

[LIVESTREAM TV—] Tyson Fury vs Oleksandr Usyk live free 18 May 2024

In one corner, there is a giant standing tall at 6ft 9in; charismatic, passionate, and with the heart of a warrior, he has overcome every challenge and hurdle placed in front of him. In the other corner, there is an enigmatic, mystifying veteran of the ring.



VAR could be used in Tyson Fury vs Oleksandr Usyk fight

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Video technology could be coming to boxing.

VAR in boxing for Fury vs Usyk fight

HIGHLIGHTS

WBC president Mauricio Sulaiman and talkSPORT's Spencer Oliver have suggested that VAR could be introduced in boxing to prevent controversial decisions.

Controversial decisions in recent fights, such as the Daniel Dubois vs Oleksandr Usyk bout, could have been avoided with the use of VAR.

Eddie Hearn, a boxing promoter, disagrees with the idea of fully implementing VAR in boxing, as he believes the suspense of the final result is an integral part of the sport.

The boxing world may be facing a monumental shakeup with suggestions that VAR will be introduced to the sport as early as May this year, potentially even being used in the heavyweight superfight between Tyson Fury and Oleksandr Usyk.

WBC president Mauricio Sulaiman has said that "boxing must implement video replay technology," with talkSPORT's Spencer Oliver going on to suggest that we could see the technology ringside very soon.

"I believe that they want to implement that in the Tyson Fury vs Oleksandr Usyk fight. They're talking about video replays etc., to help them come to the correct decision, like VAR. I think that we sometimes see illegal blows going, it causes cuts and what not, and then the guy will win the fight."

Premier League scoreboard with VAR

VAR could prevent controversial decisions in boxing

The recent Daniel Dubois vs Oleksandr Usyk fight is a perfect example. There have been a string of recent controversial decisions in boxing that VAR may have been able to prevent. Allowing judges to review certain shots or a decision should allow for a fairer review of the fight, in theory at least.

Jim White, speaking with Oliver on White and Jordan, referred to the Daniel Dubois vs Oleksandr Usyk bout where the former allegedly hit the latter with a low blow. The call sparked controversy as it allowed the Ukrainian five minutes to recover. In the end, he went on to win the fight.

Tyson Fury's cut eye in sparring

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If VAR had been in use that night, Oliver said: "That's a great example. He wouldn't have got the five-minute break on the floor in between the rounds and Dubois lost his momentum then. Dubois was fired up, he was ready to go, but that may have changed the fight. The referee has allowed the five-minute break, in the five-minute break, then say, 'Woah, that wasn't a low-blow, get him on with it.' They overrule it basically."

Usyk recovering from Dubois 'low blow'

VAR in football

VAR, which has been implemented in the Premier League since 2019, is not without its own controversy. The introduction of video technology was met with some skepticism but a general consensus that it would improve the fairness of the game. Fast-forward to 2024, and even Gary Lineker is admitting he was wrong to welcome VAR with open arms.

However, boxing and football are two different sports which has been emphasised by proponents of video technology, who highlight that individual shots can turn an entire

fight on its head. Although promoter Eddie Hearn disagrees, arguing that the suspense of the final result is a large part of the sport.

“In boxing really, the drama is to go to the scorecards,” he said on talkSPORT’s boxing show. “VAR is great for individual instances in a football match, you have seen the game slow down considerably.”

Eddie Hearn during press conference

He added that there could be potential for video technology in a limited manner, but he doesn’t want the sport to become “too computerised.” The anticipation of the final result is part of why the sport is so compelling, according to Hearn.

It’s not the first time Hearn has weighed in on the matter. In 2019, he seemed to have a different take on video technology. When asked whether boxing should implement VAR, Hearn said: “Yes absolutely. What’s the downside? There is none. It’s not as if it’s going to slow the game down.”

In Hearn’s defence, he made these comments before VAR was properly introduced into top-flight football and its effects could be properly understood.