

50 Years Ago, Pacquiao Would've Fought Mayweather Three Times Already

Written by Rick Folstad

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Somebody find this guy a fight.

I'm not talking about a rematch with someone he's already beaten, or a fight against some pug past his prime. No lightweights pretending to be welterweights.

I mean a fight against someone new and fresh and quick and tougher than fourth-year calculus.

Someone who can dent trains with a left hook and who runs marathons before breakfast. An "S" on his chest would help.

Seems like Manny Pacquiao hasn't broken a sweat in or outside the ring since his high school prom. Picking an opponent for him is like throwing a cattle rustler into the hands of a lynch mob.

"Yeah, that's the hombre who stole my cows and kicked my dog. Quick, grab him. We're gonna throw him in there with Pacquiao."

Ask Freddie Roach who he wants his fighter to face next and he'll tell you he'd like to see Pacquiao fight WBC middleweight champ Sergio Martinez.

It's a smart pick and maybe the only one out there.

Martinez is coming off a stunning win over Paul Williams and his name is starting to be heard around water coolers, loading docks and in saloons.

His win over Williams was one of those fights that quickly turned into a mugging. It was on cable TV, but if you didn't see it, close your eyes and picture an unsuspecting guy who suddenly gets clobbered by a wild haymaker thrown in a crowded pool hall. Williams never saw it coming, but neither did anyone else. I'm not even sure Martinez knew he threw it.

The punch landed flush and if Williams ever takes another shot like that, he should seriously consider a change in careers, maybe to the food and beverage industry or law enforcement. I'm guessing Williams is still counting stars.

And lost opportunities.

So what about Martinez? He's beaten or almost beaten some pretty good guys recently and has looked real good doing it. He also has that growing reputation, and if you promote fights for a

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living, you can't ask for much more.

Plus, Martinez is big. Bigger than lightweight Juan Manuel Marquez, who was lobbying for a third fight against Pacquiao.

Sorry, Juan. Won't happen. Pacquiao is closer to middleweight than lightweight.

"I'd like to see (Pacquiao) fight Martinez at the right weight," Roach told the media recently. "Martinez at the right weight I think can be the most exciting fight out there."

So what is the right weight for Pacquiao and Martinez? Whatever that weight is, they better decide on it pretty quick. At his present growth rate, Pacquiao will be calling out heavyweight contender Tomasz Adamek by Christmas 2011.

According to Roach, Pacquiao has already sent his sympathies and best wishes to the suddenly forgotten junior-welterweight division.

I can just hear Roach now: "It's all yours, boys. We're looking for bigger and better things. Hopefully, we'll find them somewhere around 150 pounds."

If Martinez isn't available for Pacquiao, Popeye with a few cans of spinach would be a good opponent. They just have to break Popeye's cartoon-character clause.

Unfortunately, Popeye is more likely to fight Pacquiao than Floyd Mayweather Jr., who is almost a cartoon character in his own right.

Court-appointed dates on Mayweather's busy legal calendar will keep him too tied up to think about fighting. The only battles Mayweather is training for are with opposing attorneys and the mother of his kids.

Too bad. Fifty years ago, Pacquiao and Mayweather would have already fought each other three or four times. It could have been the stuff of LaMotta and Robinson; Sadler and Pep; Ali and Frazier.

Instead, we're left with Pacquiao and a bunch of cattle rustlers. [Comment on this article](#)