

Even An Old Mosley Is Better Than Any Fighter Mayweather's Fought

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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As was stated here shortly after Floyd Mayweather Jr. beat Juan Manuel Marquez, Mosley-Mayweather just might be realized. That's great news and despite Shane being more rusty than Floyd, their names together make for a super-fight worthy of the monumental attention it will garner.

The history of Mosley 46-5 (39) and Mayweather 40-0 (25) and how they've conducted their careers is an open book to most boxing observers. Most know that Mosley will jump at the chance to share a ring with Mayweather. The only question is will Mayweather agree to the fight without making any ridiculous demands at the negotiating table to hold up the fight?

For the sake of argument purposes I'm going to assume that Floyd will take the fight and not try to gain a monumental advantage via any pre-fight conditions. Of course it will be said that Mayweather is only taking the fight because Mosley will be nearing his 39th birthday and will have been out of the ring almost 18 months by the time the fight comes off, an argument I won't dismiss. However, other than Floyd fighting Pacquiao, Mosley is the next best fight for him to take.

It will be said by Floyd's fans that even if he beats Mosley he won't get his due because it's an older Shane that he fought. Well, isn't that the truth? Who's fault is it that Mayweather has waited so long to actually fight Mosley? Obviously Mayweather is much closer to his prime than Mosley is his. Until Mosley convincingly beat Antonio Margarito a year ago he was viewed as a fighter on the decline. Suddenly after Margarito he's the Mosley of 2000. Wrong. However, his new trainer Nazeem Richardson looks to have given Shane an infusion and he fought one of the more complete fights of his career versus Margarito.

The fact is Mayweather is at a point where it's almost impossible for him to silence his critics such as myself. Even if he beat Pacquiao and Mosley in his next two fights, he will have scored his best wins over a former flyweight champ and a welterweight who first won the title a full decade ago. That aside, a win over Pacquiao and Mosley would add to Floyd's legacy and his standing historically would be in better stead than had he never fought them.

That said, there is one thing that everyone is missing if Mayweather does in fact fight Mosley sometime before the end of this summer. And that is Mosley at almost 39 is still a much more formidable opponent than any other fighter Mayweather has fought in his 40 pro-bout career.

All one has to do is look at Floyd's record and it's easy to conclude that even an old Mosley is a much harder go than the Zab Judah, Carlos Baldomir, Oscar De La Hoya or Ricky Hatton that Mayweather fought circa 2006-07. Unless Shane ages before our eyes the night he fights Floyd, he's a better boxer and puncher and is physically stronger and mentally tougher than all of the before mentioned fighters. And Mayweather very well could have something to do with Mosley aging before our eyes.

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If Mosley-Mayweather or Mayweather-Mosley comes off, Mayweather has to be thought of as being the favorite. From a style vantage-point Floyd holds the advantage, especially against a Mosley who's lost some speed and doesn't have the same legs he did when he was of his vintage form. Both Mayweather and Mosley are counter-punchers and like to bring their opponent to them. The fighter who is forced to change their role in the fight will be the one who is at the disadvantage. And that will be Mosley.

Once Mosley squares off with Floyd, Shane will be forced to fight as the attacker and puncher. That isn't him at his best and works to Mayweather's advantage. Floyd's quicker hands will allow him to time Mosley and break off the exchanges when he wants to. Mosley will have to somehow find a way to work inside and assert his physical strength over Mayweather, something that shouldn't be a herculean task for even a 39 year old Mosley.

Prime-vs-prime I'd go with Mosley in a heartbeat. However, in 2010 I'd take Mayweather to win a decision with him having to escape a few rough patches along the way. One thing Mosley has going for him now: Nazeem Richardson is a good fight strategist, and a guy who knows how to talk to fighters, something the 30 year old Mosley wouldn't have had.

Forget about the fact that if the fight happens Mayweather won't be meeting Mosley at his best, Shane is still better and more of a threat to beat Mayweather than any other fighter Floyd has ever been in the ring with.

I'm not sure a decision win over Mosley propels Mayweather that much higher historically, but it has to be considered his signature win. And any fighter who beats Mosley must get his props. So if Mayweather wins - no, he's still not Sugar Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearn or Roberto Duran, but he closes the gap that now exist.

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