

SPORTS BOARD

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March 13, 1986



Now eyes Hagler

HEARNS WINS NABF CROWN OVER SHULER

It was an easy night for Thomas Hearns Monday in the North American Boxing Federation middleweight championship at Caesars Palace.

Hearns hurt James Shuler with a short right hand and then knocked Shuler out with another stunning right to win the North American Boxing Federation middleweight championship at Caesars Palace.

Now, bring on Marvin Hagler, the undisputed world middleweight champion who defended his title by knocking out John Mugabi in the 11th round Monday at Caesars.

It was Hagler who stopped Hearns in the third round last April at Caesars Palace.

"I would love to fight Hagler. I've got something to prove," said Hearns. "I'm not finished. I've got a long way to go."

It was Hearns' first fight since his third-round knockout loss to Hagler last



Thomas Hearns

year. Hearns, 160 pounds, of Detroit, showed that he wasn't finished as a middleweight, not by a long shot.

He started the fight by working his left jab. He caught Shuler several times with lefts to the body. He then rocked Shuler with a short right to the head at about the 1-minute mark.

Then came the big right. Hearns caught Shuler flush on the head and Shuler went down.

Referee Richard Steele counted Shuler out at 1:13 of the round and Hearns was the new NABF middleweight champion.

"I hit him with a couple of left hooks to the body and the couple I threw made him lower his hands," said Hearns.

Shuler agreed.

Hearns entered the fight as the World Boxing Council's super welterweight champion. That title wasn't on the line Monday. He did capture the NABF crown.

But it's the undisputed world middleweight championship that looms mightily on Hearns' mind.



SUPER COACH — Former Green Bay Packer all-pro and Hall of Famer Willie Davis (l.) joined a multitude of top leaders in a moving tribute to Coach Eddie G. Robinson (2nd from r.) at the Los Angeles Sheraton Plaza La Reina Hotel when the Los Angeles Chapter of the Grambling State University Alumni Association honored the winningest college football mentor. Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley (r.) presented Coach Robinson with a plaque while Bob Green (2nd from l.) gave the coach a check for \$20,000 for the Grambling State University Scholarship Fund. Green, senior vice president of the co-sponsoring Paddington Corp., importers of J&B Scotch, also gave Coach Robinson and his wife, Doris, tickets for a Caribbean cruise, which was co-sponsored by the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and Don and Karen Rodgers' Regal Travel Service.

Hagler KO's Mugabi at 1:29 in 11th Round

While promoter Bob Arum was talking about plans for a Marvin Hagler-Thomas Hearns rematch, Hagler surprisingly was taking a wait-and-see attitude.

Hagler had just come off of a tough fight, finally

knocking out previously undefeated John Mugabi at 1:29 of the 11th round of their scheduled 12-round bout before a sellout crowd in an outdoor stadium at Caesars Palace Monday night.

Arum had been talking about a Hagler-Hearns rematch for September, again at Caesars Palace, after Hearns had knocked out James Shuler in the first round earlier in the night.

But Hagler, who had not indicated anything before about not continuing his boxing career, wouldn't commit himself to the rematch with Hearns.

"No, I'm not committing myself to anything right now," Hagler said. "I'm going to go home and rest."

Hagler had just defended his undisputed middleweight championship for the 12th time in what was one of his toughest challenges.

Mugabi, a native of Uganda now fighting out of Tampa, Fla., put up a much tougher fight than most people expected.

Witherspoon fined \$25,000 by WBA

Tim Witherspoon, who tested positive for marijuana after beating Tony Tubbs for the World Boxing Association heavyweight title, must give Tubbs a rematch within 90 days, WBA counsel James Binns said Monday.

Witherspoon was fined \$25,000, but the WBA did not withdraw title recognition from him, Binns said.

The attorney said the winner of the rematch must then defend the title against top-ranked Frank Bruno of Britain within 90 days of the rematch.

Witherspoon won the title on a 15-round decision over Tubbs last Jan. 17 at Atlanta.

The Georgia Boxing Commission has fined Witherspoon \$500 and placed him on a year's probation.

Witherspoon appeared at a hearing in Philadelphia last Friday, during which he pleaded to keep his title, saying "I'm not a criminal."

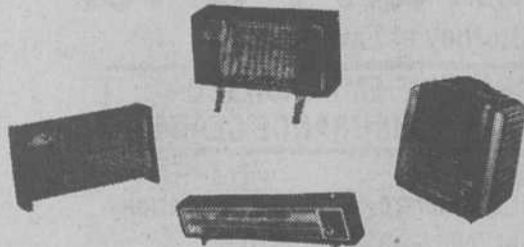
"All my life I tried to make good and everybody makes a mistake."



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