

## Mayweather's Too Professional To Be Taken Down By Turmoil

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Tuesday, 01 September 2009 19:00

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During Floyd Mayweather's conference call with the boxing media this week, a popular topic of discussion centered on the distractions he's had surrounding him this training camp as he's prepared for his 144 catch-weight bout with WBO lightweight champ Juan Manuel Marquez. The first set back occurred when Mayweather suffered a rib injury (which to this day he's never fully admitted as to how it happened exactly) which caused the fight to be in limbo for awhile before it was ultimately re-scheduled for this coming September 19th.

After that, his uncle and trainer Roger Mayweather was charged with assault. Luckily for Floyd the case will be heard after the fight with Marquez. Shortly after that Mayweather's Las Vegas home was raided by the cops. Confiscated from his house were a couple guns and bulletproof vests. Along with that a supposed associate of Mayweather's fired shots at a car in a skating rink parking lot. The car occupants were people that Mayweather reportedly knows and doesn't like. Fortunately for everybody no one was hurt and at the moment Mayweather isn't suspected of any wrongdoing and will not be charged with any felony or crime.

Like most upper-tier champions and great fighters Mayweather is the most safe and under control in the boxing ring. The fight for them is usually the easy part. It's getting to it that can sometimes be like navigating a minefield for them.

"My main thing is to focus on the fight," Mayweather said. "Anything else, I'm not worried about. I try to focus on positive things."

The positive that Mayweather is referring to is winning the fight. Floyd's been around too long and is too smart to be taken down by something he has complete and total control over, and that's preparing for Marquez. His priority is getting ready for his upcoming fight and you can bet on him not letting anything distract his preparation for it. Mayweather knows that his identity as a person along with his legacy as a fighter can go out the window with a loss to Marquez. In some ways Mayweather is so much like Bernard Hopkins in that they both see the big picture better and more clearly than most fighters ever do.

Neither Floyd or Bernard ever let themselves get out of shape. When they go into training for a fight it's about honing their skill and putting together a fight plan that takes away the best thing their opponent will try and hope to do against them. Never do they carry the burden of worrying about losing weight or struggling to make the weight stipulated by the contract. It's money in the bank that they'll make weight the first time they weigh in, because they're the consummate pros.

Floyd said, "It's extremely important for me to perform well and dominate." To do that he's going to have to be in great shape. He knows in order to stick to his demand for at least purse parity in a future showdown with Manny Pacquiao, he can't afford a so-so performance versus Marquez.

Mayweather may dispute he reads what's written and reported about him, but he does. And he knows that despite the fact that he fought a better version of Oscar De LaHoya and Ricky

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Hatton than Pacquiao did, most boxing fans remember Manny beating them more convincingly than he did. Floyd can steal some of Pacquiao's thunder to a degree if he takes Marquez apart. In two bouts with Marquez, Pacquiao is 1-0-1 against him. Pacquiao fans believe he beat Marquez both times they fought and some of Manny's detractors think Marquez beat him both times. Regardless of what anyone thinks both fights were close. That doesn't mean Mayweather has to stop Marquez, but the onus is on him to win a non-controversial fight and control the action most of the way. Doing such will be something he can build on in and out of the ring if he does fight Pacquiao next.

Don't worry about Mayweather being greatly, if at all, affected by what's going on around him. Great fighters can block out the things around them that could divert from them being at their best for a big fight. Muhammad Ali still had to deal with a Supreme Court decision hanging over his head before he fought Joe Frazier the first time. Had he lost his appeal to the highest court in the land he was going to prison for five years. Yet he fought one of the two or three greatest fights of his career versus Frazier during their first bout.

Michael Spinks lost his fiance in a car accident shortly before his unification bout with WBC light heavyweight champ Dwight Muhammad Qawi. Spinks carried his young daughter to the ring with him the night of the fight and then went out and put on a boxing clinic against Qawi. In 15 rounds of fighting, Spinks' shoulders maybe touched the ropes twice as he was giving Qawi a steady diet of left jabs as he moved about the ring on his way to a unanimous decision victory.

How about Thomas Hearn's younger brother Henry being arrested for shooting and murdering his girlfriend six days before he fought his rematch with Sugar Ray Leonard? That was some burden for Hearn to carry around for six days leading up to a fight he'd been waiting almost eight years to become a reality. And that must have felt as though he had the weight of the world on him. Hearn dropped Leonard twice and a fight that he should've won due to the two extra points he should've been up because of the knockdowns was declared a draw. The point is Hearn fought a great fight under adverse conditions. Everybody knows he won the fight. In fact Sugar Ray Leonard admitted on the Arsenio Hall show six months later that Hearn deserved the decision in their rematch.

Mayweather isn't faced with anywhere near the pressure and distractions that Ali, Spinks and Hearn were. Floyd will be fine. If anyone wants to sweat something about him before the fight, worry about him not fighting since December of 2007. Regardless of the fact that Mayweather has never taken any punishment and never abused his body, he is 32. He's had hand and back trouble over the years and until he's in the ring and fighting for real, nobody can say for sure with impunity how his body will respond.

What can be said is Mayweather loves saying he's the only fighter that hasn't lost, and will want to claim that after he fights Marquez. That guarantees he'll get out of his body everything it has to give. He has no control over whether or not it holds up, so be concerned with that. On the other hand he can control how he's affected by things around him that are out of his control. And that's something that he won't be taken down by.

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