

Foreman-Cotto: The Cynical Choice Looks To Be Foreman

Written by Frank Lotierzo
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For anyone who has been an ardent observer of the sweet science for any length of time, the cynic in you is what often becomes your guide when it comes to handicapping the outcome of certain big or marquee fights. Forget about who you think is the better or more skilled fighter. The overriding thought that echoes in the back of your head is, what outcome sets up the next big fight best.

On June 5th WBA junior middleweight title holder Yuri Foreman 28-0 (8) will defend his title against former junior welterweight and welterweight title holder Miguel Cotto 34-2 (27) at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, NYC. Cotto hasnt fought since November of last year when he was stopped by Manny Pacquiao in the last round - thus losing his WBO welterweight title. Foreman last fought in March when he won a unanimous decision over Daniel Santos (showing more tenacity than weve seen from him in previous fights) on the Pacquiao-Cotto under card. Both Cotto and Foreman are promoted by Bob Arum.

Cotto and Foreman are 29 years-old, but thats about the only thing they have in common other than working for Arum. Cotto has done good by Arum since the beginning of their promoter-fighter relationship. Miguel has fought the best of the best in both divisions hes campaigned in and has never put forth a half effort or been in a bad fight. Cotto is a real fighter and because of that theres probably not much left in the tank being that hes given everything he has every time out. Miguel has endured a lot of punishment over the last 22-months in three (Margarito, Clottey and Pacquiao) of his four fights during that time. His skin busts up easy now and its hard to picture it holding up over the course of a long fight. Remember, Miguel is not hard to find whether hes moving back and looking to counter or pressing the fight and forcing the action. And in reality Miguel hasnt really forced the action when hes been in with the class of the welterweight division, starting with his fight against Shane Mosley in late 2007.

Yuri Foreman may hold a title, but he hasnt really faced much resistance since turning pro in 2002 because his opposition has been so-so at best. Cotto is the biggest name fighter Yuri will have faced and hes facing him at the right time and at a higher weight than Cotto has ever fought at. Foreman is also four inches taller than Cotto and has a much greater reach. Hes also the fighter that represents the future and if he wins the fight hell be in the sweepstakes for at least one mega fight later this year, most likely against Manny Pacquiao. Thats right, if Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather cant agree on the terms of a fight between them, Foreman would be the perfect opponent for Manny to face in November and attempt to win a title in a record extending eighth weight division for him.

I see Foreman as being a kind of years of faithful service award for Cotto from Arum. Foreman isnt much of a puncher and if he beats Miguel, its doubtful that hell hurt him, if at all. If Cotto wins there are plenty of fights that Arum can use him for and fatten his bank account even more, something that I doubt any boxing fan would begrudge him.

So forget about who you or anyone else thinks is the better fighter between Cotto and Foreman.

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The reality is Cotto and Pacquiao wouldnt be a big fight if they met in a rematch. As of this writing Pacquiao-Mayweather has so many hurdles to clear before its made, and everyone knows Manny is going to fight this coming November. If Pacquiao cant secure a super-fight with Floyd, he has even more options than Mayweather does. And facing Foreman for that eighth title is probably looking better and better if Mayweather holds true to form and wants to dictate the terms of the fight. The game plan looks like it calls for Foreman to remain undefeated, mostly for Pacquiao as a fallback option.

Breaking down the Xs & Os of Foreman-Cotto is somewhat compelling. But the cynic in me wont allow for me to get that far into it, because it looks as if Cotto is getting a nice going away present, allowing Foreman to be the front-runner to be Pacquiaos next opponent and affording him the opportunity to make history again by winning a title in an eighth different weight division.

Both fighters will give it their all, but the business of boxing is best served by Foreman winning a decision. That must be taken into account when determining the winner of this fight.

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