

There's No Sudden Infusion Of Power Or Punch Resistance In Pacquiao

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Wednesday, 20 January 2010 18:00

With former Oakland Athletics/St. Louis Cardinals slugger Mark McGwire recently admitting he used PEDs during the 1998 MLB season in which he hit a record setting 70 home-runs, steroids and HGH have dominated sports pages and the Internet. Three years after McGwire hit 70 home-runs San Francisco Giants outfielder Barry Bonds broke his record and hit 73 home-runs, a record that still stands in 2010. Bonds has never admitted to taking PED's - but due to his body seemingly transforming from Matthew Saad Muhammad to Mike Weaver overnight, Bond's has been under the suspicion that he like McGwire was aided by HGH/PEDs.

The year before Bonds hit 73 home-runs he hit 49, then hit 46, 45 and 45 in the three subsequent years after hitting 73. Obviously something good happened to Bonds in 2001. Which is sort of what Floyd Mayweather Jr. has insinuated with his accusations that Manny Pacquiao is boxings' version of Barry Bonds. However, if you believe Pacquiao has been aided by PEDs, his performances circa 2004-09 don't bear that out.

The Mayweather faction insinuates that Pacquiao's durability/punch-resistance and punching power have been magnified due to his use of some form of steroids or PEDs. The problem is the evidence pointing to him taking an illegal substance is devoid when placing his record under the microscope.

The thought that any form of HGH/PED gives a fighter more punch resistance is only believed by those who've never been exposed to fighters in the gym and associated with them during their day to day lives. Some reading this will know exactly what I'm talking about and others will make their determination based moreso on what they want to believe or what fits their agenda. I know it's a touchy subject and the so-called experts and sports medicine scholars differ on PEDs depending on who you talk to. I'm coming from an actuality vantage-point.

Maybe steroids help athletes in other sports but there's not one known case where a professional fighter benefited by taking them, especially a non-heavyweight. I know fighters who I will never name that experimented with many different types of supplements and steroids looking to gain an edge in the ring. In most cases they were hoping to gain some power. And every one of them regressed as a fighter. If they gained anything it was mental - but even at that they lost something else as a result of it.

Pacquiao's chin and ability to take a punch:

Pacquiao was stopped early in his career by Rustico Torrecampo in the third round in 1996, when he was 17 years old and still not even a young man. Three years after that he was stopped for the second and last time in the third round by Medgoen Singsurat and lost his flyweight title. Five months later in his next fight he weighed in at 122, ten pounds more than he did for Singsurat. So it's not a reach to believe that he was weakened by making the flyweight limit as a 20 year old. Forget about Pacquiao's chin being suspect and aided by some type of PED/HGH. He's filled out and matured over the last 10 years since Singsurat and his chin has

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never betrayed him or been an issue of concern.

In March of 1963 Henry Cooper would've knocked out the just turned 21 year old Cassius Clay had his left-hook landed early in the fourth round instead of right at the bell ending it. What would've happened if Joe Frazier's massive left hook from his first fight with Ali in 1971 hit the young Clay of 1963? Clay would've gone to sleep and had been counted out! Only Clay filled out and matured physically in between 1963-71. And no one has ever questioned Ali's chin or accused him of injecting steroids at any point during his 20 plus year career.

Bottom line is Pacquiao's chin and punch resistance get the benefit of the doubt until proven otherwise.

Pacquiao's Power:

In regards to Manny Pacquiao's punching power, if it's been aided by any type of supplements or HGH, perhaps he may want to find a new supplier and get his money back. Sure Pacquiao can really hit, but it's not like he's on the level of a Thomas Hearns, Julian Jackson, Alexis Arguello or even Michael Spinks, who not only scored more one-punch knockouts than Manny, but did so with both hands. Pacman's finishing punch is his left-cross exclusively.

In 2004 fighting as a featherweight he had Juan Manuel Marquez down three times in under two minutes and couldn't keep him down. Ten months later fighting as a super-featherweight/junior lightweight he hit Erik Morales for 12-rounds and didn't stop him and lost the fight. When they fought a rematch 10 months later at the same weight he had to work him over for 10-rounds before the fight was stopped. They met in a rubber match again ten months later and Pacquiao stopped a washed up Morales in three rounds, but it wasn't a one punch blitz and it still required him to hit Morales countless times before the fight was halted.

In April of 2007 Jorge Solis made it to the eighth round before he was stopped. Six months later a glove shy Marco Antonio Barrera went the distance with Pacquiao after making it to the 11th round with him the first time they met. In Pacquiao's next fight Marquez went the distance with Pacquiao again - and despite being down once went on to lose a controversial decision.

In his next bout Pacquiao fought lightweight David Diaz and stopped him in the ninth round, which is one more round than it took Kendall Holt to do it. Six months later Pacquiao met a drained 145 pound corpse named Oscar De La Hoya. Finally after giving Oscar a ceaseless pummeling for eight rounds and hitting him at will but never staggering or putting him down, De La Hoya didn't come out for the ninth round.

Pacquiao's upset of De La Hoya set up his next fight against Ricky Hatton who was viewed as perhaps the top junior welterweight in boxing at the time. Pacquiao's speed and unorthodox angles made Hatton a sitting duck for Manny's right hook. Pacquiao dropped Hatton twice in the first round and in the second round Pacquiao put Hatton away for good with one massive hybrid left to the chin.

Six months later Pacquiao had target practice on 145 pound welterweight Miguel Cotto for the

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better part of 12-rounds. Despite having Cotto down twice early in the fight, Miguel took the Pacman's Sunday best but never went down again. Finally in the 12th-round, in which the determined Cotto probably would've finished the fight on his feet, the fight was stopped.

Hatton and Cotto both suffered devastating knockouts before fighting Pacquiao at the hands of Mayweather and Margarito. So it's not a reach to assume both Ricky and Miguel had a little taken out of them before facing Manny. And the reality is Hatton is Pacquiao's only one punch knockout victim in a big fight.

Like Pacquiao, everyone talks about Rocky Marciano's one-punch knockout power. But the reality is Jersey Joe Walcott was the only big time heavyweight Rocky iced with one punch. The other stoppage wins he scored as champ came from an accumulation of punches. Maybe it's a fair question to ask whether or not Pacquiao and Marciano were truly one punch life-takers like a Thomas Hearn or Max Baer?

After viewing Pacquiao's record against elite opposition, Ricky Hatton is the only upper-tier fighter that he's stretched with one punch. Not to mention Hatton is a face first attacker who was coming in and got caught as flush and clean on the chin as you'll ever see one fighter catch another.

It also can be said that Floyd Mayweather--certainly not known for being a big puncher, and it may have taken him longer but-- Floyd did knock Hatton loopy with a single left-hook. An overwhelming majority of Pacquiao's knockouts have come as a result of his fast hands that land from undetectable angles coupled with his accuracy. Pacquiao is now an excellent two handed puncher - but not a life-taker who ices his opponents with a single blow.

A lot of fighters try to shrink themselves down to the lowest weight they can in order to maintain their strength and power. They fear they'll leave their punch down in the lower division and often times that's been the case when they move up. But sometimes getting down so low weakens their body and they'd be better off moving up to the next division to where their body isn't drained. In the case of Pacquiao - it's looks as if his body has benefited due to him not cutting so much weight along with him becoming a more well rounded fighter and two handed puncher.

I'd also suggest going back and looking at what Pacquiao weighed in at for his fights with Barrera and Morales, and then see how much heavier he was on the night of the fight. He entered the ring as a welterweight a day after making the junior lightweight limit. It's very plausible he was draining himself to make weight moreso than it is that he's on HGH or any type of steroid or PED.

Pacquiao's Stamina:

Pacquiao has always been a high volume puncher who fought at an extremely fast pace. He's never looked tired or as if he was hanging on because he was tiring down the stretch of his title fights going back to his tenure as a featherweight. And no one questioned his stamina or suggested he was being aided by any form of HGH/PED back then. At this time it's quite a reach to suggest his terrific stamina and energy are the result of anything other than his

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incredible work in the gym during his preparation for his bouts. His stamina has always key asset and weapon for him.

If Manny Pacquiao is injecting or swallowing anything illegal, I don't see the evidence where its aided his power and/or chin in an unnatural way nor his stamina. It's just not there!

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