

Boxing Ringside with Bobby Franklin

Carter Vs Mims

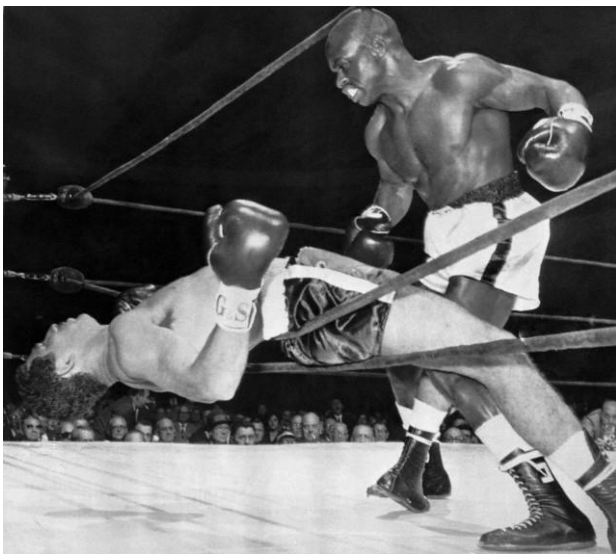
Learning While Fighting

Recently, I watched the 1962 fight between Ruben Hurricane Carter and Holly Mims. The fight took place on December 22, 1962 at Madison Square Garden. It is a highly interesting bout to watch. In it you can see how Carter had to adapt from depending on his powerful punch in order to deal with the wily veteran Mims. *(Photo Holly Mims)*



Carter's original opponent for that night was Gomeo Brennan. Brennan pulled out the morning of the fight when he woke up with a head cold. A call was put in to Mims who lived in Washington, DC and he agreed to fill in for Brennan. He caught a flight to NY and by that evening was in the ring facing the hard punching Carter.

Mims was a savvy boxer and was always in shape. He had fought just a month earlier. However, stepping in on short notice against such a strong opponent may not have seemed like a wise move. Of course, it could also be argued that in what was only his 16th bout Carter may have been smart to avoid such a ring wise veteran as Mims who could make him look bad even if Carter won. It actually proved to be a good move on Ruben's part even though Holly gave him all he could handle.



Two months earlier Carter had destroyed Florentino Fernandez in the first round with a devastating knock out. Carter had raw power and a solid chin, but was he beginning to rely too much on that power to score victories? That is the curse of the heavy hitters. They get lazy when it comes to learning the finer points of the game. The list of promising superstar punchers who never quite made it because of this lack of learning is a long one. *(Photo Carter v Fernandez)*

This is where the Mims fight showed a lot about Carter. Ruben was the favorite going

into the match. The odds were large in his favor probably due to the fact that Mims only had a few hours notice before taking the fight. Holly had 82 fights at that point in his career and had never been stopped. Ruben was in only his 16th fight. Eleven of Carter's victories were by kayo with the Fernandez stoppage putting him on the fistic map. *(Photo Ruben Hurricane Carter)*



Mims came into the fight with 59 wins, 23 losses, and 6 draws. He had been fighting since 1948 and had faced the likes of Sugar Ray Robinson, Joey Giardello, Rocky Castellani, Spider Webb, George Benton, and Henry Hank.

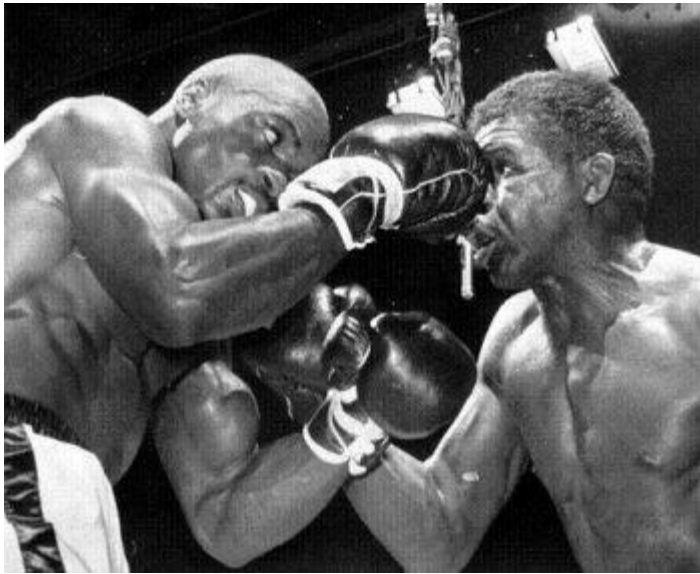
When the bell rang in the Garden that night Carter came out in explosive fashion. Memories of his destruction of Fernandez were still fresh in his mind, and he probably felt he could repeat what he did that night. He did hurt Mims, and for a moment it looked as if he would score an early kayo. However, Mims was no Fernandez. He was a complete fighter who knew how to handle any situation in the ring. When hurt, he knew how to cover up, how to hold, how to fight back and let his opponent know he'd better not get too wild or he will pay a price.

Carter was not able to pull off a first round victory, but he kept the attack up in the second round. By now Mims was figuring Ruben out and was hitting him with beautiful jabs from a distance, and when Carter would get within power punch range, Holly would move in close where he was the superior in-fighter.

In the fourth round Mims dropped Carter with a left hook right hand combination near the ropes. Carter was up immediately, but he had been shaken. He didn't see this coming and you can see by his face he was recalculating his strategy. At the end of the round he tapped Mims on the shoulder in a sign of respect for the veteran.

Starting in round five Carter showed he was more than just a powerful puncher. He had the mind of a good boxer. He came out shortening up his shots. He had been made to pay for swinging too widely, but what differentiated him from so many other punchers, he was able to adapt mid-fight. It turns out he had more than a punch, he had the mind of a good boxer. Sure, Mims was still frustrating him, but he didn't allow that to discourage him as so many others would have.

Watching this fight is a pleasure for a couple of reasons. First, you get to see the brilliant boxing of Holly Mims. He is amazing in the ring. The term "educated left hand" could have been coined just for him. He was the consummate counter-puncher, could fight in close and at long range with equal skill, and was very difficult to hit with a solid blow.



With Carter you see a young fighter developing right before your eyes. After he was dropped in the 4th round he could have let his frustration take hold and he would have lost. Instead, he realized he had to do something different, and he did even if that meant having to give up on scoring a knockout. (*Photo Carter (Left) and Mims Mix It Up Inside*)

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Ruben Carter won a unanimous decision that night, one he worked hard for. Even if he had lost the fight to Mims it would have been worth it for what he learned that night. Ten rounds in the ring with Holly Mims was like going to boxing graduate school for Carter. He came out of that fight a much better fighter than he was going in.

In 102 career fights Holly Mims was only stopped once, and that was on cuts and near the end of his career. In 40 fights Carter was also stopped only once, and that was also on cuts. Mims was not known as a puncher having only scored 13 knockouts in his career. Carter will always be remembered as a knockout artist having scored 19 knockouts in his 27 victories. Both will be remembered as being fighters who were next to impossible to kayo.

Watch the Mims/Carter fight, then watch it again. It is a very interesting fight and you will not only be entertained by it, you will learn a lot from it.