

Morales vs. Pacquiao Fight Predictions

Written by Robert Ecksel
Thursday, 17 March 2005 18:00

The writers at *The Sweet Science* have their say on Saturday's war between Erik Morales and Manny Pacquiao.

Morales by KO.

Mitch Abramson

Overlooked in this battle of superstars is the fact that Morales is considerably bigger than Pacquiao, who has moved up two divisions in less than two years. "Pac-Man" is inexperienced at 130 pounds, which could be a problem against a tall, strong, seasoned veteran like Morales. True, Morales gets hit and gets hit often. And he'll probably get rocked once or twice by the Filipino power puncher. But, in the end, Morales has too much experience in grueling fights. He'll rally down the stretch against a fading Pacquiao to win a split decision.

Matt Aguilar

I like Pacquiao. He really did a number on Barrera. Morales is a totally different animal altogether. Although Manny is probably the harder puncher with the faster hands, I feel he'll have some problems getting inside on Erik. Morales is a rangy fighter and he knows how to use his height and reach to its full advantage. Erik has some pop in his shots too. This may discourage Manny from the all-out aggression he will need to win this fight. Please keep in mind that once Juan Marquez survived the first few rounds and a couple of knockdowns, he was able to control Manny. I see the same scenario in this fight. Either Manny wins early or Morales will win by decision or late round KO. I think Erik will survive so he's my pick.

Jim Amato

Pacquiao has some nice wins, but he's been down before and he's beatable. He drew with Juan Manuel Marquez and there are those who thought Marquez could have gotten that fight. Pacquiao doesn't quite have the same experience in the spotlight that Morales already has. And that can also play a factor. I love Morales physical advantages. But Pacquiao is determined to be as big a star as Morales. I think it's a close fight, but I pick Morales by split decision.

"Irish" Bobby Cassidy

I think Pacquiao forces the action the whole way. I think it will be a fast-paced fight with plenty of great exchanges. But to me, Morales is on a slightly different level. He's got the height and reach advantage and I certainly wouldn't discount his power. Pacquiao will walk in for as long as he can, but it will be too high a price to pay. I think Morales stops him in the 10th round.

Robert Cassidy Jr.

Regardless of who starts off stronger, the fight is bound to develop into a war. In my opinion, Morales is the better boxer of the two, but Pac has the perfect style to disrupt his rhythm and draw him into a dogfight. Many will suggest that by Morales being the bigger and arguably stronger of the two, he would benefit from such a fight. But I don't believe he possesses the necessary timing and patience it requires to offset Pac's style, in which is he able to catch you

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from awkward angles with both speed and power. I see Morales getting LEGITIMATELY dropped for the first time in his career (the KD in the first Barrera fight was a low blow that was a blown call by the ref), and Pac dominating down the stretch en route to a unanimous decision.

Jake Donovan

Size matters, in affairs of the heart and affairs of the fist. Morales is the naturally bigger man, with bigger fights against bigger opponents (with the exception of Barrera) on his resume. El Terrible has been in war after war, whereas Pacquiao is still relatively fresh, but the veteran weathers an early firestorm, before melting Manila Ice in round nine.

Robert Ecksel

Pacquiao's southpaw style and fast hands could be a problem for Morales, but Morales has the reach advantage and he's been fighting at 130 pounds while Pacquiao is moving up. Tough fight to call, but my instincts - which are seldom right - say Morales by decision. Don't ask me why.

Rick Folstad

Pacquiao's star is on the rise, whilst Morales' career appears to be on the downward arc. Coming off a disappointing performance against Marco Antonio Barrera, though, Morales has a lot to prove. So much so, his career in the top flight may hang in the balance. Morales is the bigger man with the superior boxing skills. But how he loves to brawl! And the fans love him for it. Pacquiao is all unbridled energy and malicious intent when he steps between the ropes. And how the fans love him for that. Both men's defense is suspect at times, but perhaps Pacquiao's more so. Morales seems to forget to move his head and at times just gets hit too often. Pacquiao likes to walk straight in, often conveying the impression he believes the best defense is a good offense. It is hard for me to picture this one being anything other than a great fight: one in which I have to favor Pacquiao's edge in speed and freshness. Manny Pacquiao by Decision.

Chris Gielty

This should be nothing less than a candidate for "Fight of the Year." Pac-Man should devour Morales in a wild shootout. Manny by TKO in 8.

Randy Gordon

Erik Morales has been through three wars with Marco Antonio Barrera, losing two. Those punches add up. Morales won't be overwhelmed by Pacquiao's swarming style, but El Terrible won't be able to match the pace. Manny Pacquiao by decision.

Tim Graham

This will be a tough, close, exciting fight. Freddie Roach and Manny have something in store for Morales which will put another "W" on Pacquiao's record. IF Manny loses, it will be by close and unpopular decision, but that could pave the way for a possible Gatti-Ward type series between Morales and Pacquiao. Manny Pacquiao by decision.

Amy Green

This fight is a boxing fan's dream! The anticipated nonstop action brawl, from round one's

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opening bell till the end, should make for an early entry into 2005's Fight of the Year category. Pacquiao destroyed Barrera, and Barrera recently beat up Morales, so the obvious choice should be Pacquiao. But I see Morales the victor in a hard-fought, "back in the alley" style fight! In the end Morales will find (must find) a way to allow his superior boxing talents to prevail against Pacquiao's annihilating style. Juan Manuel Marquez's ability to survive, and actually get the better of the "Pac-Man" - after getting knocked down three times in round one of their classic battle (12 round draw) - is what Morales MUST have in his mind and in his game plan against the ever-dangerous Pacquiao. Morales will show his true heart, his champion's heart. "El Terrible" will battle Manny early, and then out-box him late en route to a TKO win in the latter rounds of a fight definitely worth watching. Morales TKO 10-12th round over Pacquiao.

Mike Indri

"Comparisons," said The Buddha, "are odious," particularly when it comes to boxing. Still, in the absence of other quantitative data the obvious measuring stick here would appear to be Barrera, who (for our money, anyway) beat Morales three times. Pacquiao demolished him when they fought, ergo . . . Pac-Man by decision.

George Kimball

Pacquiao finally bites off more than he can chew as he fights Morales, who will likely carry a 5-8 pound weight advantage in this fight, while trying to knock off yet another top Mexican. If Morales works behind his jab and brawls only on occasion, he will win. Should he choose to get caught in a brawl with the PacMan his chances dramatically decrease. Morales has been sparring with the best of the best and looks to be taking this fight like his entire career depends on it. It just might. I think Pacquiao gets caught being overly aggressive and that Morales will land his right hand with stunning regularity and accuracy as Manny keeps his hands low. Cut up and dropped, the fight is stopped and Morales' hand is raised.

Joey Knish

This is a fight I don't have a strong feeling on either way. There are things that concern me about both of them coming off their last fights. In the case of Morales, he starts slow and has to work his way into the flow of the fight. Pacquiao is not the fighter you want to come out slow against. On the other hand, when forced to fight at what would be considered a measured tempo, Pacquiao's the least effective. Pacquiao is also vulnerable to getting dropped because of the way he attacks with reckless abandon, which is a plus for Morales due to his advantage in height and reach. Morales is desperate and really needs the fight. Pacquiao is on a high and feels like he's unbeatable. Again, I don't have a strong feeling either way. Both fighters have things in their arsenal to present the other with problems. However, since I'm forced to pick, I'll go with the fighter who I believe is more confident, Pacquiao. Most likely by decision.

Frank Lotierzo

Both can change a fight with one punch, so anything can happen. I'm going with the more technically sound guy. Morales won't cower under the Pacquiao storm. He'll find a way to time Pacquiao and land a fight-changing shot. Morales KO 6.

David Mayo

Handicapping this one is no easy feat. I'll take Morales by decision, but admit it's a mental coin

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toss.

Bob Mladinich

What an exciting match-up this is going to be. The big question will be whether Erik Morales can stand the heat the PacMan is going to put on him. I think he will and I think Morales has the style to upset Pacquiao. While there may be some controversy involved in the end, I pick Morales to win on a points decision.

Deon Potgieter

Manny Pacquiao has shown signs that he just may be one of the special ones, a preeminent mix of power and speed developed by following an unusual path of fighting only men who knew how to fight. No stiffs for Manny; his last 18 opponents had a compiled record of 689-65-13. Only three of those went the distance with him. Two managed draws; Medgoen Sinsurat became only the second man to defeat him, and that was five years and 16 fights ago. Eric Morales has been to war, too many times; four months ago he was savaged by the quick fists (and Pacquiao's are quicker) of Marco Antonio Barrera for a full 36-minutes, losing a majority decision. Beatings like that take their toll. It will be a great test for Pacquiao, one he should win by unanimous decision.

Pat Putnam

Erik Morales is a slow starter, but when you have a granite chin you can afford to be. Manny Pacquiao will be the aggressor at the opening bell. While there will be no knockdowns, the first round will have the one-sidedness of Pacquiao-Marquez. However, "El Terrible" will catch his stride by round four and the two will slug it out in a match that is destined to be an early nominee for Fight of the Year. When the blood and sweat clears, Morales will be on the good side of a razor thin decision. Morales by split decision.

Aaron Tallent

Morales win via unanimous decision.

Scott Yaniga