

Top Ten Pound For Pound Mexicans

Written by Ralph Gonzalez
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It's been about a year since I put out my first Top Ten Mexicans list and I got some interesting responses. There were those who felt that the omission of Erik Morales and Marco Antonio Barrera was downright sacrilegious. Many also questioned the placement of Mexican-American fighters like Oscar De La Hoya.

For those that can't fathom not seeing the names Barrera or Morales, this isn't a career appreciation list. Yes, both of these men are all time greats, but neither have had a significant win in years. As for De La Hoya's placement, as far as I'm concerned, Mexican-American boxers qualify for this list. It's a non-issue this time around anyway, so let's start.

1. Israel "Magnifico" Vazquez (WBC Super Bantamweight Champion) 43-4, (31 KOs)

Although Juan Manuel Marquez and Cristian Mijares are more technically sound fighters, Vazquez's punching power is as tremendous as his heart. It's carried him through great performances against top level competition like Jhonny Gonzalez, Oscar Larios and his classic trilogy against Rafael Marquez.

Next for Vazquez: Either Rafael Marquez for a fourth time or Jorge Arce in a pay per view event.

2. Juan Manuel Marquez (Former Super Featherweight Champion) 48-4, (35 KOs)

Rafael's older brother lost to Manny Pacquiao in a fight that could've easily gone either way. At this point, his 34 years of age are catching up with the Mexico City fighter trained by Nacho Berinstain. He would love another crack at Pacman but Pacquiao ain't having it. Their last meeting was too close for comfort for the Filipino superstar and he has no desire to provide the Mexican with a rematch.

Next for Marquez: A move to the lightweight division where he'll continue chasing Pacman. Next fight is slated to be against Joel Casamayor.

3. Rafael Marquez (Former WBC Super Bantamweight Champion) 37-5, (33 KOs)

Losing twice to Israel Vazquez by the smallest of margins shouldn't mean much as far as this list is concerned. Marquez started out strong in their last two encounters but was eventually picked apart in the final rounds by "El Magnifico." As of now, Marquez vs. Vazquez III still remains the fight of the year for 2008.

Next for Marquez: A fourth confrontation with Vazquez would seem to be the best option for Marquez.

4. Cristian Mijares (WBC Super Flyweight Champion) 35-3, (14 KOs)

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You gotta love the way the Durango native fights. He's fast, slick and super athletic. Is he a Mexican version of Willie Pep as TSS's Ron Borges proclaimed after his impressive defeat of former WBA Superflyweight champion Alexander Munoz? He sure looks like it. His upper body movement and his footwork are extraordinary. The way he twists and bends and sets up his shots is masterful. Wins over Jorge Arce, Jose Navarro and Munoz proved that he's the man at 115 pounds.

Next for Mijares: Everyone's hoping for a showdown against WBO champion Fernando Montiel. As of now, nothing official has been set.

5. Antonio Margarito (IBF Welterweight Champion) 36-5, (26 KOs)

"The Tijuana Tornado" stormed back into winning mode after losing his title to Paul Williams by decision. His victim was Kermit Cintron, who was beaten down unmercifully in a rematch for Cintron's IBF title.

Next for Margarito: Miguel Cotto in what should be a true war reminiscent of Lupe Pintor vs. Wilfredo Gomez. An example of the Mexico Vs. Puerto Rico boxing rivalry at its very best takes place on July 26th in Las Vegas , Nevada.

6. Fernando "Cochulito" Montiel (WBO Superflyweight Champion) 37-2, (28 KOs)

After a disappointing performance against Jhonny Gonzalez, Montiel has been looking impressive lately. His resounding victories over the once formidable Martin "Gallito" Castillo and Luis "Titi" Maldonado have sent the Los Mochis, Sinaloa fighter's stock soaring. Montiel is a boxer puncher with excellent footwork and speed. Reminds you of another Mexican superflyweight?

Next for Montiel: Cristian Mijares in a unification bout? We can only hope.

7. Hugo Cazares (Former WBO champion) 26-4, (19 KOs)

We really don't get to see enough of this guy. The fact that he fights at the light flyweight division doesn't do him any favors since there's a disregard for the lower weight classes by many boxing fans. Cazares is a brilliant stalker in the ring. An efficient, aggressive, punching machine who doesn't back up. A mini Margarito. His split decision loss to Ivan Calderon in the Puerto Rican's backyard was very unsatisfying so they're doing it again.

Next for Cazares: A rematch against Calderon on August 30th.

8. Juan Diaz (Former WBC/WBA Lightweight Champion) 33-1, (17 KOs)

The "Baby Bull" was battered by Nate Campbell in his last outing as the veteran used his experience and resilience to bully the Texan. But there's still plenty left in the kid from Houston. Expect him to come back strong.

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Next For Diaz: Michael Katsidis on September 6.

9. Edgar Sosa (WBC Light Flyweight champion) 32-5, (17 KOs)

Here's another guy we won't get to hear about due to his fighting weight. This great little boxer puncher made his name heard after beating Brian Viloria for the vacant WBC title by a thin margin. Hasn't been defeated since 2003 and just defeated Takashi Kunishige by eighth round t.k.o.

Next For Sosa: To be determined

10. Humberto "La Zorrita" Soto 44-6, (28 KO's)

Okay, so he lost to Joan Guzman. But the Dominican is probably the most underrated fighter on the planet. Guzman is now set to move up to the lightweight division along with Pacquiao and Juan Manuel Marquez. This will give Soto the space he needs to fight it out with Edwin Valero and Yuriorkis Gamboa for superfeatherweight domination.

Next for Soto: An interim WBC title shot against Francisco Lorenzo on June 28th.