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Standing straight up Manny Pacquiao is about the size of the top of a Mercedes Benz sedan, not necessarily imposing when you're talking about a fighter considered the best boxer pound for pound in the world. Like a Mercedes, he's in the elite status, not just for this era, but also possibly for all time.

Ricky Hatton has almost the same exact height and like his rival, many >consider the Manchester native one of the finest prizefighters today pound for pound.

On Saturday, Pacquiao (4-3-2, 36 KOs) of the Philippines and Hatton (45-1, 32 KOs) from England will battle for the latter's Ring Magazine and IBO junior welterweight titles at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas. The fight will be televised on HBO pay-per-view and is co-sponsored by Tecate cerveza.

Generally when speaking about the baddest fighter on the planet the subject conjures images of basketball sized boxers with muscles bulging and grimaces resembling a fugitive from the movie Twilight. Not so. If Pacquiao reminds of any past figure, the only person that comes to mind is Bruce Lee, the man who put martial arts on the map and whose legend continues though he's been dead for 35 years. Pacman's upcoming battle with Hatton can be equated to the epic battle shown on Way of the Dragon with Lee and Chuck Norris in the Coliseum in Rome: two iconoclastic warriors with different styles and prodigious fan bases. Bruce Lee had that same kind of blazing self-confidence that Pacquiao emotes. Though bragging and boasting was never part of the now deceased kung fu master's persona, the world recognized his abilities and new twists on fighting techniques. Pacquiao doesn't brag or boast either. Yet the world sees the lightning reflexes and ability to rise from a mere flyweight to welterweight and still fight bigger and stronger foes like a pure fighting machine. "I don't want to say I'm better than him," said Pacquiao humbly when asked to compare Hatton. "I train hard so that I can compete with him. We'll see who wins." It's all very Bruce Lee-like. Every time Pacquiao steps in the ring you can bet that a flurry of blinding punches and too rapid to predict footwork will take place with the Filipino superstar. From fight to fight he improves rapidly and confidently. "I'm a better fighter now," admits Pacquiao almost begrudgingly from his abilities six years ago.

The hard boiled look of Hatton has been chiseled on his face after more than 15 years in a boxing ring. Like most British people, not just fighters, he has that confidence built from more than 400 years of success that England enjoyed as ruler of a worldwide empire. Hatton realized he lacked certain skills needed to continue to the top of the heap like England realized that a strong navy was necessary to protect its empire back in the early 1600s. That's why the "Hitman" chose Floyd Mayweather to bring his brand of defensive tactics and quick movements to the fold. After losing to Floyd Mayweather Jr. and nearly losing to Juan Lazcano the English pugilist decided to try another tact. "That Lazcano fight, after the Mayweather fight, I

was just trying to steamroll him," said Hatton. "I told myself, 'You've always had good boxing ability, but you know, you're not using it any more. And that's why I opted to go with Floyd Mayweather." A polished Hatton expects to bring his enhanced skills along with an expected large vocal crowd of British subjects to the Las Vegas arena when he fights Asia's greatest hero since Bruce Lee. Think Enter the Dragon part two and that's what you can expect on Saturday. "I don't' see it being a tickling contest," says Hatton. "He likes to fight just like me." Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach has honed his fighter from a mostly attack dog mentality to a razor sharp boxer who uses subtleties and movements to create openings. "Hatton is very strong," Pacquiao says without hesitation. "I do not predict fights." One thing that can be predicted is a full house that will witness the rise and fall of one fighter or the other. Rebates Tecate cerveza is offering a $20 rebate for the Hatton-Pacquiao pay-per-view fight to customers who buy a 12-pack or more of the beer.