

Who's Next For Oscar?

Written by Raymond Markarian
Tuesday, 01 January 2008 19:00

The Associated Press has confirmed that Oscar De la Hoya is a few weeks away from choosing his next, and possibly, final opponent. The fight date is set for May 3, 2008 but the opponent is still in question. Here is my question: how great would it be to walk in the shoes of Oscar De la Hoya?

I can't even get my girlfriend to watch a decent movie but Oscar De la Hoya could make \$50 million on one nights work. Where is the fairness in that?

The man has lost 3 of his last 5 fights but still has the muscle to choose when, where, and who he elects to stand in the ring with. Any name he mentions is more than willing to take the challenge. This means that Oscar De la Hoya is in a position of power.

He is the Al Gore of boxing. Gore lost the 2000 Presidential election but still has the influence to control the Democratic Party. If Gore decides to run for the Presidency, there is a very good chance that he wins. When Oscar fights again, there is a very good possibility that he and his opponent will win, at least financially.

When Oscar chooses his opponent for his fight on Cinco de Mayo weekend, he should hold a national press conference.

At the time of the announcement, boxing fans and writers would gather around their television sets much like a Top 50 college basketball team watching the television screen to see if they make it to the March Madness NCAA Tournament. De la Hoya's possible opponents would attend the press conference looking their best, sitting next to their family, promoters, trainers, and cut men.

The fighter DLH chooses should be placed in an envelope and opened up, to create more anticipation.

"And Oscar De la Hoya's next opponent will be.... "

The Obvious Choice: Ricky Hatton

Ricky Hatton has outrageous fan support, which makes him the leading candidate to become Oscar's next opponent. De la Hoya was seen at times standing up and cheering for Hatton during the Mayweather fight. That was probably because both fighters had an agreement, in principle, to create a Hatton/De la Hoya showdown that was set to take place in England. The agreement made sense because of the star power both fighters possess. All Ricky Hatton had to do is look good against Mayweather, win or lose. "The Hitman" did his part. He fought a good fight against PBF. But there is a problem. De la Hoya is a tall and naturally strong welterweight. Even though this event will be easy to sell, it might be a mismatch. Hatton has fought two times at welterweight. He was the smaller man, and got hit hard in both fights.

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The Risky Choice: Miguel Cotto

Miguel Cotto has evolved into an intelligent bruiser. In 2007, Cotto's performances against Zab Judah and Shane Mosley have proven that he could box and brawl with anybody. A possible De la Hoya vs. Miguel Cotto fight would be (for lack of a better word) amazing. This is probably the best match up for De la Hoya. It is a good risk, and a great fight.

The Money Choice: Floyd Mayweather Jr.

This fight has "Cha Ching," written all over it. If Hatton brings the fans then PBF brings the money. Out of fairness to fight fans, De la Hoya must know that another PBF fight would probably have the same outcome as the first one. But 2.4 million PPV buys for their first fight makes De la Hoya vs. Mayweather II a very strong possibility. Mr. Money himself has made it clear that he would be happy to come out of his supposedly planned two year hiatus to fight Oscar again. And who knows, maybe they will go duke it out more often this time. De la Hoya and Mayweather II make dollars and sense.

The Underdog choice – Winky Wright

De la Hoya is a promoter first and a boxer second. De la Hoya the promoter would not approve of this fight. Recently Winky Wright has called out De la Hoya's name. But it has fallen on deaf ears. Winky might have the "Wright stuff" to beat De la Hoya but styles make fights and these styles just do not mesh well.

The "I should win, but I could still lose" choice – Zab Judah

Zab Judah is arguably the best pure athlete in boxing. It just too bad he falls into the same trap with every big fight. Judah's formula has been to fight hard to win for the first five rounds then forget to throw punches towards the end of the fight. Despite his supposed lack of focus, Zab Judah still packs a punch. Judah vs. De la Hoya would be interesting and Judah has a good chance to win because of his speed and athleticism.

The "Safe, but I won't make any money" choice – Vernon Forrest

Let's face it, Golden Boy Promotions would have a tough time selling this fight to a bunch of drunken mud wrestlers watching the Spelling Bee. Watching Martha Stewart run the Boston Marathon would probably be more exciting than watching Vernon Forrest fight Oscar De la Hoya. Forrest might have a chance to beat Oscar. But the fight would be difficult to watch.

The "Lets give this young fighter a chance" choice – Paul Williams

The new kid on the block has flirted with becoming the Rodney Dangerfield of boxing. In July, Williams beat the world's most avoided fighter at the time, Antonio Margarito. But nothing has happened since then. If Oscar gives Paul Williams an opportunity then kudos, but that is a very big IF. There are not many boxers running to fight this elite welterweight. They are running away from him.

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The "Attract Mexican fans" choice – Antonio Margarito

God bless Hispanic fighters. Men like Israel Vasquez, and the Marquez brothers have followed the footsteps of Barrera, Morales, and J.C. Chavez to give us wonderful boxing memories over the years. It seems like every Hispanic fighter has it in their blood to create good fights. De la Hoya vs. Margarito would be a slugfest. Margarito comes to fight and applies pressure. Therefore it is possible that De la Hoya would be forced into a give and take war that he is looking for. If this were 5 or 6 years ago, Margarito would have a very good chance to fight De la Hoya. Unfortunately for Margarito fans, at this point in his career, De la Hoya is looking to create world events. Margarito just does not fit in that category yet.

The "Very intriguing" choice: Manny Pacquiao

A possible Pacquiao vs. De la Hoya fight is probably the only fight in boxing that could be held in a neutral location like Zimbabwe and still create a \$10 million gate. Manny Pacquiao is the Michael Jordan of the Philippines; Oscar De la Hoya is the face of boxing. If the fighters were not so far away in weight, this fight would be a no brainier. According to Bob Arum, there have been rumors floating around about a possible De la Hoya/Pacquiao face-off. It just probably won't happen in May 2008.

And the winner is.... ?????

Weigh in, TSS Universe. Who should Oscar fight in May?

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