

Who's The Real Shane Mosley In 2010?

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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Now that the Mayweather-Mosley bout is signed and scheduled to take place on May 1st, the speculation as to who will win has begun. Shane and Floyd are two of the greatest and most complete fighters to grace the sport of professional boxing over the last 20 years. Mayweather who will turn 33 later this month and Mosley who will be 39 a few months after the fight are two of the best welterweights in the world. Obviously Manny Pacquiao has to be included in that conversation as well. Most likely Pacquiao would be a slight underdog against Mayweather and a slight favorite over Mosley.

As of this writing Mayweather looks to be the surer bet over Mosley when it comes to which one of them will show up having retained their A-game on the night of May 1st. Floyd looked tremendous in dismantling Juan Manuel Marquez in his last bout. In his previous fight against Ricky Hatton he looked to be at the top of his game and performed better than he did in his signature winning bout versus Oscar De La Hoya a little more than two and a half years ago.

Shane Mosley fought one of the most complete fights of his career a little over a year ago when he took apart and stopped the tough and durable Antonio Margarito in his last fight. It was also Mosley's first fight with his new trainer Nazeem Richardson. Under Richardson's tutelage, Shane exhibited great holding and clinching skills which were exactly what he needed to do in order to disrupt and impede Margarito's aggression and strength.

Nazeem appears to have infused life into Mosley at the twilight of his career. The only thing that's unclear... is the Margarito fight a good indicator of who Mosley is as a fighter in 2010? Did Shane match up well with Margarito or is he really the fighter who was being written off after losing a decision to Miguel Cotto and then coming on to stop the crude and wild swinging Ricardo Mayorga in the last round in his last bout before meeting Margarito?

What Mosley shows up to face Floyd Mayweather this coming May will determine what kind of a fight boxing fans will see. If it's the Mosley who had a hard time getting off versus Mayorga until Ricardo slowed and became more predictable and easier to time than he normally is, Mayweather will run away with the fight. And if it's the Mosley who got caught in between styles fighting Cotto, Mayweather will pot-shot him and stay a step ahead of him the entire fight.

The last thing Mosley can let happen against Mayweather is for him to try and show Floyd something different from round to round. If Shane comes out aggressively, looking to put Floyd away with one big punch, he'll think he's punching at a sheet draped over a clothes line hanging in his neighbor's backyard. And if he tries to bring Mayweather to him looking for the big counter, he'll come in second every time because Mayweather has the reach, hand speed and instincts to beat Mosley playing tag.

On the other hand if Mosley fights with the same purpose and ring savvy he exhibited against Margarito, then the fight has a chance to be a memorable one. Against Margarito, Mosley boxed from the outside as Antonio was trying to shrink the ring and force it on the inside. Once he got

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there Mosley tied him up and clinched - thus impeding Margarito's aggression and forcing him to reset and start over. Then when Margarito tried to change it up and inch his way towards Mosley behind his jab, Shane sensed the subtle change and fought more aggressively, utilizing his superior hand speed and made Margarito pay a price on the way in and set him up to be taken out later in the fight.

For the Margarito fight, Mosley's trainer Nazeem Richardson drew up the perfect fight plan and Mosley followed it to the letter. And in doing that he had to fight himself along the way because Shane likes to attack and trade when he's under fire. However, Richardson apparently reached Mosley and convinced him trading and going to war with Margarito wasn't the way to go.

At this time Richardson has to be considered one of the three or four best trainers in professional boxing. Now he has to come up with a fight-plan for an almost 39-year-old Mosley to somehow draw Mayweather into a knockdown, drag-out fight in order for him to have his best chance to beat the favored Mayweather. And for him to do that, Mosley will have to have retained enough of his physical skills and weapons to carry out the plan against what will surely be an uncooperative Mayweather.

If Mosley is to hand Mayweather his first pro defeat, he'll have to force the fight on the inside and somehow keep it there for a majority of the time. Mayweather likes his opponent to bring the fight to him, but has never been confronted by an opponent who had fast hands who's stronger than him. Mosley has to force Mayweather to trade hooks and uppercuts with him while his back is on the ropes. To do that he'll have to be in great shape and also be elusive enough to make Mayweather's jab miss him with some consistency. If Shane is too upright as he's moving in, Mayweather will pepper him with his left-jab and score with some crowd stopping left-hooks off it.

Mosley does not need to be creative to beat Mayweather (if he's going to beat him, that is.) He has to be completely consistent, start to finish. And he doesn't have to worry about whether his shots are catching Floyd clean early in the fight, he just has to stay on him, landing anywhere he can.

The question that cannot be answered until fight night is - is Shane Mosley the measured and calculated physical force that took apart Antonio Margarito or is he the fighter who looked a little better than ordinary versus Cotto and Mayorga but certainly not extraordinary. When Mosley steps into the ring to fight Floyd Mayweather he'll be coming off the longest period of inactivity of his 17 year career. Add to that Mayweather is the most accurate and best counter-puncher he will have faced during his career, and that's not a good recipe to go into a fight with Mayweather.

As of late Mosley's speech and diction haven't been as sharp and clear as it once was. I hope that's more the case of me catching him on and off day or after a tough gym session. But in all honesty that scares me as to what Mosley has left. When it was discussed that he was going to fight Joshua Clottey it was stated here that in my opinion that was a bad matchup for him. Once that fight fell through and the fight with Andre Berto was made, I felt that Shane wasn't a lock to win that one.

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Mayweather from a style and mindset vantage-point will present Mosley more problems than either Clottey or Berto could've. I'm not going to guess at this time what version of Mosley will show up. What I do know is if he's not the fighter we saw versus Margarito, Floyd Mayweather will have a lot to do with him looking spent and on the severe decline.

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