

## Andre Berto, The Unknown Welterweight...BORGES

Written by Ron Borges  
Friday, 15 April 2011 15:00

---



Once upon a time Andre Berto would have been talked about. His name would have come up regularly on the sports pages and in barroom debates because he holds a portion of one of boxing's most revered prizes – the welterweight championship of the world.

That was when boxing held sway in this country but today it has become a niche sport for diehards, a game that has made itself too complicated to keep track of and too self-destructive to pay attention to for the average sports fan. The people who suffer most because of this are guys like Berto, an undefeated and earnest champion who is seen as standing several notches below Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather, Jr. and so is all but ignored.

## Andre Berto, The Unknown Welterweight...BORGES

Written by Ron Borges  
Friday, 15 April 2011 15:00

---

This is despite the fact his last EIGHT FIGHTS have been telecast on HBO, the cable network that used to build stars but now most often seems to keep young fighters from becoming stars. While the cable giant is incessantly hyping Pacquiao's appearance against well shot Shane Mosley next month you'd have to send the Mounties out to find much mention of Berto's title defense Saturday night against undeserving Victor Ortiz, the young phenom who faded the first time someone punched back but who remains protected by his association with Oscar De La Hoya and hence ends up with a title shot while more deserving fighters languish in even deeper shadows than the ones obscuring Berto.

Berto (27-0, 21 KO) has held the WBC title for nearly three years, defending it six times against, frankly, B level competition. He has never been able to land the kind of fight that might have lifted his profile – one against Pacquiao, Mayweather or even Mosley – in part because they didn't see an economic need to do so and neither did the man running his career, manager Al Haymon.

And why would Haymon risk Berto if HBO is willing to pay him \$1.2 million to defend his title against someone like Freddy Hernandez, as they did in his last outing? The risk-reward ratio there was perfect from a business standpoint – no risk for a healthy reward.

That is not the case this weekend however because for all Ortiz's dubious issues with his resolve when pressured he can punch like a mule and if he lands Berto could find the floor as readily as anyone else. Of course, if Berto fights smartly and with his usual level of interest (which he did not show, by the way, when he was handed a dubious decision over Luis Collazo a year ago on a night he admits he was ill-prepared for the challenge he faced) he should dominate the second half of the fight and eventually convince Ortiz of something he's already shown before – that there's a level of pain through which he's not willing to pass just to have his hand raised.

"There's no question about my heart," Berto said. "I have to question his on everything from one situation, when he had to endure controversy (because) he didn't like to crack back (in a loss to Marcos Maidana when he not only quit under duress but admitted it after the fight).

"At the end of the day you can't teach what beats in the chest. You either have it – heart – or you don't. I can out-power him, out-skill him. Any way it goes.

"Let's see how he handles real power. I got caught early in my career – my hand just hit the canvas – and I got aggressive. I didn't quit. I got aggressive."

Berto is likely to approach Ortiz (28-2-2) in the same fashion, although he does have to respect his punching power even though Ortiz is moving up from junior welterweight for the first time. Ortiz has the kind of power that can stun a man and when that happens he's quick to try and finish him but Berto is aware of that and should be ready for it.

The problem is if he does defeat Ortiz where does that leave him? Will he be one step closer to either Pacquiao or Mayweather? Not likely.

## Andre Berto, The Unknown Welterweight...BORGES

Written by Ron Borges  
Friday, 15 April 2011 15:00

---

Will he finally be able to get a piece at Mosley, who at 38 is now in the business of selling his hard-won but now shop worn reputation to fighters who want to burnish their own resumes like Mayweather, Pacquiao, Miguel Cotto and Lord, even Sergio Mora? That too would seem unlikely because once Pacquiao is finished with him it's likely Mosley will be finished as well, at least as a saleable commodity to a public that seems to only remember the old names because no one is building any new ones for them to pay attention to.

Berto might have been one of those names in other times but he has been too well protected by Haymon and unable to get the kind of big fight that could lift his profile even in defeat if he acquitted himself well.

That is not his fault, it is just reality in boxing these days and so instead he prepares at 27 for guys like Ortiz, who drew in his last fight against Lamont Peterson in December at 140 pounds yet somehow ended up with welterweight title shot out of it.

Berto has been criticized by many in boxing circles for the quality of his opponents but he's fought King Kong compared to Ortiz, whose best wins came against well shot Vivian Harris and nearly well shot Nate Campbell before the draw with Peterson.

Perhaps Berto has been a willing co-conspirator in the road he's taken but I doubt it. Berto has been crying out for a shot at Pacquiao or Mayweather for some time and seemed anxious to face Mosley as well at one point, at least more anxious than the people around Mosley were to make that match happen it would seem.

And so a fighter who would in years past have been talked about in the larger sporting world as a champion you wanted to see in against the biggest names today he continues to fight in the shadows despite the fact he's been on HBO nearly as often as Tony Soprano.

"I feel I'll always get a little criticism," Berto said. "They say the fighters I've fought are a lower level of competition. I won't get the credit that I deserve (if he beats Ortiz). I just keep knocking guys out. Every time I step in the ring I'll make it look like that (easy).

"Talk doesn't make a difference. At the end of the day I don't listen to criticism. I don't listen to what others say. I'm staying focused on the fight. Skills pay the bills. It only matters if you win."

That is a wise philosophy to follow because it's unfortunately all Andre Berto can do. Win and wait for his moment. Win and wait for Manny Pacquiao or Floyd Mayweather to decide they need him as much as he needs them or wait for someone like Amir Khan to move up to 147 pounds in search of a title belt.

Only then will we really know about Andre Berto, which is a sad fact he has to ignore if he's ever going to change it.

[Comment on this article](#)

## Andre Berto, The Unknown Welterweight...BORGES

Written by Ron Borges  
Friday, 15 April 2011 15:00

---

### **FighterforJC says:**

I disagree with this article in that I do believe Goldenboy is setting up Andre Berto to be Mayweather's next opponent. There's one thing going for Berto, a couple of things, really, that makes him the ideal Mayweather opponent. First and foremost is his size or lack thereof. Second is his chin. Unless Mayweather's skills have eroded dramatically over the past year, Berto should be a cakewalk for Mayweather, at least after the early rounds, a few of which could go to Berto on enthusiasm alone as Mayweather sits back and figures him out. But considering Mayweather's other options (Pacquiao, Cotto, Sergio Martinez), Berto would be the lesser of the evils.

### **amayseng says:**

jc,i have to strongly disagree. mayweather beats berto 12 rounds to 0

### **FighterforJC says:**

[QUOTE=amayseng;5391]jc,i have to strongly disagree. mayweather beats berto 12 rounds to 0[/QUOTE]

Either way, he's being set up as Mayweather's opponent.

### **ultimoshogun says:**

Unfortunately, Berto will probably receive little or no credit for this fight. Too bad Golden Boy and Top Rank have a tiff going on like a couple of school girls, I think Clottey woulda been an interesting matchup for Berto.

### **amayseng says:**

i have ortiz by early ko or decision

but probably early ko

dont forget, collazo had berto down, ropes held him up

also quintano had berto down as well

ortiz has more power, much more,

### **Radam G says:**

Wow! I find this piece hard to comment on. Holla!

### **donputo69 says:**

## Andre Berto, The Unknown Welterweight...BORGES

Written by Ron Borges  
Friday, 15 April 2011 15:00

---

I have ortiz by SD...You heard it here first...holla back!!!

### **brownsugar says:**

Berto has changed a bit... no longer sporting the huge pecs and body builder biceps that he was known for in the past... he used to talk about how he walked around at 165 between fights and how hard he had to struggle to make weight... Berto weighed in at 145 for this fight.. a pound less than Ortiz.. either Berto has become a disciple of the TSS,.. eating properly between fights.. and maintaining a steady workout regimen... or he's overtrained out of panic... I choose to believe that Berto has evolved to a higher level.. and knows what's important and what's not in the life of a fighter... Ortiz has nothing to lose and will unleash the Mad Dog he's been hiding away in his subconscious... he knows he can do great damage to Berto if he has access to his chin... I predict Berto goes out and teaches Ortiz the meaning of respect early... to befuddle his mind by bringing back his Demons of insecurity.... keeping him psychologically contained with a steady flow of pain in the form of a stiff right hand and a hard left upper cut. Ortiz has potential to KO anyone... and I wouldn't be too shocked to see it happen... but he's not gonna outbox Berto... Berto by UD or late stoppage.

### **brownsugar says:**

BTW...(Fighter4JC and UltimoShogun),.. Berto and Mayweather are kissing cousins..BFF's,..& thick as thieves... both are promoted by Al Haymon... you'll never see a fight between those two... ever! I'd like to see them oppose each other too... think it'd be interesting. although I'd still favor Mayweather even with his inactivity. But By the end of 2012 or 2013 Floyd can forget it... his athletic biological clock is winding down rapidly

### **amayseng says:**

brownsugar is exactly right...

floyds athletic clock is winding down...and he knows this, hence why being caught by an inactive of 18 months 38 year old shane mosley, caught and almost knocked out...

this is why i think floyd is done fighting...he may be an idiot on the streets, but in between

the ropes he is a prodigy....he knows he relies on reflexes, speed and timing as a defensive specialist.....and he knows the time to hang them up is now....

physically manny is in his prime, floyd is years past....

dlh being past his prime pushed floyd to the edge 5 long years ago...

dont ever expect to see a pacman vs floyd fight....floyd dont want it....he never did...

## Andre Berto, The Unknown Welterweight...BORGES

Written by Ron Borges  
Friday, 15 April 2011 15:00

---

even at his declining level, floyd still beats berto 12 rounds to 0....easily

that is how ordinary berto is.

berto has great speed and good buzz but NO ring IQ, none, terrible footwork and the inability to set up traps....

### **the Roast says:**

I cant decide who will win. At first I thought Ortiz would land a big punch and win by stunning KO. Then I thought, nah, Berto is bigger, faster, takes a better punch and has never quit in a fight like Ortiz has. Berto should win. I'm looking forward to the fight and I think anything can happen.

### **amayseng says:**

how can anyone be a fan of berto all the guy does IS HOLD all effffing night long. hold and complain

he was a paper champ

### **Radam G says:**

@the Roast, you were right. Anything could happen. Like I have been saying for years: BERTO IS ANOTHER HYPE! And just imagine all da suckas up in my grill for saying that Da Manny would kayo Berto without any fun in round one. Holla!

### **the Roast says:**

That was a wild one! Beyond my expectations! A few weeks back Ultimoshogun and the Roast predicted that both fighters would hit the deck. I didnt expect both men to go down twice! I am happy for Ortiz. He set a torrid pace and I wasn't sure he would be able to keep it up for twelve rounds. Great fight, I hope to see a rematch. Mayweather was sitting ringside licking his chops. Will the vulnerability of Ortiz be enough to get Floyd back in the ring?