v Ismail Anwar; Chris Kongo v Nathan Hardy; Kian Thomas v Ryan Hardy; Robin Dupre v s/o; Onder Ozgul v s/o; Joshua Ejakpovi v Mario Petrov; George Jupp v Damian Lawniczak; Joe Hayes v Zaur Sadihovs; Dan Neville v Joe Beeden; Konrad Stempkowski v s/o; Thomas Jarvis v Ali Wyatt; Ryan Maycock v Edgars Sniedze; Ibz Mercan v Merdjidin Yuseinov; Gelasiu Taaru v Stefan Sashov; Richard Riakporhe v Istvan Orsos; Davis Pagan v s/o; Charlie Wynn v Steven Backhouse; Jimmy Smith v Tom Lloyd; Jake Best v Matthew Ashmole; JJ Hughes v Scott Hillman. (Promoter: Warrior Promotions).

**Fenton Manor Sports Complex, Stoke-on-Trent**

Craig Morris (holder) v Ryan Fields (Midlands Area welterweight title); Nathan Gorman v Gogita Gorgiladze; Reuben Arrowsmith v Ryan Toms; Kieran McLaren v Michael Mooney; Jake Haigh v s/o; Sam Evans v s/o; Owen Jobburn v s/o; Rob Hunt v s/o; Nathan Clarke v s/o; Luke Caci v s/o. (Promoter: Hatton Promotions).

**Lagoon Leisure Centre, Paisley**

Michael Roberts v Imre Nagy; Jordan McCorry v Ryan Moorhead; Ross Murray v Adam Mackenzie; Gary Cornish v Revaz Karelshvili; Iain Butcher v Gyula Dodu; Paul Kean v s/o; Dean Marner v s/o; Marc Kerr v Sam Omid; Ahmed Ibrahim v s/o. (Promoter: Sam Kynoch).

**Victoria Warehouse, Manchester**

Charlie Schofield v s/o; Lee Carter v Zheko Zhekov; Luke Evans v s/o; Liam Taylor v s/o; Lee Oldham v s/o; Marc Leach v s/o; John Telford v s/o; Ben Sheedy v s/o; Arthif Daniel v s/o; Omar Dusary v s/o; Bilal Rehman v s/o; Jordan Latimer v s/o; Chris Monaghan v s/o; Anthony Leak v s/o. (Promoter: VIP Promotions).

**Cintas Center, Cincinnati, Ohio (BoxNation & Showtime)**

Adrien Broner v Adrian Granados; David Avanesyan v Lamont Peterson; Marcus Browne v Thomas Williams Jnr. (Promoter: About Billions Promotions & Mayweather Promotions).

**Halle Georges Carpentier, Paris, France**

Karim Guerfi (holder) v Stephane Jamoye (European bantamweight title).

**Complexe Sportif Mohammed V, Casablanca, Morocco**

Simpiwe Vetyeka v David Berna; Gevorg Khatchikian v Med Sebyala; Youri Kayembre Kalenga v Garrett Wilson; Mohammed Rabii v Adam Mate. (Promoter: Gary Hyde).

**Carnivore Grounds, Nairobi, Kenya**

Ismayl Sillakh v Karama Nyilawila; Daniel Wanyonyi v Jacob Maganga. (Promoter: Bigger Than Life Entertainment).

**Traktor Sport Palace, Chelyabinsk, Russia**

Rustam Nugaev v Jessie Cris Rosales. (Promoter: RCC Boxing Promotions).

## TUESDAY 21

**Silver Street Studios, Houston, Texas (FOX Sports 1)**

Miguel Flores v Dat Nguyen. (Promoter: King's Promotions).

## THURSDAY 23

**Nizhny Tagil, Russia**

Dmitry Bivol v Robert Berridge; Sergey Kuzmin v Vaclav Pejzar. (Promoter: LTD RAT & World Boxing).

## FRIDAY 24

**York Hall, Bethnal Green (BoxNation)**

Thomas Essomba (holder) v Jay Harris (Commonwealth flyweight title); Boy Jones (holder) v Craig Poxton (Southern Area super-featherweight title); Lerrone Richards v s/o; Sanjeev Sahota v s/o; DP Carr v s/o; Harley Benn v Svetoslav Dimitrov; Zak Chelli v s/o; Naylor Ball v s/o; Charlie Driscoll v Rhys Saunders; Billy Long v s/o; Archie Sharp v s/o. (Promoter: Queensberry Promotions).

**Holiday Inn, Birmingham**

Jordan Clayton v s/o; Mike Cole v s/o; Ikram Hussain v s/o; Luke Heron v s/o. (Promoter: Black Country Boxing Promotion).

## BOXING ON THE BOX

## THURSDAY 9

**7.00pm BoxNation**  
Cassius & Helder

**7.30pm BoxNation**  
**LIVE** World Series  
of Boxing – Italia  
Thunder v British  
Lionhearts

## FRIDAY 10

**7.00pm BoxNation**  
Bunce's Boxing Hour

## SATURDAY 11

**12.00am BoxNation**  
**LIVE** Robert Easter Jnr  
v Luis Cruz

## MONDAY 13

**7.00pm BoxNation**  
Boxing Matters

## WEDNESDAY 15

**12.55am Channel 4**  
KOTV Boxing Weekly



# VESTED *INTEREST*

Meet the personalities  
at the heart of the sport  
With JOHN DENNEN

Ray Moylette is switching his ambitions to a new target



IS Olympic dreams ended in Venezuela. Ray Moylette had pursued his ambition through two professional style six round ABP contests

in Turkey and Uzbekistan.

He lost those bouts but taking them meant he was able to enter the last Olympic qualifier in Vargas. It was an extreme place to go for a boxing tournament, with civil unrest convulsing the country.

"We weren't allowed to leave the compound and had an escort everywhere we went. It was tough. We sort of blanked it out. We were on a job there," the Irishman said. "It's definitely some place I won't be rushing back to."

But he was unlucky at the tournament, being drawn against the eventual winner Hovhannes Bachkov in his first bout in Venezuela. "The top three qualified out of seven and myself and the Armenian

## 'THE OLYMPICS ISN'T THE BE ALL AND END ALL'

met in the first fight and he beat me on a unanimous decision but it was pretty close. He went on to [well beat] everyone else along the way. Some of those lads wouldn't have even laced my boots in the warm up. So the standard was pretty poor," Ray reflected.

"It's just the way the draw worked against me. It wasn't meant to be. If I had got anyone else in that draw I would have qualified."

Now he has moved on, without being

an Olympian. Discussing his frustrations he said, "After missing out on the Games and a couple of upsets I had over the

year and watching some of the judging in the Olympics, I just think what is it all about? Just seeing some of the Irish lads come back from the Olympic Games, they're back to square one. The Olympics isn't the be all and end all,

**'WE WEREN'T ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE COMPOUND. IT WAS TOUGH'**

what it's hyped up to be through your whole career.

"Even though it was my main ambition, my main goal was to get there. Even if I had gone there, I'd still have to make a choice where I am now. I didn't want to put four years into training for the Olympics and miss out again by dodgy decisions or being treated unfairly. I wasn't going to take that risk. I'll take the pro route, I'm 26 now and I don't have another four years to waste."

"It would have been a hard decision a couple of years ago. I never pursued it."

He's confident he can succeed professionally. "I've boxed in three World championships, three Europeans, I've travelled the world and thank God for

that. It's been very good to me. It's really moulded the person I am but I think it's just time now to move on and stand on my own two feet and take to the pro ranks and see what I can take from there," he said.

"I have a great pedigree behind me. I've had over 300 fights, former World [Youth] champion, former European champion and Senior Elite champion in my own country. I've fought with the best and beaten some of the best."

Moylette's pro debut will be in London at the Connaught Rooms on March 4.

"I hope to have a minimum of eight fights this year already," he said. "I just put pen to paper to get the show on the road. I'm looking forward now to getting started."



**John Dennen**

@BoxingNewsJD

Amateur Editor



**EXPERIENCE:**  
Despite his disappointments, Moylette [left] has a fine track record

Photo: NIKITA BASSOV/AIBA





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## WEB WISDOM

**So time for another flight off to Hungary for Bocsakai tournament, looking forward to doing three-threes.**

LISA WHITESIDE is on the road to fight again, and facing a new challenge.

**Getting the first flight from Leeds to London, then Italy later. Looking forward to my second World Series of Boxing fight on Thursday.**

But is Italy ready for DALTON SMITH?

**Congrats to Chris Eubank Jr on his win tonight, but I wasn't impressed. Give me 12 months and I'll take any title off him he's holding.**

World bronze medallist, Commonwealth Games champion, ABA Elite champion and Rio 2016 Olympian, ANTONY FOWLER throws down the gauntlet.

**Solid strength and pad work sessions done over here in sunny Australia. All prep for Commonwealth Games 2018.**

Scottish flyweight REECE MCFADDEN wants to repeat his Glasgow 2014 heroics at the next Commonwealth Games.

Photo: AIBA



**SEASONED:** Spicer [right] boxes in her second World championships

# 'THE QUALITY HAS IMPROVED'

## QUICK-FIRE Q&A

London boxer Valerian Spicer has now travelled all across the international circuit for Dominica

### WHAT'S your next target?

I could do another Commonwealth Games in 2018 and could do another, if I qualify, Pan American Games as well. They're probably the two big things.

It's tempting and I'm not ruling it out. But all my focus was geared up to Rio.

### How disappointing was it missing out on Rio?

I gave it my absolute best shot. I've got no regrets about anything over the last couple of years I had my funding I utilised at every opportunity and really made the most of it. I think what was disappointing was it's always very difficult boxing for a small nation [Dominica] when you're up against big countries. I had quite a few debatable decisions. There was nothing I could really have done about that.

I was bit unlucky in the qualification tournaments because my first qualification tournament was in Argentina, I won my first bout and I didn't get the decision in my second bout against Kiria Tapia from Puerto Rico, which I thought was a very debatable decision. Then the World championships

was the second qualification [tournament]. That's very, very hard to qualify from. I won my first bout and lost the second one to the Russian [Anastasia Belyakova], who obviously is very good, won a medal at the Olympics.

It was a very hard route to qualify.

### With more high-profile female boxers turning professional, is that something you'd be interested in?

No, I don't think professional boxing is for me. But fantastic that a lot more girls now are getting into professional boxing. It's about time. But I think it was only a matter of time before that happened. The amateur scene for female boxers is really competitive now and a lot of

the countries have structured boxing programmes. So I think it's only a matter of time before more and more girls go over into the professional domain.

### You boxed Katie Taylor once?

I did, it was my third international bout, just after the Commonwealth Games in 2014. It was at the Worlds in South Korea.

At that time she was [a level above]. Female boxing has now got a lot, lot stronger and the quality's a lot better. She's up there, definitely. But there are a lot of other good ones up there.

I did notice from [my] first Worlds to the second Worlds the quality had really improved.

## MISSION 2017

# GALAL YAFI

LIGHT-FLYWEIGHT Galal Yafai, one of the fighting brothers of new professional world champion Kal Yafai, will have his first contest since losing to Cuban World champion Joahnys Argilagos in the Olympic Games for the British Lionhearts on Thursday February 9.

"It feels good to be boxing again and it's great that it will be in WSB which is a really exciting format. I love that it's five rounds and the whole build up before with the weigh-in," Galal said. "My job when I'm out there is to make sure that I win. We want to get the season off to a good start and to make sure we've got our first win under our belt. Hopefully the team will have as much success as they did last year and secure their place the final."

BoxNation televise the match live from 7.30pm on Thursday.

**We pick out a boxer who's planning on making an impact this year**



## FAST FACTS

**Age:** 24

**From:** England

**Stance:** Southpaw

**Titles:** European Olympic Qualification Event



# AMATEUR SCENE

The very best action, previews and news from Olympic-style boxing

With JOHN DENNEN | @BoxingNewsJD

SEND us your club's news, results or upcoming events to [john.dennen@boxingnewsonline.net](mailto:john.dennen@boxingnewsonline.net) or 020 7618 3478

Among the new regulations, the 86kgs division will be in this year's Elite championships

A WEIGHT class will be restored to the England Boxing Elite championships this year. The old cruiserweight division is coming back. It is not an international weight division, therefore this weight class will not be a route to international boxing but it will an option for winning the national title.

This will be welcome news for many, who felt there was too great a gap between light-heavyweight (81kgs) and heavyweight (91kgs).

The new guidance from international governing body, AIBA is that: "National federations for domestic competitions may now alter the AIBA Technical Rules to reflect national laws or conditions as long as the alteration does not diminish the rules, especially regarding medical and safety requirements." For England Boxing "this is a significant change and is as a result of improved relationships between National Federations and AIBA," adding, "The England Boxing club guidelines were amended to ensure England Boxing and the other Home Nations have uniformity. This will assist when England Boxing boxers travel to Scotland and Wales."

The other measures to look out for are that when it comes to head butts or illegal blows, if there is no cut or injury the referee will give a warning and deduct a point or may disqualify the offending boxer. But if the illegal blow results in a cut or injury the referee must disqualify the offending boxer.

Elite and Youth boxers, both

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/MATTHEW CHILDS



**BLAST FROM THE PAST:** The old cruiserweight division, contested by Simon Barclay [right] and Deion Jumah in 2010, is reborn

## CRUISERS RETURN

male and female will now be boxing three-three minute rounds. The female Development championships, like the male development championships, will now also be boxed over three-threes.

A Youth boxer, born in 2000, can box a Junior born in 2001 provided there is no more than 12 months in age between them. A Youth cannot box an Elite boxer, unlike last year. England Boxing urge that "extra caution must be taken when matching boxers with more than

12 months age gap," although up to 24 month age gaps are allowed for Juniors and Youths.

England Boxing has introduced a lower entry level age for starting competitive boxing, saying: "A boxer must have attained their 10th birthday and can box either skills [an unscored exhibition] or competition or a combination of both bouts with

a recommendation that they box no more than 10 bouts (excluding championship bouts) in a season."

In England only senior male boxers compete without headguards.

AIBA sent a letter to national federations to say they were not planning

to remove headguards for Youth or Junior boxers, and would only remove them for senior female boxers after further study. They said: "No decision will be made concerning women's boxing and the removal of headguards until a due medical process is put into place just like for men... Regarding Youth and Junior categories, the removal of headguards is not envisaged. This rule has been existent for some years as part of the competition rules and its amendment is on the agenda of the next Technical & Rules commission meeting that will be held in February of this year."

**'THE REMOVAL OF HEADGUARDS NOT ENVISAGED FOR YOUTHS AND JUNIORS'**

## WORLD QUALIFIER SET

European championships will lead to the Worlds

A EUROPEAN men's championships will be held this year in Kharkiv, Ukraine, from June 14-25.

The competition will also act as a qualification for the men's World

championships, set to begin in August in Hamburg. According to the EUBC the top eight boxers at the European championships will win a place at the Worlds.

280 boxers will compete at the 2017 World Elite Championships. 260 places are up for grabs through the various Continental qualifiers, as

the host nation will take ten places and there are ten wild cards. The wild cards will be chosen by the AIBA Seeding Commission with a view to ensuring a high level of competition.

2017 therefore will be a busy year at least for elite male international boxers.



# IRISH ELITES UNDERWAY

## Olympians set to enter at semi-final stage

THE big names are sent to enter the Elite championships at the semi-final stage, which take place at the National Stadium in Dublin from February 10-11. 2016 light-heavyweight Olympian Joe Ward is set to enter at that stage. He'll want to restore momentum after an Olympic campaign that proved deeply disappointing, losing a winnable first contest in Rio to Ecuador's Carlos Mina.

Fellow Olympian Brendan Irvine will also box in the semi-finals. The young flyweight has plenty of potential. He also lost his first contest at Rio 2016 but had a tough draw, coming up against gold medallist Uzbekistan's Shakhobidin Zoirov. Irvine beat England Ishmail Khan in December and will have to refocus on the next Olympic cycle.

All the way up at heavyweight, London 2012 middleweight and then team captain Darren O'Neil competes in another Elite championships. Sean McComb, a European Games medallist and former national champion, will enter at 64kgs at the semi-final stage too.

The quarter-finals took place at the National Stadium from February 4-5. Dean Walsh has moved up to welterweight and picked up a unanimous win over Mark McCole.

Former Elite champion Myles Casey beat Eamon McNally at 56kgs but his St Francis BC team-mate,

Photo: NIKITA BASSOV/AIBA



**RESTART:**  
Joe Ward has to rebuild after the heartbreak of Rio 2016

flyweight Tommy Casey lost to TJ Waite, who was beaten by Irvine in the 2015 Irish final. St Francis BC's Ken Moore praised the performance of both men in an emotional week for the club following the death of club president Noel Griffin. "Both of our lads performed well. It will be hard for us to say goodbye to Noel. He has given sixty years service to Limerick and Irish boxing and is irreplaceable," said Moore.

The bouts were scored with the new system of using all five judges' cards.

### QUARTER-FINALS RESULTS

**52:** TJ WAITE (Ormeau Road) outpd Tommy Casey (St Francis) 5-0. **56:** EVAN METCALFE (Crumlin) outpd Frankie Cleary (Ballina) 5-0, MYLES CASEY (St Francis) outpd Eamon McNally (St Michaels Antrim) 5-0. **60:** GARY McKENNA (Old School) outpd Alan O'Connor (Bawnogue) 5-0. **64:** PATRICK LINEHAN (St Marys Dublin) outpd Colm Quinn (Castlebar) 4-1. **69:** DEAN WALSH (St Ibars) outpd Mark McCole (Dungloe) 5-0, TIERNAN BRADLEY (Sacred Heart O) outpd Gerard French (Clonard U) 4-1, PETER CARR (Crumlin) outpd Nathan Watson (Saints) 5-0, BRETT MCGINTY (Oakleaf) outpd Ross Boyle (Mourne GG) 3-2, MARK MCCOLE (Dungloe) outpd Fergal Redmond (Arklow) 5-0. **75:** EMMETT BRENNAN (Glasnevin) outpd John Joyce (St Michaels Athy) 5-0,

FEARGHUS QUINN (Camlough) outpd Glory Carlos Lumuala (Maynooth) 5-0, STEPHEN BROADHURST (Delagan) outpd David Bicevas (St Saviours OBA) 5-0, CAOIMHIN HYNES (Holy Trinity) outpd Conor Doherty (Emerald Antrim) 5-0. **81:** MICHAEL FRAYNE (St Marys Dublin) outpd Robert Burke (Glasnevin) 5-0, ANTHONY BROWNE (St Michaels Dub) outpd Sean Conroy (Ballina) 3-2. **91:** JOHN JOE McDONAGH (Crumlin) outpd Kiril Afanasev (Smithfield) 3-2, CORMAC LONG (Rathkeale) outpd Geoffrey Kavanagh (Glasnevin) 4-1. **91&:** MARTIN KEENAN (Rathkeale) outpd Patrick Nevin (St Michaels Dublin) 5-0, BERNARD O'REILLY (Portlaoise) outpd James Clarke (Kilnarnagh) 5-0, THOMAS CARTY (Glasnevin) outpd John McDonnell (Crumlin) 4-1.

## BOXING AMBASSADOR

### World ruler and Olympic champion Ward reaches out

LIGHT-HEAVYWEIGHT legend Andre Ward took time from his busy schedule to meet young boxers at Fitzroy Lodge and Earlsfield ABC on Friday afternoon (February 3).

The affable Ward, in town

to work for the broadcasters of the Eubank Jnr fight on Saturday, spent hours sharing anecdotes and answering all manner of questions about his amateur and professional careers.

He also posed for photos and signed autographs for the small crowd under the arches of the Lodge's Lambeth gym.

Photo: MARK ROBINSON/POXON SPORTS



## BATTLE COMMENCES

### The new season of the World Series of Boxing starts up

THE new season of the World Series of Boxing began on Friday (February 3). The Cuba Domadores, last season's champion, swept away the Caciques Venezuela winning all five bouts in Cuba. Some of their star names were in action. Reigning Olympic 75kgs gold medallist Arlen Lopez was in action, widely outpointing Keiber Gonzalez, 50-45, 50-44 and 50-43. Light-flyweight Johany Argilagos, a Rio 2016 bronze

medallist, was similarly dominant in defeating Jefferson Blanco. The Argentina Condors lost 4-1 at home to the Colombia Heroics, a new in the WSB this season.

The following day the first match in Group C, the Asian group, took place in Moscow and saw the newly renamed Russian franchise, the Patriot Boxing Team lose to the Astana Arlans Kazakhstan, two bouts to three. In the same group the China Dragons beat the Uzbek Tigers 3-2 in Sanya.

Visit [www.boxingnewsonline.net](http://www.boxingnewsonline.net) for more.



Photo: GETTY IMAGES



**A STEP TOO FAR:**  
Monzon [right] proves  
too much for Napoles  
at middleweight

## NO WAY, JOSE



Monzon shows his greatness against Napoles, writes George Gigney

AT welterweight, where he held the WBC and WBA titles, Jose Napoles was a magnificent champion, but his jump to middleweight against 160lb supremo Carlos Monzon was a step too far.

In Paris, the Mexican was too small against the imposing Argentine Monzon, who proved himself a middleweight great by thrashing Jose, who didn't come out for the seventh round.

Angelo Dundee, who was leading Napoles' corner, claimed his man had been thumbed in the eye, which affected his vision. While his optic was swollen and puffy, we felt there was no way Napoles could have won on this night.

Monzon knew he could hurt Napoles, but that Jose could not hurt him. He held centre-ring and unleashed arrogant, bruising blows as Napoles tried to move

in. When Jose stood and traded with the WBC and WBA middleweight champion, Napoles was beaten back.

Whenever Napoles landed a forceful shot, Monzon ate it up, his expression never changing, and fired back. As the fight hit the middle stages, Monzon refused to let Napoles off the hook and the shellacking proved too much, forcing Napoles to retire from the bout.

### CONTEH RISING

LIVERPUDLIAN light-heavyweight John Conteh got a decent workout from Les Stevens, whom he outpointed over 10 rounds at the Royal Albert Hall, displaying the sort of skill which led many to believe he could win a world title.

When he boxed at range, using his stellar jab, and kept things at his own pace, Conteh looked unbeatable. However, Reading's Stevens was able to move inside and rattle John's cage at times.

Nevertheless, Conteh got the better of the Southern Area heavyweight champion, earning a score of 98 1/2-96 1/2 on referee Harry Gibbs' card.

Conteh's jabs and hooks kept Stevens at bay for most of the fight, though Les staged a brave rally in the eighth, unsettling Conteh but not doing enough to stem the tide. Conteh went on to win the vacant WBC light-heavy crown later that year.

### BIG RISK

TONY MUNDINE, the Australian middleweight, was preparing to take on hard-hitting Bennie Briscoe in a bid to earn a crack at world champion Monzon.

Our Australian correspondent, Don Marks, felt that the Mundine-Briscoe winner should not get such a shot, given that Rodrigo Valdes had previously outpointed Briscoe in an eliminator.

Mundine had knocked back a fight with Briscoe the previous

year, so we questioned his motives for accepting a bout against the American contender. At 31, this was seen as Briscoe's last chance at earning a world title shot.

We admitted it was difficult to pick a winner, but noted that Briscoe's position at the time made him very dangerous – that proved true, as he knocked Mundine out in five rounds in Paris, before losing to Valdes for the WBC title stripped from Monzon.



# BOXING BOOTHS OF THE SWINGING '60s

F



**Alex Daley**

@thealexdaley

**Historian  
& author**

FORMER Southern Area welterweight champion Ricky Porter (Swindon) has seen the fight game from every angle. He's been a boxer, trainer, manager and small-hall promoter, and for much of the 1960s he was a booth fighter. Although the booths' glory days were before World War II, Ricky's recollections show they were still popular in the 1960s. (N.B. 'Gee' fights were staged,

*theatrically choreographed contests. 'Nobbins' was money thrown into the ring by spectators).*

## What were the booths like in the 1960s?

When you see booths on old films, you're usually shown old equipment and old gloves, like in the film *The Krays*, but that's not the booths as I knew them. They were a lot more up to date in my day. Some of them were like proper shows with clean tents and new rings, and they'd supply proper shorts.

## How did you get into booth boxing?

For years I found it hard to get gym facilities and sparring. One day I asked my pal, ex-pro Joe Ceroni, if he'd spar with me, but I couldn't afford to pay him much, so Joe suggested I join him on the booths. I done the booths with Joe for years every summer, so I was pretty fit by the time the new boxing season started. We'd follow the booths around and travel home each day, but when the booth was in a distant place – like Nottingham Goose Fair or Durham Miners' Gala – we'd stay overnight.

## How did gee fights work?

You'd have a booth fighter, which was me, standing on the front taking on all comers. But not every crowd has people who've got the bottle to get in a ring with a pro fighter, so you'd also have your gee. Now your gee is a guy who stands in the crowd, and Joe Ceroni was my gee. If no one challenged me, Joe'd put his hand up. If someone did challenge me, I'd take them on. But I'd have to get them out the way quick because my gee needs to earn money. But with the gee fights you're required to go on the floor. I had 76 pro fights and only got knocked down once, so I'm not gonna be up and down three or four times in a fairground

Photo: LARRY BRAYSHER



**PROLIFIC:**  
Porter once had 18 fights in one day

## A Q&A with 1960s welter Ricky Porter about his time on the booths

fight under the name Ricky Porter. So my booth name was Lennie Sinclair. He was an actual fighter in Liverpool. My mate Rocky Tonks used to tell me about Lennie Sinclair, and I thought, 'What a good name for a fighter – that'll do.' Funnily enough, years later I met the actual Lennie Sinclair. Joe boxed on the booths as Gino Loi and said he was the brother of world [super-light] champ Duilio Loi!

## Which booths did you box on and what was the pay like?

I used to mostly work for Ronnie Taylor, but I also worked for the McKeowens, Mel Reid and Johnny Gage. I was earning £50-£60 a day. You used to get £3 for three rounds, £4 for four rounds and then the nobbins, which might be a tenner. So for every two fights you'd get about £17. And I was only getting £7 a day from roofing. I once had 18 fights in a day at St Giles' Fair in Oxford. That's a fair that started at 9am and finished at midnight.

## EX-BOXER ASSOCIATION NEWS

### JIMMY RYAN, R.I.P

PLYMOUTH EBA secretary Ron Courtis informs me of the death of the association's long-serving chairman, Jimmy Ryan. Jimmy – who passed away on January 15, aged 87 – was a travelling booth fighter in his youth. In 1952, he had six official pro fights, meeting future Welsh Area middleweight champ Phil Edwards, among others. Plymouth EBA meets on the last Sunday of every month.

### TOM WISBEY, R.I.P

LONDON EBA (LEBA) member Tom Wisbey passed

away on December 30, aged 86. Tom had followed the LEBA since it started in 1971, and held many fundraising events at his pub, The Trafalgar. Wisbey, who was born in Peckham on April 27, 1930, boxed while serving in the army. He was best known to many for his part in the infamous Great Train Robbery.

His friends at the LEBA included Albert Carroll, Sammy McCarthy, Eddie Richardson, Peter Kent and the late Terry Spinks.

EMAIL [exboxers@gmail.com](mailto:exboxers@gmail.com) with your ex-boxer association news.



# LEE REDPATH

Paul Wheeler talks to a karate kid

Photo: STUART WARD

## When and why you started boxing:

I first started boxing when I was 11 years old. I did karate at first, but [trainer] Rab McEwan told me to give boxing a try, and it just took off from there.

## Favourite all-time fighter:

It'd have to be "The Greatest", Muhammad Ali. The reason speaks for itself.

## Best fight you've seen:

The first Arturo Gatti-Micky Ward fight [a 10-round majority decision win for Ward in May 2002] was a good one.

## Personal career highlight:

I'd say turning pro. I left it a bit late [32 years old], but that's my best achievement so far.

## Toughest opponent:

The toughest person I've been in the ring with is Craig McEwan in sparring. He was close to world title level when he was fighting out in America a few years ago.

## Best and worst attributes as a boxer:

My strength is my hand speed, and my weakness is my defence – I drop my hands too often.

## Training tip:

Look after your body, and eat and drink well.

## Favourite meal/restaurant:

I'm not going to lie, I do like fast food!

## Best friends in boxing:

Craig McEwan and my coach, Scott Cowan.

**'MY STRENGTH IS MY HAND SPEED, AND MY WEAKNESS IS MY DEFENCE'**



**'I WAS STARSTRUCK WHEN I MET [PRO WRESTLER] THE BRITISH BULLDOG WHEN I WAS YOUNGER!'**

## Other sportsman you would like to be:

A football player.

## Last film/TV show you saw:

I'm in the middle of watching the *Breaking Bad* boxset right now.

## Who would play you in a film of your life:

I'd pick Adam Sandler, so it'd have to be a comedy film!

## Have you ever been starstruck:

When I met [pro wrestler] The British Bulldog when I was younger!

## Last time you cried:

The last time I cried was when I couldn't stop laughing with my partner. There were tears streaming down my face!

## Best advice received:

My dad once said to me, 'Only you can achieve what you want to achieve from life.'

## Worst rumour about yourself:

That I was a womaniser!

## Something not many people know about you:

I'm a brown belt in karate.

## FAST FACTS

Age: 34 Twitter: @LeeRed7 Nickname: 'Super Lee' Height: 5ft 11ins  
Nationality: Scottish From: Edinburgh Stance: Southpaw Record: 5-0-1  
Division: Super-lightweight Titles: n/a Next fight: Redpath challenges Eddie Doyle over 10 rounds for the Scottish Area super-lightweight title in Motherwell on March 3.

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