

Maybe It Would Be Best If Mayweather and Pacquiao Both Lost

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather are the two best fighters active at the present time. And it's true that a fight between them to determine who is the P4P number one guy would be a compelling matchup. We'd all watch it. Okay, we know that.

But does anyone really want to have to spend another six months with their arguments, postponements, mutual backing away from the negotiating table, accusations, and threats to take other fights? I don't.

The problem is that, if Manny Pacquiao beats Joshua Clottey and Floyd Mayweather beats Shane Mosley, there's a good chance that they'll pick up at the bargaining table exactly where they left off this past January. Does anyone doubt that? A fight between them may even become harder to make if they both win their upcoming bouts.

Mayweather, deciding that because a win over Mosley has more credibility than one over Clottey, will assume he's in the superior bargaining position and probably make Pacquiao subject himself to an autopsy. He'll again demand random drug tests (and depending on how Pacquiao looks in the Clottey fight, he may ask for even more stringent testing), and Manny will decline. And we'll be subjected to the same melodrama all over again. It will be six more months of childish name calling, and pushing the rest of the business of boxing to the back burner. Do boxing fans really want to let this nonsense upstage the attention that Israel Vazquez-Rafael Marquez IV should get? That's what it will do.

It's astonishing that a guy who has never been anything but a credit to the sport, someone about whom there's never been a hint of any misdeed, will now forever fight under a cloud of suspicion instigated by someone whose motives couldn't be more transparent. And the idea that Pacquiao should have to prove that he's innocent only appeases those who think this is a perfect world. I'm really surprised by how many people who should know better are subscribing to the "if he has nothing to hide, why isn't he taking the test" position. Manny Pacquiao, like Floyd Mayweather doesn't owe anyone a thing.

I don't think either Pacquiao or Mayweather is a lock to win their respective next fights. Both are favored, but Manny's fighting a bigger guy who's hard to hurt, and Mayweather is fighting a guy who's better than he is (although admittedly he's fighting him at the right time.) And although there's no question that a Mosley-Clottey fight wouldn't be nearly as interesting or as lucrative as Pacquiao-Mayweather, maybe it'd give everybody else in the business a chance to step back into the limelight. And it would demystify Pacquiao and Mayweather. Would that be such a bad thing?

It's great when there's a lot of debate centered around a fight. And one of the greatest things about boxing is the enthusiasm that attaches to an important fight. But we've had nearly a half year obsession with a fight that hasn't taken place and that isn't scheduled. Mayweather's camp, in my opinion, has clearly gone so far as to plant shells to write and post things all over

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the Internet. You can spot them a mile away.

Let's put things in perspective. In the amount of time that Pacquiao and Mayweather have talked about fighting each other, Ray Robinson and Jake LaMotta would have been in the ring together a half dozen times. I know that times are different, and that a lot of money is on the line now and that it takes a little while to set megafights up. But this fight no longer needs setting up. And the money is there for it; both guys will make a ton of it. And let's face it, Manny and Floyd are less than riveting public speakers. Nobody -- and I mean nobody -- wants to hear them anymore.

They can monopolize boxing all they want when they're talking about their actual fight in an actual ring, not a hypothetical fight in an imaginary ring.

We know that Joshua Clottey and Shane Mosley will fight anyone, anytime, anywhere. And they won't attach a lot of conditions to doing so. Yeah, Clottey's not as interesting a fighter as some of the other guys, but at least he's not hijacking the division. And Shane is never in a bad fight. And hasn't he, through his deeds rather than his words, done enough to earn our loyalty? Like Clottey, he won't hold up the division for ransom either.

Pacquiao, Mayweather, Mosley, and even Clottey are all moving toward the ends of their careers. I've got no problem with talking about their fights when they're actually fighting each other. Hearing endless and pointless talk about who would win if Pacquiao and Mayweather fought, why they haven't fought, or if they're ever going to fight is getting redundant. I no longer care whose fault it was that they didn't fight earlier. It's idiotic that they didn't, regardless of the reason. At some level, I wouldn't mind if one or both of them were upended in their next fight.

It would do boxing a lot of good if we started focusing on Chad Dawson, Timothy Bradley, Paul Williams, Juan Manuel Lopez, Yuriorkis Gamboa, John Murray, Guillermo Rigondeaux, Nonito Donaire, and Roman Gonzalez, all guys who are fighting regularly and making names for themselves. Once we're done crowding the net with speculation about the Manny and Floyd Show, there may finally be some space available for other worthy fighters.

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