

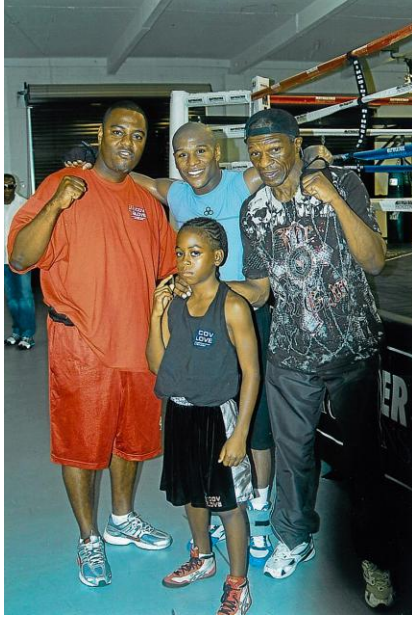
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The Mouthpiece

Young Money—Dylan “Lil Dave” Price

By: George H. Hanson Jr., Esq.

Had there been a weight class small enough to accommodate Dylan Price, the United States would have won two gold medals instead of the one garnered by 17-year-old female phenom—



Dylan and (L-R) Dave, Floyd and Floyd Sr.

Claressa Shields. Shield’s gold medal bout was the only fight that I watched in the London Olympics. Sad to say, I refuse to watch amateur boxing, because it has been reduced to “fencing with boxing gloves.” It was breathtaking to watch Shields attack and dominate 33-year-old Nadezda Torlopova of Russia. The teenager didn’t bounce in and out and throw tapping scoring blows. Surprisingly, Shields’ style replicated that of a seasoned professional instead of a point-scoring amateur. She stayed close, ripping vicious combinations to the head and body like a female version of Mike “The Body Snatcher” McCallum. Ironically, Price is cut from the same cloth—a precision punching machine who is deadly accurate and very difficult to hit because of his impeccable head movement. In the words of the great Michael Gerard Tyson, “his style is impetuous and his defense is impregnable.” Like Shields, Price is a beast! Oh I forgot to tell you, he is only 13-year-old and tips the Toledo at under 90-pounds!

Last winter, I had to cut my workout short and take a seat next to the leather heavy bag at my home base—Marian Anderson Recreation Center in South Philadelphia—as I was distracted and intrigued by the sound of tiny fists making a saccadic rhythm hammering away at an imaginary opponent. Young Dylan Price was wreaking havoc on a phantom ensconced in his mind and the bag which dwarfs his 90-pound body was paying a heavy price. He feinted, jabbed, hooked to the body and head, and sidestepped as the contraption seemed to have a mind of its own swinging on its hinges from the rafters wanting to swipe its tormentor and knock him flat over to the wall next to the weight bench—my haven that I had just vacated. The pint-sized pugilist delivered combinations with pinpoint accuracy, moving with the grace and alacrity of a panther stalking its prey, following the instructions of his father five feet away. I couldn’t help reveling in the display of pugilistic prowess and its similarity to the greatest fighter on the planet—Floyd “Money” Mayweather— as I heard rapper Lil Wayne blaring from the hard drive of my memory —“Young Moolah baby.....!”

Dylan Price is a preacher’s kid, but his dad, Dave Price, is no ordinary evangelist. The elder Price is a former fighter, an entrepreneur with multiple businesses and the inventor of the Cov-Glove, which was “designed to help eliminate the unraveling of tape in the midst of a boxing match.” The open sleeve fits snugly over the laces of the glove thus eliminating the usage of tape around the wrists. Price is an assistant trainer at the Mitchell Allen Boxing Gym at the Shepard

Recreation Center in West Philadelphia where he trains his son and other amateurs. He is a mainstay in the corner of welterweight contender Mike “Machine Gun” Jones and USBA and NABF cruiserweight champion Garrett “The Ultimate Warrior” Wilson. But, his most important acolyte is his son, whom he introduced to the sweet science.

Just four days shy of his 14th birthday which he will celebrate on August 17th, young Price wasn’t allowed to taste the sweet science until he tried other sports as mandated by his father. Thus, he played football and basketball with the elder Price leading the way as coach of both teams. The first year he played his team won the championship in both football and basketball. He had fulfilled the terms of his prerequisites and hopped into the squared circle under the tutelage of dad. Success followed them into the ring and in 2009, his second year of competition, the diminutive fighter not only won the National PAL championship, but he also took the Ringside National title.

Every summer, Dave Price and his son make a pugilistic pilgrimage to the Mecca of Boxing—The Mayweather Boxing Gym in Las Vegas to train alongside the greatest pugilist still fighting and arguably the greatest defensive fighter of all time—Floyd “Money” Mayweather. Forever the gracious host, Mayweather and his father Floyd Sr. have provided pearls of wisdom to the young fighter. It wasn’t too long ago that Money was similarly situated—a young punching prodigy trained by his father with lofty dreams. Time is the only thing that separates Dylan and Floyd—the kid is that good!

Dylan Price is an honor roll student and is first to reiterate that he is committed to the “3Bs”—boxing, the Bible and books—and not necessarily in that order. Like any normal teenager, he enjoys playing video games and listening to music. However, on Sundays you will find him in church with mother Tarra and his siblings to hear dad deliver the sermon. Despite competing in what is perceived as a violent sport instead of artistic competition, the young fighter is unabashed and unafraid to tell you that he lives by the principles of the Bible. His good manners, courage, humility and pleasant personality are the only things that rival his boxing abilities.

On July 21st Price won the National Junior Golden Gloves in Mesquite, Nevada. When the 2016 Summer Olympics roll around in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil he will be almost be 18-years-old and should be the favorite to bring home a gold medal. I only hope that by then the point scoring system that has precluded me from having any serious interest in amateur boxing will be abandoned. Hopefully, I will make the trip and be ringside to witness him use his precise punching and evasive skills to overwhelm the competition.

Call me Nostradamus, but I learned a long time ago that you don’t bet against Floyd “Money” Mayweather. Thus, it’s not wise to go against “Young Money!” Price will be in Rio capturing gold!

Continue to support the sweet science, and remember, always carry your mouthpiece!

ghanson3@hotmail.com