

Ouch! Floyd Senior Says Manny Isn't Even A Good Fighter

Written by Michael Woods

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After a scouting session in Mexico to check out Juan Manuel Marquez, Oscar De La Hoya says he's convinced that the Mexican sharp-shooter will shock the world, and hand Floyd Mayweather his first loss as a pro when they tangle in Las Vegas on Sept. 19.

Oscar, on a Thursday conference call also featuring Floyd Mayweather Sr., stated: "I just have this feeling that Marquez is going to pull this off." TSS U seems to be of a mind that a jump up in weight, and a lack of comparative speed, and an advanced age, 36, will all conspire against JMM. Many are commenting that Floyd will have a relatively easy time against the 50-4 hitter, who in his last outing campaigned as a lightweight, against Juan Diaz in February. He'll be in the welterweight range when he gloves up against Mayweather (39-0).

"I saw how he bulked up," Oscar said, "and I'm convinced he will win this fight."

Cynics, and realists, will point out that De La Hoya is, duh, a promoter, and wants to talk up his Golden Boy guy, Marquez, so Oscar's assertion will be taken in most camps with a cup-load of salt, but let it be noted for the record and retrieved if Marquez does the barely-thinkable.

De La Hoya referenced his own 2007 tangle with Floyd, and said that a jab will be a key weapon against Floyd. If he hadn't moved away from that jab-happy strategy, Oscar said, he would have gotten the nod after 12 rounds. "It wasn't that difficult," he recalled, "but I didn't keep using the jab." Styles make fights, Oscar stated, and he's certain Marquez will have dissected Mayweather's moves, and will use tactics accordingly.

Floyd Sr. was for the most part on his best behavior, as he has been since he re-entered his son's life and camp a few months back. He did allow that with him back helping Jr. train, Floyd's jab is much improved. "He's got his jab working now," the father said.

Senior diverged from Oscar at one point, after Oscar said that Floyd needs a kayo of Marquez to enhance his legacy, and his standing compared to all-timers like Duran. "Floyd has to make a statement, do something no one has done, knock him out," Oscar said. Not so, said Senior; his son's place in the pantheon is secure, and if he merely gives Marquez a "good whuppin'" that will be sufficient.

Is Senior tipping his hand, TSS U; does he have his doubts that his son can finish off Marquez?

I don't. I am of the mind that the canny Marquez, and the deliberate Mayweather, who scouts foes out for the first third of the fight, will fight some even-ish rounds, and that the accurate hands of Marquez will ding Floyd a few times. But come the last two rounds, I see Floyd stepping it up, putting punches together, and closing the show. I believe he got off on the reaction to his climactic charge against Hatton, and the resultant TKO finish. He may well now get it that fans like closure to their drama, and will endeavor to cap the night with a bang.

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The Lamont Peterson controversy was touched on, barely. Rick Reeno reported that the 27-0 Peterson, who is set to get a title shot against Tim Bradley in December, worked Mayweather over in a recent sparring session. Floyd Sr. handled a query on that subject, and in his eyes, "Floyd got the best of it." He allowed that Peterson is a "good fighter." He was not of the same mind on Manny Pacquiao. Senior said that right now he think his kid is pound for pound number one, not Pacquiao. "I wouldn't call Pacquiao a good fighter," he said. Pacman doesn't use his speed to the greatest effect, the trainer said. "He's not an Oscar or Floyd Junior or any fighter like that," Floyd's dad said.

Leonard Ellerbe, Floyd's right hand guy, said that Floyd isn't distracted by the negativity attached to him in media reports. "They talked about Jesus (too)," he said, giving some insight into just how highly he regards his employer and friend. "When people are on top they want you to fail."

All in all, there was a notable absence of drama or edginess on the call. Ellerbe gave Senior a sterling intro, Senior didn't lob any shots at brother Roger, and Oscar was his typical charming self. Where's Freddie Roach to stir up the pot when you need him?