

Should The Bradley-Alexander Winner Be In The Next-To-Fight Manny Mix?

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 08 December 2010 19:00

They are calling this one The Super Fight, a bold move which sets high expectations for the January 29 Tim Bradley-Devon Alexander junior welterweight titles consolidation bout which will be shown on HBO.

It makes some sense, in that the fight will be part of a card held at the refurbished Silverdome in Detroit. But lets traffic in reality, shall we, and admit that the real super fight we all want to see features two gents named Pacquiao and Mayweather.

Since that doesnt seem to be reaching a state of fruition, with the decisionmakers and negotiators in each camp warring with each other, and with legal woes hanging over Mayweathers head, we fight fans should probably make as one of our New Years resolutions to not waste another year getting bogged down in the will they or wont they debate.

The sports powerbrokers have said they learned their lesson, and wont spend excess energy on working toward a fight that might never coalesce. Nobody but those inside the Floyd bubble knows what hes up to, what hes thinking, why he is hesitant to prove to the world that hes the best boxer on the planet, today, and pick up a cool 50 mill while hes at it. So now everyone, basically, has shifted their concentration, from Manny-Money, to Who Will Manny Fight Next?

That lucky soul might well emerge with a shattered orbital bone, or a crushed rep after spitting the bit, or a swiftened push to retirement, in addition to the best payday of their career...but these are the risks men take for that lucky lotto ticket, and the chance to take down Pacman.

Which brings us back to the Bradley-Alexander fight. There are those that think it makes a great deal of sense for the winner of this fight to fight Pacquiao. You all know my take---I called on Nov. 22 for Manny to aim for a title in his ninth weight class, against middleweight champion Sergio Martinez. And trainer said Freddie Roach on Monday that he concurs. "I'd like to see him fight [Sergio] Martinez right away, the trainer said. But Mannys promoter, Bob Arum, has a batch of three fighters hed like Manny to choose from: Shane Mosley, Andre Berto and Juan Manuel Marquez. Mosley, even though he has looked close to shot in his last two fights, certainly when compared to himself in his prime years, is thought to have the inside track. Friend and colleague Ron Borges has lobbied hard for Marquez to get a third crack, though Pacman himself has said he doesnt think fans want that one, and Arum has dismissed Marquez demands as being excessive.

The handlers of the two men gloving up on January 29 would like their guys to be in the mix. At an NYC press conference held on Wednesday at the steakhouse Gallaghers to hype the scrap, Bradleys promoter Gary Shaw threw his guys hat in the Pacman ring. He says that if Bradley (26-0 with just 11 KOs; the WBO 140 pound champion; from Palm Springs, CA) beats Alexander (21-0 with 13 KOs, the WBC 140 pound champion; from St. Louis, Missouri), the press should push for Bradley to meet Pacman, because that is what is best for boxing.

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The winner should fight Pacquiao, Pacquiao shouldnt fight an old Shane Mosley. He needs the challenge, Shaw said. Arum is all about his own platform, his own fighters. Thats not what boxing is about. Its bad for the sport. Maybe hes an old guy, wholl take the money, and not give a f---. But when Im dead, I hope they say, He cared about his fighters, and he cared about boxing.

Alexanders manager/trainer, Kevin Cunningham, didnt go quite as far as Shaw. He thinks the winner should be in the mix for a bigger stage fight after this one, against Pacquiao, Mayweather, Mosley. The winner should be considered boxings newest superstar, he said.

HBO chief Kery Davis was listening to the discussion, and was asked to chime in. I think Kevin put it perfectly, he said. The winner of this fight becomes a star.

Shaw said the winner of this fight will have the right to call out who they want next. I asked if WBA champion Amir Khan (23-1), in action against Marcos Maidana on Saturday, wont have that same right if he wins, especially if he looks scintillating doing so. Shaw said the winner of the Bradley-Alexander fight has more juice, because they are both undefeated.

TSS Universe, what say you? Should the Bradley-Alexander winner be in the mix for the next Manny gig? Is that even possible, with Alexander and Bradley both best suited for 140 pounds, and with Manny seemingly set to fight at welterweight? And does the winner of the Silverdome scrap need to win in electrifying fashion, in order to steal some buzz back from Khan, who I see as being on the cusp on making a move in the pound for pound hunt, and someone who also enjoys his status as Freddie Roachs second best client?

Other tidbits from the Gallaghers gala, which was fab, aside from the fact that I chowed on an unbalanced meal of salad and three rolls, and had to bolt back the office because they hadnt served anything else in two hours....

---Bradley likes Maidana over Khan on Saturday. He said hed like Pacquiao and Mayweather to stop bickering, and get it on, but also that both are on their way out, and that it will soon be time for a regime change.

--Bradley isnt worried about Alexanders power, and feels Kendall Holt, who he beat in April, for one, has more zip.

--Bradley said Alexander is stupid if he truly thinks this is just another fight as he said on Tuesday in Michigan. He said that Devon is probably trying to calm himself down. I know its all or nothing, Bradley said. Im trying to get to the next level, to superfights.

---Shaw shared that before his eighth bout, Bradley ran 23 miles, with a backpack on, the night before the bout. It was not to lose weight, the fighter said, it was to assure himself hed have the needed stamina. He said the run came in handy, because his legs and stamina were strong, when a clash of heads dazed him, and his legs held up underneath him.

--Alexander said he doesnt care if Bradley thinks hes stupid for seeing this as just another bout.

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Hes trying in his head to get amped, he said. Im too fast, too slick, my angles are too much. Hes trying to find something to calm his nerves.

---Alexander says his skills are superior to Bradley, plain and simple.

---In his last outing, in August, Alexander had a tough time with Andriy Kotelnik (UD win, by scores of 116-112, 116-112, 116-1112.) He said he didnt stick to a gameplan because he was trying to impress family and friends at home, in St. Louis. I made Kotelnik look good, he said.

---Cunningham said Devon spent too much time promoting the last fight, and that affected his performance. He said his guy is the more talented, and his quicker, shorter punches will prove the difference.

--The mood was a bit somber, as co-promoter Don King was not present. His wife Henrietta died last Thursday, and her funeral is this Thursday. Kings PR ace, Alan Hopper, spoke to TSS. Don is obviously wounded, he said. Im hurting for him. But the healing has begun. A service on Tuesday featured a eulogy from Reverend Al Sharpton, and Don himself spoke as well. Gary Shaw asked for a moment of silence for Henrietta, a nice touch.

--The Silverdome holds around 80,000 so you might think its a weird venue for the fight. But Shaw said the Dome has a curtain system, which will help the event feel more cozy.

--Shaw lauded Bradleys dad, Tim Sr, for never having taken a cent from his kids purses. Hmm..might there be a message there for another dad who Shaw knows who has taken money from his kids purses?

--The mood was generally light at the event. Both teams seem to respect each other, and seem happy they will be making a million bucks each. Bradley drew chuckles when he asked if Devon could put some bass in his voice. Cunningham busted on Bradley for not being able to draw a crowd in his living room. Then the fighters squared off for a photo opp; I found it interesting because Alexander basically grinned the whole time, while Bradley got his game face on. Im a game face kind of guy...but maybe Devon is just confident as hell, loosey goosey, ready to shine on the Silverdome stage.

---Check out some video of the event here: www.youtube.com/watch

SPEEDBAG Trivia question, courtesy my pal, sports/finance wordsmith PJ Keating: which fight lasted longer, Tyson-Spinks or Tyson-McNeeley?

--52 percent of SportsNation viewers want Sylvester Stallone selected for the International Boxing Hall of Fame. SportsNation co-host Michelle Beadle disagrees, "You don't go to the hall of fame for a sport you made a movie about. Mike Tyson bled, Julio Cesar Chavez was in pain, and Sylvester Stallone put on makeup to look like he was in a fight. However, co-host Colin Cowherd thinks Stallone deserves the honor, "The boxing hall of fame is comprised of those who have made a contribution to the sport. A generation of kids wanted to box because of Sylvester Stallone and after Muhammad Ali, the second biggest name in boxing is Rocky.