

Oscar Next For Cotto/Margarito Winner?

Written by Phil Woolever
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Some time around midnight EST Saturday promoter Bob Arum will take to the podium in the MGM Grand media center and extoll the virtues of Oscar de la Hoya, after Miguel Cotto sinks a short left hook under the ribs followed by a right to the temple that leads to a TKO of Antonio Margarito.

Around that same time, wherever he may be, promoter and fighter De la Hoya will be deciding that doing business with Arum isn't the worst thing in the world.

Even if Margarito manages to find the leverage for a sequence of clubbing, overhead gloved mallets that crumbles Cotto and shocks most of the boxing world outside Margarito's fan base, the previously noted promotional pair will have reached the same conclusion.

Barring some irreconcilable difference in designated duke out dollars, De la Hoya will sign to fight the winner.

Arum has been very congenial in reference to de la Hoya, and Oscar has been relatively silent and respectful in his statements, or lack of them, regarding his one time sugar daddy.

Prior to his lackluster showing against Steve Forbes, I would have listed de la Hoya as a favorite over either Cotto or Margarito. Now, it seems Oscar's best career move may have been to call it a day along his originally considered time line of a couple years back.

However, since it appears de la Hoya still wants to go out with more of a bang, and since he will probably face off with Saturday night's victor, here's a synopsis of what to expect inside the strands when whichever of those slugging scenarios plays out.

If the de la Hoya who tackled Tito Trinidad (let's hope part two of their saga is left in the past where it belongs), Ike Quartey or Fernando Vargas shows up, Oscar could indeed stop Cotto. De La Hoya's inside combinations up and down will penetrate Cotto's flawed defense for a wide points margin.

If the Forbes fight was a state of Oscar's art statement, de la Hoya will be lucky to see the final bell against Cotto, if you consider a swollen shut eye and busted up profile lucky.

Optimal Oscar would bend Margarito with gut shots and break him with uppercuts. As de la Hoya advanced in his early career, he wiped out some pretty decent fighters who were taller than him based on a footwork style that got him inside with maximum blasting power efficiency.

Forbes form Oscar might have a better go of it than he would against Cotto, but he'd still get lumped and bruised plenty. Again, going the distance and avoiding being stopped would be a considerable dilemma.

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Cotto - Margarito shapes up as one of boxing's biggest fights of the season, and a springboard to further glory and gold.

Since it says here the winner gets a promising probable date with the Golden Boy, the stakes are even higher.

To this weekend's high profile victor goes considerable spoils. The only thing that might spoil a classic encounter and payday with the game's cash cow is if the two promoters can't put previous differences aside, like a torn glove or contract page.