

Top Ten List: The Top Mexicans, P4P

Written by Ralph Gonzalez
Monday, 18 June 2007 19:00

I like lists. Lists tell a lot about a person. You ask a person about their five favorite movies of all time and you get sense of what kind of person they are. Or ask them about their five favorite songs or music groups. You've got most of the clues you need to assess someone's personality.

My list has to do with who I believe are the top fighters in the world with green, white and red Mexican blood running through their veins. Maybe you won't be able to assess my personality through it but at least you can judge my knowledge regarding the subject.

1. **Juan Manuel Marquez** (WBC/WBO Super Featherweight champion) 47-3, 35 KO's---Make no mistake about it. Marquez beats Pacquiao, Soto, Guzman and Valero. The farce of a decision loss he received in Indonesia against Chris John was a slap to the face of boxing. His recent victory over Marco Antonio Barrera and his incredibly gutsy performance against Pac-Man solidified his standing as the top super feather in the world. At this point, age will be his only enemy. The Mexico City native is 33 and slated to fight Jorge Barrios next. Everyone wants to see Marquez-Pacquiao II but somehow we've been handed this much inferior match up.

2. **Rafael Marquez** (WBC Super Bantamweight champion) 37-3, 33 KO's

Rafael is the younger brother of Juan Manuel but he's quickly making his way out from under his older brother's shadow. His TKO win over WBC super bantamweight champion Israel Vazquez was a classic. It was his first fight in a higher division than the bantamweight division he once ruled. Marquez is now set to rematch Vazquez on August fourth in what should be classic #2.

3. **Oscar De La Hoya** (Multi-divisional world champion) 38-5, 30 KO's

De La Hoya is a true American success story. He went from the humble barrio of East Los Angeles to eventually owning a building in downtown L.A. De La Hoya became a national boxing icon and a recognizable brand. He had a little help from folks like Bob Arum and a litany of great trainers but the fact remains that De La Hoya found a way to make himself ultra rich and famous. He's won numerous world titles and put on compelling and competitive fights against many of boxing's elite which sits him in a league by himself. The already mega millionaire pulled in a reportedly forty million dollars from his last Pay Per View fight against Floyd Mayweather Jr. The pay event brought in over 2 million buys. There are always De La Hoya haters at every pay per view gathering who are there to see him get crushed. Ultimately it's the "Golden Boy" who's stacking the dollar bills higher and higher.

4. **Marco Antonio Barrera** (Multi-divisional world champion) 63-5, 42 KO's

He's coming to the end of his career and recently lost to Juan Manuel Marquez in an excellent match up. Once considered the new Julio Cesar Chavez, Barrera went on to deliver some of the

Top Ten List: The Top Mexicans, P4P

Written by Ralph Gonzalez
Monday, 18 June 2007 19:00

most memorable performances in the sport. His trilogy alone against Erik Morales assures him a place in the Hall of Fame. Barrera is still in business with Golden Boy Promotions as a promotional partner and will most likely make 2007 his last year in the sport.

5. **Jose Luis Castillo** (Former WBC, WBO Lightweight champion) 55-7, 47 KO's

Castillo has been tainted by weight problems in the past and is now settling into the 140 pound division where he'll be facing England's Ricky "Hitman" Hatton on HBO this Saturday. What can you say that hasn't been said about his wars with Diego Corrales (RIP), Stevie Johnston and Floyd Mayweather Jr. who many thought was defeated in their first meeting by the Sonora native. Castillo is one rough hombre who left Juan Lazcano and Julio Diaz looking like they'd been jumped into a gang after their respective wars with Castillo.

6. **Antonio Margarito** (WBO Welterweight Champion) 34-4, 24 KO's

You gotta love watching Antonio Margarito fight. The guy fights with the veracity of a hopped up cholo. He's a warrior's warrior who'll be facing Paul "The Punisher" Williams on July 14th. This will be a guaranteed fight of the year candidate. Their styles have been crafted to concuss other men and I've got a feeling someone will be going through the ropes in this one which will be held at the Home Depot Center in Carson, California.

7. **Juan Diaz** (WBA Lightweight Champion) 32-0, 16 KO's

This 23 year old Texican proved himself to be a force of contention with his dismantling of former world champion Acelino Freitas. His aggressive style compels you to keep him watching. He's probably one of the hardest working and busiest fighters inside the ring. His next fight may be against Julio "The Kidd" Diaz. An excellent match up with an interesting contrast in styles.

8. **Israel Vazquez** (Former WBC Super Bantamweight champ) 41-4, 30 KO's

"Magnifico" surpassed all expectations and became one of the most exciting and fun fighters to watch. His classic come from behind demolitions of Jhonny Gonzalez and Oscar Larios transformed the Mexico City native into a fixture on many of the biggest pay per view shows. He now prepares for his rematch against Rafael Marquez on August 4 in Hidalgo, Texas. This rematch is must see TV for fans and casual fans alike. The fight is a credit to boxing and a pleasure for those who like to see "A" class talent matching pugilistic wits instead of snooze-fests like Jermain Taylor vs. Cory Spinks.

9. **Julio Diaz** (IBF Lightweight champion) 34-3, 25 KO's

We have to give Coachella's Julio "The Kidd" Diaz points just for being able to live amidst the brutal heat of the city which neighbors Palm Springs. Diaz is an excellent tactician who can punch. His first round KO loss to Juan "Pollo" Valenzuela was an obvious fluke that Diaz surpassed beyond and won himself a world title in the process. It's rumored that Diaz may be facing off against Juan "The Baby Bull" Diaz in the near future. I'll take Diaz in nine.

Top Ten List: The Top Mexicans, P4P

Written by Ralph Gonzalez
Monday, 18 June 2007 19:00

10. **Humberto Soto** (WBC Super Featherweight Interim titlist) 42-5, 26 KO's

Soto holds an interim title. Whatever that means. For Soto it's been a means to keep him complacent while the "real" WBC champ (Juan Manuel Marquez) is allowed to evade a match against him. Soto has looked spectacular in his last five bouts where he's scored brutal, high light quality stoppages. His most recent was over contender Bobby Pacquiao. It's being rumored that Soto will take on Bobby's brother, Manny, next.

So there it is. Love me or hate me, I'm sticking to this list as the definitive one when it comes to ranking boxing's Aztec Warriors. If you disagree make sure to send me an email or post your opinion on the blog. Be brutal if you have to. I can take it.