

Pacquiao Is BWAA Fighter Of The Decade

Written by TSS Press

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If there was any doubt that Manny Pacquiao is the biggest star of his sport, it was put to rest by members of the Boxing Writers Association of America. By an overwhelming margin, Pacquiao took home not only the BWAA's newly named "Sugar Ray Robinson Fighter of the Year" award, but went one better by also winning "Fighter of the Decade" honors. For Pacquiao, it was his third BWAA "Fighter of the Year" award, tying him with Muhammad Ali and Evander Holyfield for the most in the history of the organization.

Right by Pacquiao's side as always was his trainer Freddie Roach, who won a record setting fourth "Trainer of the Year" award. Roach says that this award gives him special satisfaction in that it is named after his mentor Eddie Futch.

Although the Juan Manuel Marquez - Juan Diaz fight took place early in the year, it stayed fresh in the mind of the BWAA electorate. This tremendous brawl that saw Marquez win by a ninth round stoppage was voted "Fight of the Year." This award has recently been renamed in honor of Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier who engaged in three fights, two of which were of legendary status.

The John F.X. Condon award for "Long and Meritorious Service" was won by veteran sportswriter Jerry Izenberg. A former BWAA Fleischer award winner (1978) for "Excellence in Boxing Journalism," Izenberg covered the boxing beat for decades for the Newark Star Ledger. Since he's relocated to Nevada, Izenberg's pace has not slowed. Jerry still writes about the sport he loves, giving his readers an inside perspective as only he can.

Sadly, boxing lost Alexis Arguello last year, but the goodwill that the former great champion spread while alive was rewarded. Arguello (posthumously) will be honored with the Marvin Kohn "Good Guy" award.

The odds of there being a tie in any one category are slim, but for it to happen two years in a row in the same one category is very unusual. However, that is what has occurred as broadcaster Nick Charles, and former heavyweight contender George Chuvalo shared the lead for the Bill Crawford award for "Perseverance in Overcoming Adversity." The cases of both have been well documented. Needless to say, both serve as inspirations. Last year it was Genaro Hernandez and George Kimball who tied.

Joe Tessitore has been the lead blow by blow announcer at ESPN for the last 10 years. His outstanding work has been recognized by the BWAA. Tessitore is this year's winner of the Sam Taub award as "Broadcaster of the Year."

Previously the BWAA's Liebling committee (George Kimball chairman) announced F.X. Toole as the winner of this year's award for "Outstanding Boxing Writing."

Awards yet to be determined are the Fleischer award for "Excellence in Boxing Journalism" and

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the Farley award for "Honesty and Integrity in Boxing."

The 85th annual BWAA awards dinner is scheduled to take place in New York City, on June 11, 2010. Pacquiao's attendance at the event already has been confirmed. The following evening there will be a major show at Madison Square Garden.