

2004 Boxing Pound for Pound List

Written by Matthew Aguilar
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The final boxing pound-for-pound list of the year for 2004.

1. Bernard Hopkins: The top guy from beginning to end, Hopkins took care of Oscar De La Hoya with a body shot in the biggest fight of 2004. Now, he'll wait for Jermain Taylor to progress a little further, or he'll go the rematch route with Felix Trinidad. Either way, Hopkins stands to earn a lot of money in 2005 and extend that all-time middleweight reign.

2. Floyd Mayweather: How long has it been since we've seen Mayweather in a meaningful fight? Certainly not in 2004, when he outpointed the difficult DeMarcus Corley. He's slated for a January outing against a no-name. Enough stalling, already, "Pretty Boy". Fight someone we care about (preferably Kostya Tszyu), or you'll lose your #2 position sometime in 2005.

3. Felix Trinidad: "Tito" stormed back with a magnificent knockout of Ricardo Mayorga in 2004, and now hopes to capitalize on it with big money fights. He'd like nothing more than a rematch with his only conqueror, Hopkins, but he may also opt for old nemesis Oscar De La Hoya. Either way, Trinidad is sure to fight a big fight sometime in the coming year.

4. Kostya Tszyu: What a difference one fight makes. As recently as late October, the boxing world was wondering whether Tszyu was even serious about the sport anymore. We found out with a second round demolition of Sharmba Mitchell. And that made the junior welterweight division very attractive. Tszyu has several options now, including Arturo Gatti and Mayweather or even a hop up to welterweight to challenge Cory Spinks. Let's hope one of them happens in 2005.

5. Manny Pacquiao: Pacquiao fought twice in 2004, and what a fight the first one was. His thrilling war with Juan Manuel Marquez was the best brawl of the year, and there is a chance that the two rivals will go at it again in 2005. If not, Pacquiao has a list full of options: Marco Antonio Barrera, Erik Morales, etc. Pacquiao will fight one of them in the next year.

6. Marco Antonio Barrera: Another guy thought to be washed up when the year started, Barrera resurrected his career for the second time with a masterful victory over Paulie Ayala and a close decision over rival Erik Morales in another great fight. Barrera is obviously shooting for a return with Pacquiao, who decimated him in November 2003. Barrera says it was an off-night. Hopefully, we'll find out if that was the case.

7. Winky Wright: Winky entered the "superstar" realm in 2004 with a pair of decision victories over Shane Mosley. The first was very impressive, as Wright practically shut Mosley out. The second was closer, but proved once again that Winky was the superior fighter. He'd like a shot at Trinidad or Oscar De La Hoya, but neither will happen. He'd probably be best off shooting for a name like Fernando Vargas or Ricardo Mayorga.

8. Juan Manuel Marquez: After several years on the outside looking in, Marquez is finally in a

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position to make some money after his courageous performance against Pacquiao. He rose from three first-round knockdowns to wage the fight of his life in a fight that was ruled a draw. It would also be interesting to see Marquez against countrymen Barrera and Erik Morales.

9. Erik Morales: "El Terrible" fought another great fight against Barrera, but, again, it was in a losing cause. He has now lost two of three to his fierce rival, and probably wants nothing to do with him anymore. But, eventually, talk of Barrera-Morales 4 will come up again. In the meantime, Morales could shoot for Pacquiao or Marquez.

10. Glencoffe Johnson: The newest entry, Johnson pumped some life into boxing in 2004 with a pair of upsets of Roy Jones Jr. and Antonio Tarver. Now, he's set to make some really big money in rematches with either, or a shot at old conqueror Hopkins. Either way, Johnson is better than anyone imagined.

11. Jose Luis Castillo: Castillo made some comeback noise of his own in 2004, beating Juan Lazcano for his old vacant title and decisioning Joel Casamayor for another big win. He says he wants Kostya Tszyu next, and if that materializes, boxing fans will be in for a treat. If not, Castillo vs. Diego Corrales is a great fight.

12. Oscar De La Hoya: Hard to erase that picture of De La Hoya grimacing in agony courtesy of a Hopkins shot to the ribs, but the "Golden Boy" had no business fighting at 160 pounds. He should drop down to junior middle or even welterweight again if he has any hope of regaining his past form. But 2005 could be the final year for one of boxing's all-time great attractions.

On the brink: Antonio Tarver, Diego Corrales, James Toney