

## F-LO: I Liked Mayweather To Beat Pacquiao...Now I'm Not So Sure

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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It's been said here since before the Pacquiao-Hatton bout that Floyd Mayweather would be the choice in a potential clash with Manny Pacquiao. In fact I remarked to a colleague and friend right before the bell for the first round between Pacquiao and Cotto that, "if Mayweather was in the other corner and about to face Pacquiao - I'd have no reservation picking Mayweather to win."

The thought behind that was Floyd Mayweather sees everything his opponent does and/or tries to do. Everybody who fights him has to adjust and change their game when they face him. But I'm not sure that's the case pertaining to Pacquiao if and when he meets Mayweather.

The word great is not thrown out here to laud any fighter who scored a sensational knockout or looked impressive in their last fight. At the same time this observer watches boxing with an open mind and with both eyes unobstructed. And that has led me to view Pacquiao-Mayweather a little differently than I did. I no longer conclude that Mayweather holds the stylistic advantage over Pacquiao that I firmly believed before his bout with Cotto.

It's no secret that if they fight Mayweather will step back and make Pacquiao lead and chase him as long as the fight lasts. And that would leave him open to Mayweather's counter left-hooks and right hands. My belief is that Floyd making Manny miss and then catching him with flush counters eventually would result in Pacquiao not coming in with such impunity. However, Pacquiao showing against Cotto just how great of a punch he takes causes me to doubt as to whether Mayweather posses any punch in his arsenal that will impede Pacquiao's aggression.

Another problem for Mayweather fighting Pacquiao is Floyd doesn't throw a lot of punches. Mayweather seldom throws two and three punches at a time. His offense is more seize-the-moment intuition, and that leads to him not throwing a lot of punches and combinations. There's no question that he's got terrific boxing genes, but he's never confronted a fighter who combines speed and two handed shocking power that comes from so many different angles, almost nonstop, like Pacquiao is capable of doing.

Yes - Mayweather usually sees everything that his opponent throws at him. And his high right hand and shoulder roll prevents much of his opponent's offense from penetrating through. Sometimes Mayweather will give his opponent a free shot or two at his body, which opens them up for his accurate and quick counters to the head and face because their hands are down.

But against Pacquiao that could backfire and draw him into a fire-fight with Pacquiao.

Mayweather's hurdle when he fights Pacquiao is Manny throws as many as 7/8 hard punches at a time. Even more troublesome for Floyd is he can get off with short straight punches inside to the head and body. Mayweather may be a defensive wizard at making his opponent miss when his back is to the ropes. But Pacquiao throws so many punches that I don't care who the

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fighter is, he has to retaliate back to get Pacquiao off of him. If Mayweather tries to sit back and just wait for the counter, Pacquiao will eventually get something in and force Mayweather to fight out of necessity instead of allowing him to box.

Pacquiao showed that Cotto's power didn't deter him from carrying the fight and opening up. So there's no doubt he'll be fearless going at Mayweather in trying to get him into exchanges. And if that happens Pacquiao will get through to Mayweather's chin with his quick and straight left hand. If he shakes Mayweather or causes him to hold or try to get away, Pacquiao will feed off of that and become even more aggressive. And once Pacquiao draws him out and forces him to try and fight him off, it'll be easier for him to get Mayweather in that position the deeper the fight goes.

I'd hate to have to make a pick right this moment on a Pacquiao-Mayweather bout. However, at one time I was confident Mayweather held the style advantage over Pacquiao and would win a noncontroversial decision controlling the action most of the way.

After watching Pacquiao blitz Miguel Cotto, I'm no longer certain that Mayweather has the strength, power and chin to out-box Pacquiao. And at this moment I have more questions about Mayweather than I do Pacquiao in a potential matchup between them.

Lastly, Pacquiao has the more proven chin. And that's not the same as saying Mayweather doesn't have a first-tier chin. Although I don't think anyone knows the answer to that for sure. What is known is Pacquiao will test Mayweather's chin with harder, faster and with more accurate punches than any other fighter he's ever fought.

On November 13th, 2009 I would've been willing to bet heavily on Mayweather to beat Pacquiao. As of November 19th, 2009 I can't say for sure I'd pick Mayweather to beat Pacquiao, let alone bet on him.

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