

## FIGHT JUDGES' SUBJECTIVE WORLD

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### Document Text

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{A PUBLISHED CORRECTION HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS STOR

#### HAGLER-LEONARD

LAS VEGAS - The ninth round of Sugar Ray Leonard's split decision victory over Marvelous Marvin Hagler Monday night was a classic, one of the greatest in championship history.

Both fighters found a higher gear for three minutes of ferocious give-and- take action.

That it was not scored unanimously by the three ringside judges illustrates the rancor attending the decision and the vagaries of boxing's subjective scoring system.

Judge Dave Moretti of Nevada and Lou Filippo of California gave the round to Hagler. But Judge JoJo Guerra scored it for Leonard.

Yesterday Pat Petronelli, Hagler's co-manager, said of Guerra, "They ought to put that guy in jail."

Said Guerra, who judged his 45th title fight, "I have nothing to be ashamed of."

Guerra's 118-110 margin for Leonard -- meaning he saw Leonard winning 10 of 12 rounds -- was under fire yesterday from Hagler's camp and Nevada boxing officials. Moretti's 115-113 score for Leonard and Filippo's 115-113 for Hagler indicated the true closeness of the bout, they said.

Said Duane Ford, chairman of the state athletic commission, which selects the judges, "He (Guerra) wasn't there."

Moretti was "right on target," and Filippo was "close," Ford said.

Ford added, "Pat Petronelli is an extremely sore loser."

Guerra, of Monterey, Mexico, defended his scoring, saying Leonard "outboxed" Hagler and "beat him to the punch."

Non-boxing fans may think it curious that three obscure judges can decide the outcome of a multimillion-dollar competition between two highly trained athletes. Boxing fans accept subjective scoring only grudgingly, hoping always for the finality of a knockout.

Subjective scoring is equally controversial in diving, figure skating and gymnastics.

Generally, boxing judges take into account punching, aggressiveness, defense and ring generalship. But philosophies differ from judge to judge.

Judges must be licensed by either a state commission, as are Moretti and Filippo, or by a world sanctioning body, as Guerra is by the World Boxing Council.

The state commission selected the three judges, with input from the WBC and both fighters' handlers, Ford said.

Ironically, it was Pat Petronelli who demanded a Mexican judge, Ford said.

"He requested a Mexican judge because he felt a Mexican judge favored a slugger," said Ford, the father of Tufts football coach Duane Ford Jr. {CORRECTION: Because of a reporting error, the Nevada State Athletic Commission chairman was incorrectly identified in yesterday's Globe as the father of Tufts football coach Duane Ford. He is the coach's uncle.}

Petronelli "stereotyped" Mexican judges because Mexican fighters traditionally disdain clever boxing, Ford said.

Said Petronelli, "I asked for a guy who likes infighting, like a Mexican."

The fight was difficult to score, as evidenced by the lack of agreement among the judges.

In just five of the 12 rounds -- 1, 2, 5, 6 and 11 -- did all three agree. Leonard won rounds 1, 2, 6 and 11, while Hagler won the fifth unanimously.

Guerra differed from the other two in five rounds.

Moretti and Filippo agreed on eight of 12 rounds.

"It was a tough fight to score," said Filippo, of Los Angeles. "Some of the rounds could have gone either way. A one-round swing between myself and Moretti would have produced a draw."

Filippo said he felt Hagler won because he fought a full three minutes each round, while Leonard fought sporadically.

"You have to score all three minutes," said Filippo. "Leonard held a lot, and Hagler was the aggressor. Without Hagler pressing, there wouldn't have been a fight."

However, Hagler's attack "was not effective aggression because he missed a lot," Filippo said.

Filippo, 61, a supervisor for Waltham-based Thermo Electron, was working his 35th title fight as a judge or referee, he said.

"Sometimes when you're on the short end, you feel bad," he said. "But I don't feel bad. I was close."

The closeness was indicated by punching statistics kept at ringside. Hagler connected on 291 of 792 punches (37 percent), and Leonard scored on 306 of 629 punches (49 percent). However, the punch statistics do not take into account the effectiveness of the punches, Ford pointed out.

Judges are instructed in seminars, but standard criteria are difficult to establish, Ford said. Judges are told to watch a target "zone" that splits down the middle of a boxer's head and shoulders and extends to the top of the hip.

"Each judge has his own cup of tea," said Ford. "But the one who lands punches with aggression

wins the fight. You've got to do something to win. It's not that complicated."

Said Filippo, "Concentration is the main thing."

It is not unusual for a judge to perform badly in a major bout, Ford said.

"In Las Vegas, there is a certain pressure, like shooting a free throw in the NCAA finals," said Ford. "The pressure is caused by the grandeur of the event. Some of these judges come to Nevada and feel a tightening." marant;04/07 NKELLY;04/08,10:24

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## Illustration

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### Abstract (Document Summary)

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