

Once Again Mosley's Risk/Reward For A Fight Is Reversed

Written by Frank Lotierzo
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The rumors have begun to surface that WBA welterweight champ Shane Mosley 46-5 (39) will be defending his title against Joshua Clottey 35-3 (20) later this year. What a surprise. Once again Mosley's eagerness to fight and unwillingness to sit on the sideline has him on course to fight Clottey who happens to be the toughest match up for him at 147 outside of Paul Williams. However, to no ones surprise it will not be for a ton of money.

The three best-known welterweights in the world at this time are Mosley, Floyd Mayweather jr. and Miguel Cotto. Manny Pacquiao cannot be included among this group because he is not really a welterweight. Something that's been highlighted almost every time his upcoming fight with Cotto at a 145-pound catch-weight has been mentioned.

If the Mosley-Clottey bout becomes a reality, it's an excellent opportunity for Clottey, especially coming off a loss in his last fight, but it's a bad fight for Mosley. Think about the two marquee welterweight fights coming up this fall, Mayweather-Marquez and Pacquiao-Cotto. In those bouts, despite what tremendous fighters Marquez and Cotto are, they are basically the opponents. That's not a slight on them or their ability what so ever, but the fact of the matter is they're both underdogs and the purpose of them fighting Mayweather and Pacquiao is for them to lose in a gallant fashion, thus paving the way for the real Super-Fight, Pacquiao vs. Mayweather.

Now, think about Mosley-Clottey? Mosley will of course be favored just like Mayweather and Pacquiao are. So in a way Clottey is the opponent. Only he's a really live opponent and Mosley is definitely at more risk of losing to Clottey than Mayweather is to Marquez and maybe even Pacquiao is to Cotto.

Of the three opponents, Marquez, Cotto and Clottey, who is the most dangerous of the three? Well, lets see. Marquez will be 36 when he fights Mayweather and is fighting him at 144, which is roughly 10 pounds higher than he's ever fought in his career. He's also winding down a career where he's fought just about everybody who was somebody his size or in his division.

What about Cotto? For starters Cotto will have to weigh-in at 145 or less for Pacquiao, which is one pound less than he's ever weighed fighting as a welterweight. No, a single pound is not a make or break issue, but it's still two pounds less than the welterweight division allows. On top of that, Cotto was physically handled in two of his last three fights against Margarito and Clottey. Not only that, but he took a pretty good going over and was really busted up after both fights. In reality, Cotto is an old 28 and has fought what could be considered boxings version of Murders-Row in Carlos Quintana, Zab Judah, Shane Mosley, Antonio Margarito and Joshua Clottey. Obviously those fights have taken their toll on him physically over the last three years. No way Cotto is the same fighter he was going into the Margarito fight in July of 2008.

In Cotto's last fight he won a split decision over Clottey. That said, who administered more physical punishment to whom during the fight, Cotto or Clottey? The only answer to that is it

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was Clotney who took more out of Cotto than the opposite. Clotney was on the verge of winning the fight, but lacked Cotto's hunger and desire and blew the last two rounds resulting in Cotto earning a well deserved and hard fought decision.

As a result of Cotto's win over Clotney, Manny Pacquiao had Cotto to fall back on as sort of a Golden Parachute when Mayweather acted as expected and wanted to hoard all the money in a proposed fight between them. Pacquiao benefited in a big way via Cotto beating Clotney, because it's doubtful that Pacquiao and his trainer Freddie Roach would've taken a fight with Clotney for the same money they're getting for Cotto. And the reason for that is they're smart boxing guys. They both know the 32 year old Clotney is more of a threat and danger to Pacquiao than Cotto is. Clotney's strength, defense, chin and jab would provide Pacquiao all kind of trouble.

Yeah, Cotto beat Clotney legitimately when they fought this past June, but who would most pick or be favored in a rematch? Most likely Clotney would be the favorite if they were to fight again in their next bout. That's why of the three marquee welterweights in the world, due to a lack of quality challengers available, with the exception of fighting Paul Williams, Mosley drew the most dangerous opponent he could've in Joshua Clotney.

Once again Mosley's willingness to fight the best available, for what more than likely won't be a break the bank payday, may cost him a Super-Fight with either Pacquiao or Mayweather sometime in 2010. In Clotney you have a fighter with a great chin who is physically strong. He has a powerful left jab and likes to follow it up with his terrific uppercut. Making matters more difficult for Mosley is Clotney has been hearing how he blew his last fight with Cotto, and squandered a great opportunity to capture a piece of the welterweight title. If there's one thing we know it's Clotney will fight with more urgency and purpose than he ever has before in his career in his next big fight. He has every reason imaginable to give it his best and show up with his A-game on fight night versus Mosley.

On the other hand it's easy to see fighting Clotney is somewhat of a let down for Mosley, who probably figured stopping Margarito for the WBA welterweight title in his last fight would've led to a huge payday and Super-Fight with Mayweather, Pacquiao or even a rematch with Cotto. Instead he's getting one of the most dangerous fighters in the division off a loss and who really believes he was jobbed out of the decision last time out because of Politics.

Clotney's a tough fight for anyone at 147 stylistically. If Shane decides to just use speed and movement fighting behind is jab and in spurts, and to not try for a kayo, he could have a fairly trouble free fight. Clotney doesn't bother you much if you don't bother him. So if Mosley goes with brains over brawn, he'll do okay. Under the tutelage of Nazeem Richardson, that's pretty much how Mosley fought Margarito. Based on one fight it looks as if his new trainer Nazeem Richardson has help extend Mosley's career and make him a more disciplined fighter. But if Shane feels he's got something to prove, he could lose.

Richardson will equip Shane with the right fight plan if the rumored fight with Clotney becomes a reality. Sure, Mosley will be at least a marginal favorite over Clotney, but I wouldn't consider a Clotney win an upset. If Mosley beats Clotney, it's a payday and keeps him in line for a fight with

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one of the survivors of the upcoming Super-Fights this fall in the welterweight division.

Which is exactly where he's at now. Making a fight with Clottey is a fight in which the risk/reward for Mosley is reversed. Floyd Mayweather Jr. he is not.