



Abner Mares-Eric Morel:

Both fighters find themselves competing at super bantamweight for the first time on Saturday. I like Mares' ability to set a faster pace against an older opponent in this fight. His quick reflexes combine well with his technical skills - on offense and defense. Mares will likely possess too much speed and volume for a 37 year-old Morel, who will likely be the more defensive minded fighter. Mares can be vulnerable on attack as he sometimes finds himself over committing on offense. There is also the left hook to the body that Mares likes to throw - when he does, he sometimes leaves himself open for a counter . Mares' right hand loses it's discipline as he throws his left. Morel is an intelligent fighter, who could, if timed right, exploit Mares' defensive flaws. Morel's elusiveness could also be a factor - if Mares is not landing anything early, frustration could set in - Morel is a savvy veteran, whose experience cannot be taken lightly. Morel, like Orlando Salido against JuanMa - is an underrated technician who is capable of capitalizing on any recklessness within an opponent's arsenal. Morel's counterpunching ability could prove to be the perfect foil for Mares' ultra aggressiveness.

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Written by Lee Wylie

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However, it's easier said than done as Mares' combinations make it very difficult for an opponent to counter. Mares doubles up on his left hooks to the body and head with great speed and intensity. Joseph Agbeko, an underrated technician, struggled with Mares' offensive variety and workrate last time out.

In the end, it boils down to this. Mares is the more proven fighter around this weight class - wins over Joseph Agbeko, Vic Darchinyan and Yohhny Perez prove that. In contrast, Morel's best days were at flyweight. The competition Morel has faced since his prison release has not matched that of Mares. Morel is currently on a 10 fight winning streak, and he has never been stopped. However, he hasn't faced anyone with the type of offensive gifts that Mares possesses.

Prediction:

Mares by late stoppage, the first to stop Morel. Speed, workrate and aggressiveness will be too much for the older Morel.

Moreno-De La Mora:

This is a very tough fight for Moreno because of styles. Moreno, a defensive counterpunching southpaw, is making the 11th defense of his bantamweight title. His opponent, De la Mora, employs an unpredictable "in and out" style of boxing that can be a counterpunchers' worst nightmare. De la Mora also goes well to the body too, mixing his combinations upstairs and down.

As shown in the past, Moreno can be a lot more aggressive than he was against Vic Darchinyan last time out. Moreno will have to show more of his many talents in this fight against a fighter in De La Mora who may not be as well known, but is technically alot more proficient than the crude Armenian. If there's a fault with Moreno, it's that Moreno can sometimes allow his opponents to outwork him and unload on him - as if to demonstrate his defensive prowess. The problem with that of course, is that judges could score rounds for the other guy for being the aggressor. If

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Moreno is too negative, the fight may be deemed to be a lot closer than it really is. Moreno also has to be weary of De La Mora's power - the Mexican has a 68% knockout ratio.

In the end, Moreno's vast talent should be too much for De La Mora, who is nowhere near as versatile as Moreno. De La Mora was unlucky not to get what would have been a career best win against Koki Kameda last year. A win over Moreno would banish any memories of that loss for De La Mora. Moreno however, is a significant step up from Kameda; he is a pound for pound talent and is among the very best technicians in all of boxing.

After a slow start, I think Moreno figures out the angles and begins to time De La Mora's attacks. Moreno is master when it comes to shutting down an opponent's main form of offense. De La Mora, who likes to leap in with combinations, is not the most accurate of punchers and could find himself off balance often, leaving himself open to counters because of Moreno's uncanny ability to step off to the side just as an opponent is launching an attack.

Prediction:

Moreno by unanimous decision. I don't think Moreno will look as impressive as he did against Darchinyan. At times, Darchinyan's reckless aggression played directly into the Panamanian's mercurial hands. Because of De La Mora's underrated talent and style, it should be a high skill-level contest and this might be a case of win this one and look good next the time for Moreno.

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