

Manuel Quezada Is Playing Tricks On Us

Written by Raymond Markarian
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After Manuel Quezada knocked out Travis Walker in the first round of a homecoming fight in Lemoore, Ca on July 16th, he had a smile on his face. It was the closest Quezada has come to becoming a magician.

Boxers are like magicians because they are both in a performance based industry. Sure a magician could have the greatest trick in the world, but without stage presence, or some kind of attention grabber, a show could turn to disaster.

One of my favorite movies, The Prestige shows a prime example of one-ups-man-ship between two magicians played by Hugh Jackman and Christian Bale. Jackman's character seems more talented than Bale's. But when it came to performing an act, Bale had the greater charisma. Therefore Bale's character generally drew the bigger audiences in the movie.

Usually in sports, winning means everything. But in boxing, a victory does not necessarily provide universal acclaim. That is why fighters have to win, and they have to look good doing it. It is not always about the W.

The most exciting fighters attract the spectators. It is almost a guarantee that a technical boxer like Winky Wright would have a tougher time selling tickets than a knockout artist like Mike Tyson.

Quezada's win created tremors in the division. His knockout of Walker in the first round was two rounds faster than Chris Arreola disposed of Walker nine months earlier. Now Manuel Quezada is holding a rabbit in his hat. There is a growing reputation surrounding the proud Mexican heavyweight contender who feels like the outcome of his victory is more important than the time it took to finish the job. Does beating Walker faster than Arreola beat him mean that Quezada is a stronger puncher than Arreola?

"Everybody has been saying that to me. I don't really look into that Arreola win too much. I just think that I caught him with a better shot do you know what I mean."

But Quezada is happy about the win nonetheless. "It is exciting. I am happy about this win and proud that I could be known as one of the other strongest Hispanic heavyweights in boxing."

The Walker win is Quezada's 17th straight victory; nine by knockout. He feels like he is ready for the top fighters in the division.

"I am training with these top guys all of the time in the gym," Quezada said. "This was a big win, but I am not going to get ahead of myself. I think that I need a couple of more fights to get a world title shot, against marquee opponents definitely."

Meanwhile the Wasco, California native is aware that the politics involved in the sport might

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force an aspiring champion to pay his dues more than a recognizable name with less merit. For instance Hasim Rahman received an opportunity to fight for the heavyweight title last December and he has not beaten a name fighter (Monte Barrett) in the last four years.

“I can’t really say what other people deserve. I just worry about my thing,” Quezada said. “Once I get to the top, and challenge for the world title, I want to say that I took all of the steps necessary to get to this spot. I want to fight and beat all of the contenders and not have any regrets on my way to the title.”

Quezada says that he would get discouraged if one of the top level guys would not want to face him.

“I think that I put myself on the map by beating this top contender. For them not to want to fight me makes me feel like they don’t respect me. I believe in myself. I believe that I am a good fighter man. I would definitely get discouraged if they did not want to fight me.”

Since the 31 year old began his fight career in 2001, he has had a desire to prove people wrong. The vicious left hook that plastered Walker onto the canvas is not all he wants to be known for.

“A lot of people look at me and might not see a Klitschko or a Chris Arreola. So, I just want to prove to people that I can fight. You don’t know me now, but I am going to show that I could fight and compete with these guys,” Quezada said. “My motivation is my kids, and family. This is the only thing that I know how to do honestly. I started in martial arts, kickboxing, and now I am doing boxing. Honestly, I am just a competitor. I like to fight. I love when people say that I can’t do it because I am going to show you that I can.”

Quezada says that he is ready to fight again in September or October and he is keeping his ear to the street. He notices the Klitschko brothers searching for opponent to fight at the end of the year, and he is more than willing to step to the plate.

“Of course I would fight them. Who would give that up? I wouldn’t. I am always in the gym, always trying to get ready, and always staying in shape. So if something like that came up, I would definitely try to prove myself.”

How does he think that he will match up with one of the Klitschkos?

“It is a hard matchup for anyone trying to fight those guys because they are tall and athletic. But again, you just have to work. If the opportunity was presented to me, I would put in work. Every minute of every round, I would put in work man.”