Written by David A. Avila
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Sergio Mora remains the lost child among middleweight contenders mostly because of his style and remarks from some members of the television crew made during and after a fight with Shane Mosley last year.

It's a shame because boxing is not made of one style.

Former junior middleweight world champion Sergio "The Latin Snake" Mora (22-2-2) fights Shibata Flores (45-11, 26 KOs) at Fantasy Springs Casino in Indio on Friday night in Southern California. Special guest will be former heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield.

Anytime a Latino like Mora fights a slick and defensive style he gets criticized as if it's not acceptable to the guys behind the mikes. There's a sort of discrimination occurring that if a fighter is a Latino counter-puncher, he should not be televised. It's ok for African-American boxers to display that style, but not Latinos, especially if they're not known for punching power.

Mora has based his whole career on a counter-punching style that led him to becoming a junior middleweight world champion. And you don't win a world title by luck.

To me the chess game between a pressure fighter and a counter puncher is the ultimate test of prizefighting. A pressure fighter versus a pressure fighter is ok, but even that can lead to monotony.

A few weeks ago the boxing style of Jorge Linares was ultimately dissected by the pressure fighting style of Antonio DeMarco. It's this kind of match up that makes boxing exciting.

Ever since Mora fought Mosley he's been treated as a pariah. It's really not fair. Up to that moment, Mosley had been an aggressive boxer-puncher but slipped into a counter-punch mode. He was unable to contend with Mora' s style in the boxer-puncher mode and adapted by becoming a counter-puncher. HBO's crew lambasted the fight and laid most of the blame unfairly on Mora.

The current middleweight champion Sergio Martinez of Argentina has recently fought and stopped a relatively unknown British fighter Darren Barker. Though Barker showed well, why is it that HBO or Martinez's promoters made this fight instead of pitting a well known fighter like Mora against Martinez?

Word has it that Martinez will be fighting another European boxer who has no credentials with American viewers. How can this be ratified by HBO or the promoters? It's one of the primary reasons that Martinez cannot seem to gain notice with American fans. He keeps fighting guys from Europe instead of Americans. The viewers just don't care about no-name Europeans.

Meanwhile, former reality TV star Mora resumes his quest for another world title bid and what better opponent than Flores who has his own championship designs? Fantasy Springs Casino in Indio will be the target area for their Golden Boy Promotions match on Friday.

"I've had the worst luck this year. I need to turn it around," said Mora, 30, who formerly held the WBC junior middleweight title. "Shibata Flores has a lot of experience and he's a southpaw so I can't take him lightly."

Mora is one of only two fighters who defeated the late great Vernon Forrest in a prizefight. In June 2008 Mora beat Forrest by decision to win the world title and join Nicaragua's Ricardo Mayorga as the only boxers to beat the great Georgia fighter. Two months later Forrest won the rematch with Mora.

Forrest and Mora never had the rubber match to decide who was better. In July 2009, Forrest was shot and killed during a carjacking.

"He was a great fighter," says Mora, who was Forrest's last opponent in the boxing ring. "I learned a lot from fighting Vernon."

Flores knows a thing or two about fighting for a world title too. Back in September 2001 the

native of Mexico was ranked number one as a junior middleweight and fought Fernando “El Feroz” Vargas. He also fought Verno Phillips before that fighter captured the world title. He retired from boxing after that fight but now returns eight years later.

“Those are eight years I was not taking punches my friend,” says Flores, who was tagged with the name “Shibata” because he resembles a former Japanese prizefighter named Kuniaki Shibata, a featherweight contender from the 1960s. “I’ve been taking it very slowly. Now I’m going into another level.”

Now training in Big Bear, the Sonora native sparred with another Mexico star Saul “Canelo” Alvarez and was able to ascertain where he fits in the boxing world’s stratosphere.

“Sergio Mora has a different technique and is very good. I saw his fights with Shane Mosley and Brian Vera,” said Flores, 39, who is trained by Abel Sanchez. “He has speed and movement. I have power. I think I can do something.”

Thompson Boxing Promotions fight card

Eighty miles west junior featherweights Esquivias (14-0, 9 KOs) and Mexico’s Gonzalez (11-4-1, 7 KOs) headline the fight card at the Doubletree Hotel in Thompson Boxing Promotions fight card.

Esquivias is a quick-fisted contender from Carson who utilizes his pinpoint accuracy to break down opponents. He’s trained by world famous boxing guru Freddie Roach.
Also on the card is Ontario’s Jonathan Arellano, an undefeated junior featherweight, and Pennsylvania’s hard-hitting bantamweight Miguel Diaz.

TBP fighter Artemio Reyes

Artemio Reyes Jr., a welterweight who fights under the Thompson Boxing Promotions banner, returned from Atlantic City with an impressive win over former Olympian Javier Molina.

“Before the fight Molina said I was not at his level," said a victorious Artemio Reyes (14-1, 11 KOs) after the bout. "We gave the fans what they came to see, a great fight. Molina showed a lot of guts but he couldn't put up with the pressure. I came to Atlantic City to get what I deserved: Respect.”

Molina (9-0, 4 KOs) entered the ring undefeated and fought valiantly for eight rounds against the pressure fighting Reyes. But all three judges awarded the decision to San Bernardino’s Reyes whose family in attendance numbered nearly two dozen.

“I did this for my family and all the people that came from home to support me, they are a rowdy bunch and I am sure I made my pops proud, this is for him,” said Reyes whose father Artemio Reyes Sr. has been in a coma for three years. “I am taking the gloves I wore tonight back home for him.”

Fights on television

Fri. Telefutura, 11:30 p.m., Sergio Mora (22-2-2) vs. Shibata Flores (45-11).

Sat. HBO, 7:15 p.m., Alfredo Angulo (20-1) vs. James Kirkland (29-1).

Sat. Showtime, 9 p.m., Lucian Bute (29-0) vs. Glen Johnson (51-15-2).

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

The Latin Snake is DITTO! Suckas do discriminate against him because he is a slick, fast, fighting, intercity Latin. He is the best Sergio and would kick Sergio Martinez's arse. Make the fight and fight out. Holla!

the Roast says:

Nobody gives a shibata about Mora.