

Should Floyd Be Ahead Of Manny On The P4P List?

Written by Ron Borges
Sunday, 02 May 2010 15:00

LAS VEGAS – Any more questions about Floyd Mayweather Jr.?

If one remains it is only this –why is Manny Pacquiao ahead of him on most pound-for-pound rankings?

Pacquiao ascended to that position not by beating Mayweather but by replacing him when the latter went into a 21-month, self-imposed exile after defeating Oscar De La Hoya and beating the considerable stuffing out of Ricky Hatton. He has marked his return to boxing by beating up Juan Manuel Marquez, with whom Pacquiao was life-and-death in two meetings, and Saturday night dominating Sugar Shane Mosley so thoroughly it seems fitting now to call him Saccharine Shane Mosley.

That Mayweather outpointed the 38-year-old WBA welterweight champion hardly came as a shock. He was a 4-1 betting favorite after all and even long-time supporters of Mosley, like Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach, seemed to find it difficult to make a strong case for him. But it was the aggressively lop-sided way Mayweather did it and, more importantly, that he had to overcome a staggering moment in Round 2 along the way that left even De La Hoya loudly singing his praises after the bout had been decided.

Always one to give opponents their props, De La Hoya called Mayweather "the greatest fighter on the planet" and "possibly the greatest of all-time." The latter seemed a bit over the top, especially if you ever saw Sugar Ray Robinson at all, Muhammad Ali at his best, Henry Armstrong on film or Sugar Ray Leonard in his prime but his other point now seems unassailable. Maybe Pacquiao will someday prove his superiority but he'll have to take a string of unwanted blood tests to get the chance and in De La Hoya's opinion it may not be worth the bloodletting.

"I did fight all three of them (Mayweather, Pacquiao and Mosley) and I have to be truthful," De La Hoya said after Mayweather won 11 of 12 rounds on two of the three judges' cards on his way to a unanimous decision that left Mosley humbled and red-faced from the lacing he took. "Mayweather is on a different level.

"Manny Pacquiao is a great fighter. I would never ever disrespect his accomplishments. There's no stopping Pacquiao (from aggressively coming forward and throwing punches). He's the energizer bunny!

"But he makes too many mistakes. When you do that against this guy you pay for it. It would be an interesting fight but Mayweather, by far, is the best. Mayweather is special. We have to respect that.

"Floyd Mayweather's ability to instinctively throw a punch and connect, that doesn't come around but once in a lifetime. We didn't see the Mosley we're used to seeing. You've got to give

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that to Mayweather. We witnessed the best fighter on the planet. No doubt in my mind. No doubt in Mosley's mind."

There was some doubt in everyone's mind at the Grand Garden Arena for a moment or two when Mosley landed two flush right hands to the face of Mayweather midway through the second round. Each jolted his head around as if it was on springs, the first knocking him off balance and the second wobbling him worse than anyone ever had.

It was a moment like this that many of his critics had been waiting for. The only real argument you could make up to this point of his career was what would happen if he got hurt and had to dig deep and fight back. What happened was just what anyone who saw him fight Emanuel Augustus at Cobo Hall in Detroit 9 ½ years ago would have expected.

That afternoon Mayweather had a bloody nose and was being belted from angles he never expected to see punches coming from. He was still young enough to not be quite sure what to make of it all but in the end he knew he had two choices – he could surrender or he could bite down on his gum shield and fight. He did and Burton's cornermen ultimately had to come in and save him in the ninth round.

Mayweather was faced with a similar problem after Mosley twice lashed him as solidly as he's ever been hit. Would he panic and get himself into deeper water? Would he go into a defensive shell and take more punishment? Or would he fight?

He fought, wisely until his head cleared but by the end of the round he was the one landing punches and in Round 3 he attacked Mosley with what would become the most important punch of the fight – a pulled counter right hand which comes when Mayweather sees the jab being launched at him.

He rocks back a bit to avoid it and then rifles a straight right hand over the top of it, landing it so often in the middle of Mosley's face that by the end of the seventh round there appeared to be a permanent red blotch from his chin to his forehead.

It was a bruise, and a memory, that wouldn't go away and neither would Mayweather, who by the end of that seventh round had written not only red but also the sad color of discouragement and resignation on Mosley's face.

"After awhile I think Mosley went into survival mode," Mayweather (41-0) said. "All he was trying to do was survive. At one point I thought he was going to cough it up, but he held on valiantly.

"I think he tried, but its just me being able to show my versatility to adapt and adjust. My game plan was going to work, break him down in every way."

That he did it so thoroughly seemed to stun Mosley, who in past fights had often been the one to make adjustments during the course of a fight that led him to victory. Certainly that was the case when he fought De La Hoya, especially in their first fight, but this time there were no

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adjustments to be made to what Floyd Mayweather brought into the ring.

It is difficult to adjust to superiority, especially when it comes in every way possible. Before the fight Mosley had said he had a Plan A, a Plan B and a Plan C and he would not fail to use them all.

Truth be told, if he'd had a Plan A-to-Z it wouldn't have made a difference because Mayweather proved prophetic when he said on Wednesday "There's a blue print to beat him. He's been beat five times. I never been beat. There's no plan how to beat me."

Certainly Mosley didn't have one, a fact he grudgingly had to acknowledge.

He was hurt real bad when I hit him with that shot," Mosley said of his first big right hand. "I was that close to getting him. I think after I caught him with that big right hand I opened up to much and played into his hands. I was too tight. When I hit him with the big right hand, I thought I was going to get the knockout.

"He started to avoid the punches. He did surprise me. Once I tried to get my timing back, I couldnt adjust and he did."

He also couldn't match Mayweather's hand speed, agility or defensive wizardry. What Mayweather did to Mosley was take away the jab he thought he was going to land by countering him with so many quick, hard rights over the top of it that he simply stopped trying to throw it.

Then he took away his sweeping right hook by either slipping it and countering or landing his own jab so hard and rapidly that Mosley kept finding himself dead in his tracks and unsure what was a safe punching distance and what was not.

Finally, he took away his spirit, making clear to him in the final rounds there was nothing he could do but resign himself to defeat at the hands of a guy who, as De La Hoya admitted, was better in every way.

Mosley has very fast hands, but he doesnt have a jab," growled Mayweather's uncle and chief trainer, Roger. "He had tremendous hand speed, but it means nothing if you can't hit the target. Youve got to be able to hit the target. Mosley is fast if he fights somebody slow, but its different if its somebody faster. My nephew boxed his ass off. The fight wasnt even close.

Indeed it was not and maybe one with Manny Pacquiao won't be either. As Mayweather pointed out, Mosley was the 41st guy who said he had a plan but once the two of them were alone with each other inside four strands of rope that separated them from the rest of society, all his plans were like the wind – gone in an instant.