

## There's A BIG Difference Between Floyd's 33 And Mosley's 38

Written by Frank Lotierzo  
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This past Monday night Floyd Mayweather Jr. was a guest on Foxnews channel's Greta Van Susteren's show "On The Record." Mayweather was on the show to discuss his May 1st bout against WBA welterweight title holder Shane Mosley.

During the interview Van Susteren mentioned that Shane Mosley is 38 years old and suggested to Floyd that he was significantly younger than Mosley. Floyd responded by saying, "we're both in our thirties." And that's a fact. Floyd turned 33 last week and Shane is actually closer to 39 than 38, being that he'll turn 39 four months after he fights Mayweather.

Floyd also said that he won't get any credit for beating Mosley because everyone will say he's an old man. And he's right to a degree in regards to what might be suggested if he does in fact win the fight. Those who are rooting for Mayweather and want to justify his acclaim as a once in a generation fighter and talent will act as if he beat Mosley at his best. Which is nothing short of being intellectually dishonest. On the other hand, those who are either rooting for Mosley or against Mayweather will say Floyd just beat the name Mosley and imply that Shane was on the decline when they fought.

So lets clear up the age disparity before Mayweather and Mosley step into the ring.

On the night of May 1st 2010 it is likely Mayweather will have never looked stronger physically or more confident as a fighter. As for Mosley, he's coming off one of the more complete fights of his career after a string of less than stellar showings. If Mayweather beats Mosley, he must be given credit for it and it will clearly be the signature win of his career, there's no disputing or refuting that.

Regardless of how one may feel about Mayweather, it's still a considerable feat to beat Shane Mosley. Only three fighters can say that. Vernon Forrest, who had the style and size to do it, Winky Wright was simply too big for Mosley, and I saw Mosley edging Cotto by a point. So in the ring, at least to me, only Forrest and Wright have defeated Shane conclusively.

However, Mayweather beating Mosley can't be what propels him to being thought of as the most complete fighter of his era, although a stoppage victory would elevate Floyd's resume in a big way. It's preposterous to think of Mayweather as this generation's Sugar Ray Leonard because he defeated Mosley as a welterweight eight years after Vernon Forrest did it twice, and Miguel Cotto officially did it two and a half years ago. It just simply doesn't measure up to Leonard splitting two fights with a 29 year old Roberto Duran (72-1) and stopping Wilfred Benitez and Thomas Hearn when they were a combined (70-0-1) and in their prime. I won't even include Leonard beating Hagler because Ray did it fighting as a middleweight opposed to the welterweight he was against Duran, Benitez and Hearn.

The gap in age between Floyd and Shane is significant. There's a big difference between 33 and 38 in boxing. Granted, every fighter ages differently. Yet it's impossible to find a single

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former great fighter who was as great at 38 as they were at 33. This includes Jersey Joe Walcott, Archie Moore, George Foreman and Bernard Hopkins. Add to that the caliber of relative opposition that Mayweather and Mosley fought during their pro careers, and the whole thing falls into absurdity. On top of that it's well known that fighters who compete in the divisions below heavyweight age more rapidly and dramatically, which is due to the fact that their fights are more fiercely contested because they face a better grade of fighters throughout their careers.

Muhammad Ali was 33 when he fought Joe Frazier in Manila, and two months shy of turning 39 when he fought Larry Holmes. Is there any comparison between the Ali of 1975 and 1980? In the Manila fight it can be said with impunity that Muhammad was at his zenith regarding his physical strength and actually landed the harder punches during the fight against Frazier, who was 31 at the time. When he fought Holmes five years later, Ali had the appearance of an empty package that was nicely wrapped while bouncing around the ring before the fight even started.

Sugar Ray Leonard was 32 when he fought Donny Lalonde in 1988, and almost 36 when he fought Terry Norris in 1991. Leonard looked like an old man shadow boxing in his corner before the bell rang for the first round when he fought Norris. Sugar Ray Robinson was 31 for both of his fights against Randy Turpin, in which he went 1-1. He was 36 for the two fights he split with Carmen Basilio. If you've seen those four fights, the Robinson who fought Turpin both times would've never struggled with and had to fight Basilio twice just to beat him once.

There's no such thing as the perfect comparison/contrast in boxing. And just because Ali, Leonard and Robinson were on the severe decline between 35/38 doesn't mean that Mosley is as far gone as they were at relatively the same age. However, Mosley is a boxer-puncher stylistically, and only swarmers and attackers burn the candle from a physical vantage-point faster. It's deceitful for Mayweather or anyone else to dismiss the age disparity between he and Mosley suggesting that they're both in their thirties. Most boxing purist and fans should know better, as Floyd certainly does.

The bottom line is Mayweather in terms of boxing is significantly younger and less rusty than Mosley will be on the night they fight. If Mayweather were fighting the Mosley of March of 2010 four months out from his 39th birthday, "Who R U Picking?" That's what I thought, Floyd isn't a lock in spite of the advantages he has in his favor in the year 2010, let alone the fighter he'd erode to by 2015.

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