

Pound for Pound: The World's Top 12

Written by David A. Avila
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Now that the dust has settled from the world title fight between Floyd Mayweather and Oscar De La Hoya, a number of realities have been revealed including the Pound for Pound champion of the world.

Sure the win by Mayweather was not quite decisive as predicted. De La Hoya has never been a foil for anybody in his entire career. Any fighter with world titles in six weight divisions surely can compete at a high level against anybody.

What the fight proved was stamina determined the winner as De La Hoya tired after the sixth round and Mayweather slipped into overdrive to scoot past his opponent and win yet another world title in a fifth weight division.

The victory by Mayweather opens up the door to list the best fighters in professional boxing regardless of weight. Here is this season's list of the very best fighters Pound for Pound:

1) Floyd Mayweather (38-0, 24 KOs) – Despite a frail right hand Mayweather was able to defeat Oscar De La Hoya over 12 rounds. At times it seemed the bigger fighter would eventually catch up to Pretty Boy Floyd, but he slipped out of range while not exactly running. It was a better fight than expected because Mayweather wanted it that way. He's still on top of his game.

2) Manny Pacquiao (44-3-2, 35 KOs) – After seeing Pacquiao hit the campaign trail in his native Philippines, hit the gym at the Wild Card Boxing Club, then hit Jorge Solis into submission, I'm convinced Pacman is the most exciting fighter today without a doubt. Some people feel he could even give Mayweather a run for his money if they could meet at 135 or 140 pounds. Pacquiao improves every single fight.

3) Winky Wright (51-3-1, 25 KOs) – The southpaw style of Winky Wright has befuddled opponents in the junior middleweight and middleweight divisions and now he's moving up to the light heavyweight division to tangle with the master Bernard Hopkins in July. Good luck. One thing about Wright: he fears no man in the boxing ring. Lately he's been dispensing with defense to provide more excitement for fans. Great idea Winky.

4) Rafael Marquez (37-3, 34 KOs) – What an exhibition of power boxing the Mexico City native exhibited against fellow chilango last March. In defeating the powerful Israel Vazquez the world got to see boxing at its best. A rematch with Vazquez should prove no less exciting than the first. This time promoters should give more than two weeks to announce the fight and give fans a chance to see boxing at its electrifying best.

5) Joe Calzaghe (43-0, 32 KOs) – Though the stoppage of Peter Manfredo was premature by the British referee, this Welshman can fight up a storm. The world needs to see one of the best prizefighters of this era in action. It's time for the United Kingdom to stop hogging up Calzaghe and give the rest of us blokes a chance to see the Pride of Wales. Hopefully the rumors of

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Calzaghe coming to America are true.

6) Juan Manuel Marquez (47-3-1, 35 KOs) – The oldest Marquez brother rose from a tremendous knockdown by Marco Antonio Barrera and rallied to victory with a gritty determination. No surprise there. He showed the same determination against the great Pacquiao. Who's next for the stylish Mexico City fighter with those burning eyes? This guy's as hungry as a four-round fighter.

7) Bernard Hopkins (47-4-1, 32 KOs) – After he beat Antonio Tarver it looked like the Executioner was going to retire. Now he's back hood and all looking to put the axe on good old Winky Wright. Now age 42, can Hopkins continue to show the same mastery that allowed him to win for 12 straight years without a loss? Don't bet against Hopkins. He's one of the true masters of the boxing game.

8) Jermain Taylor (26-0, 17 KOs) – It's not Taylor's fault that he's going against a slew of junior middleweights. And it's not his fault that they tried to hoodwink Sergio Mora into fighting in Memphis when the fight was originally set for California. But someone has to pay the price. Taylor's stock continues to fall because he's not fighting real middleweights or someone with a chance to beat him. Cory Spinks is not the answer.

9) Marco Antonio Barrera (63-5, 42 KOs) – Barrera's loss to Juan Manuel Marquez was not a blot on his record. Instead it proved the Mexico City master boxer remains confident of his ability. Though he may retire, a rematch with Marquez would be another thrilling fight. Their fight in March was one of the best of the year so far. Barrera may announce his decision by June if he will continue. Should he say yes, a rematch with Marquez could be arrange in September.

10) Shane Mosley (44-4, 37 KOs) – Could Sugar Shane Mosley be the fighter to dethrone Mayweather? Perhaps. The Pomona prizefighter remains one of the most exciting fighters on the planet with his combination of speed and power. He refuses to give boring fights regardless of the competition. No word yet on his next fight but if Mayweather needs a fight Sugar Shane might be one to avoid.

11) Joan Guzman (27-0, 17 KOs) – Few people know about the Dominican speedster but he's capable of beating anyone below junior welterweight. Now he has Floyd Mayweather Sr. in his corner so expect an even more devastating Guzman. His fight for the WBO interim lightweight with Michael Katsidis on May 26 was cancelled. But I'm sure his handlers are anxious to get him back in the ring. What's surprising is he was just a 122-pound titleholder two years ago but everybody ducked him. So he jumped three weight divisions and now is challenging the knockout specialist Katsidis.

12) Oscar De La Hoya (38-5, 30 KOs) – More than a few including Mayweather's camp predicted the Golden Boy would be demolished. But time after time De La Hoya has proven he can fight anybody on earth in the boxing ring. One judge gave it to De La Hoya while another had him losing by only two points. It was razor close to being ruled a majority draw. A rematch has been discussed possibly for September. De La Hoya can beat anybody. A second fight with Mayweather could be the difference especially knowing he didn't use the jab enough.