

Roach, F-Lo Compare Cotto And Hatton

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Wednesday, 30 September 2009 19:00

With the month of October underway the countdown to Pacquiao-Cotto has begun. On November 14th boxing will see the biggest and most anticipated fight of 2009 realized. When this fight was first announced shortly after Cotto won a split decision over Joshua Clottey, it was easy to see why Pacquiao was installed as a 3-to-1 favorite by the Vegas oddsmakers. Six weeks before Cotto nudged by Clottey, Pacquiao blew out the once beaten Ricky Hatton in two rounds. And no fighter gets more hype and is perceived to be unbeatable more so than a big puncher like Pacquiao coming off a spectacular one punch knockout.

Add to that Cotto wasn't anything close to overwhelming against Clottey, and in reality Clottey blew the fight in the last two rounds as much as Cotto won it, who wouldn't view Pacquiao as the favorite? What's been lost in the debate up to this point is Clottey was a much more formidable opponent than Hatton. In a head to head match up Clottey would be an even harder fight for Pacquiao than Cotto based on strength, style and durability.

Speaking of comparing and contrasting fighters, Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach commented on the difference between fighting Hatton and Cotto a few weeks ago. Roach said Miguel Cotto has a lot in common with Ricky Hatton. and stated "both boast of jaw-breaking left hooks, both are big and strong, ultra-aggressive and love to go to the body to soften up their foes."

Then he added, "Miguel Cotto is a lot smarter than Ricky Hatton," and emphasized that's the biggest difference between them and that makes Cotto more dangerous. After that Freddie said if Pacquiao thinks he's in for another easy fight he could be terribly mistaken. It's easy to see why Roach was asked to compare Cotto and Hatton, and after doing so it's more than obvious to conclude that they're in different leagues as fighters.

Other than both going to the body, there's not much to compare. Hatton is a reckless somewhat face first attacker who comes in with his chin up. Ricky attacks in spurts and doesn't apply bell-to-bell pressure. Cotto is much more versatile and can either bring the heat and break his opponent down or he can step away and counter-punch like he did when he fought Shane Mosley and Joshua Clottey. Cotto and Hatton are also different in their aggression. Cotto comes in low and is better at cutting off the ring and getting under punches. He also gives his opponent more upper-body and head movement. Hatton is one of those fighters who starts out giving his opponent some side-to-side head movement early in the fight, but once he gets nailed his chin goes up as he looks to load up on every shot.

Hatton is easier to neutralize because his punches come in on an arc and can be blocked or slipped with less effort and movement, as opposed to Cotto who keeps his hands close to his body and is not only harder to hold and tie up, but can get off better inside because his hands are free to punch. Physically, Cotto is clearly stronger than Hatton and is the type of fighter who can wear a smaller opponent down by just trying to hold him off as he presses forward without even engaging with him.

Roach, F-Lo Compare Cotto And Hatton

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Wednesday, 30 September 2009 19:00

When it comes down to who's a bigger puncher, it's not even close. Cotto is an exponentially bigger puncher than Hatton. Cotto fought three welterweight title bouts against Mosley, Margarito and Clottey who happen to have first tier chins. Mosley and Clottey have never been stopped and Margarito's only stoppage loss came in his last fight against Mosley. Is it even plausible to think Hatton could bother Mosley, Margarito or Clottey with his Sunday left-hook to the head or body? No, it's not.

The one thing that can be said about Hatton over Cotto is he throws more punches than Miguel does. Cumulatively they don't add up to being nearly as effective as Cotto's lesser output, but it's the only category in which Ricky gets the edge.

As a fighter Cotto is clearly a step up from Hatton. He does everything better and is more versatile. Having said that - I give Roach all due credit for recognizing how smart Cotto is because he's extremely smart. Miguel is capable of thinking his way through a fight and has shown the ability to change and adjust his style in big fights. Whereas Hatton is the same fighter every time out and isn't nearly as calm or calculated in the heat of a firefight. When comparing Cotto and Hatton starting with conditioning and all that comes after that, Miguel gets the check mark in his column.

However, Cotto's versatility advantage over Hatton won't be a big plus for him against Pacquiao because he'll have to press and attack Pacquiao like Hatton had hoped to. Just as it was impossible to envision Hatton beating Pacquiao by waiting on him and counter-punching, the same applies to Cotto.

For Cotto to beat Pacquiao he'll have to survive Manny's early assault and get out of the first couple rounds. And he's much better equipped to do that than Hatton was.