

# Boxing's current scoring technique is archaic

Ever since the first boxing match was held in 1719, the sport has been subjected to alterations that have made the battles more enjoyable to those in attendance around the world.

But recently, the scoring of some bouts has once again brought criticism, not only about the accuracy of the scores, but whether there should be a way for the participants to find out just what scores are being posted as the bout progresses.

The recent loss of Bernard Hopkins to Jermain Taylor by one point should be carefully scrutinized because of one judge, Duane Ford, scoring the last round 10-9 for Taylor while the other judges gave the round to Hopkins who clearly won the round.

Many decades ago, the fighting was done with bare knuckles. In early years of the sport, James Figgs was recognized as the champion, and he was followed by a succession of contenders, like Yankee Sullivan, the first American champion in 1860.

After the Marquis of Queensberry decided the participants should wear gloves, James J. Corbett defeated the Boston Strong Boy, John L. Sullivan, and boxing became more acceptable to the masses, and the sport has gained momentum over the last hundred years.

The time was reduced to two minute rounds for some amateur bouts and three min-



## SPORTS PACE

By Huel Washington

utes for the professional fighters. A minute rest between rounds was added, too.

The referees used to vote in bouts but now most bouts have three judges, and the referee just enforces the states' fighting rules. Several years ago, championship bouts were shortened from 15 rounds to 12 rounds, and few of the fighters, managers, trainers, or patrons complained.

In quite a few states, women have become judges of bouts, and in a few bouts between females, there have been women referees.

Currently, in Nevada, the ballots of the judges are collected between each round and handed to the Nevada Athletic Commission representative who is at ringside.

In Las Vegas, the NAC Executive Director Marc Ratner is usually at ringside, especially at big bouts.

Ratner, who was recently inducted into the Southern Nevada Sports Hall of Fame, is also a football official in the Mountain West Conference, the head of the high school football officials association and the time keeper for the UNLV women's and men's basketball games.

In football and basketball, the scores are given after crossing the goal or when a basket is made. This way, the fans have some idea who is winning. After each round in a professional boxing bout, the fans have to guess who won, because they can't see

how the judges have voted.

The fighters are also in the dark about the scoring of each round. For instance, Hopkins didn't realize that one judge gave Taylor the first six rounds.

When informed of the loss of the first six rounds on one judge's card, Hopkins said, "I was sitting down. I must have been knocked out to lose the first six rounds."

But if he could see the scores, he would have known how far, if any, he was behind in the bout. Another

judge had the six rounds split, three each, while the judge who gave Taylor the last round, gave Hopkins only one of the first six rounds.

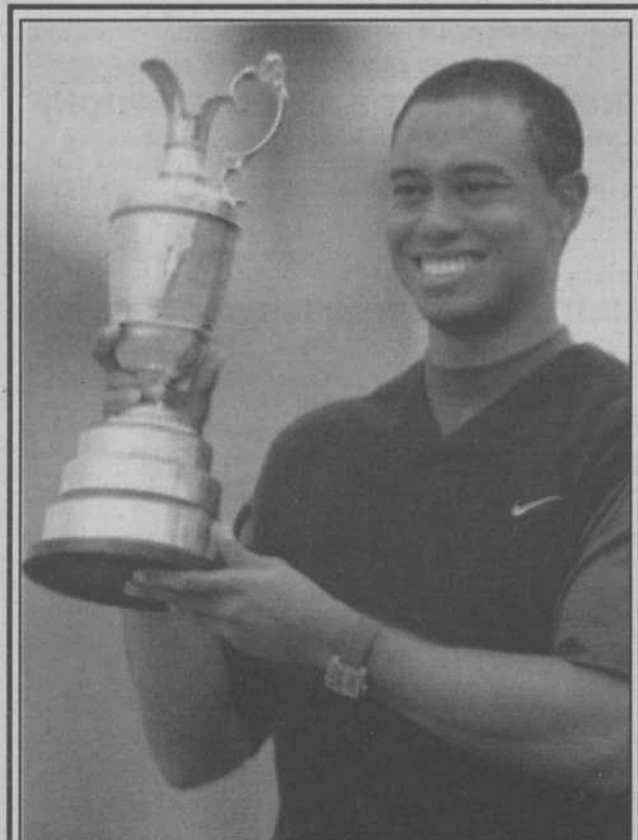
In another bout on the card, Fernando Montiel defended his junior bantamweight title against Everett Briceno. Each of judges had Montiel almost pitching a shut out.

But to illustrate the discrepancy in the voting, in round eight, two judges gave Briceno the round in a bout that had scores of 118-110,

(10-2), 117-111 (9-3), 117-111 (9-3), all for Montiel. Actually, Briceno didn't win a round by the media; however, he would have fought harder if he knew he was that far behind.

Ratner is against posting the scores after each round, because he thinks the winning fighter won't give the fans their best effort once they are ahead. That's not true.

With all of his sports background, Ratner doesn't (See Sports Pace, Page 15)



### RETURN OF THE KING

Tiger Woods of the U.S. holds the Claret Jug trophy after winning the British Open in St. Andrews on Sunday. Woods won the 134th British Open on Sunday by five shots with a 14-under-par 274 total.

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