

Pacquiao and Rios Visit ESPN!

Written by The Sweet Science
Monday, 05 August 2013 22:12



Manny Pacquiao (54-5-2, 38 KOs) and Brandon Rios (31-1-1, 22 KOs) visited ESPN's headquarters in Bristol, Connecticut on Monday to help promote their 12-round welterweight bout scheduled for Saturday, November 23rd at The Venetian Macao's Cotai Arena in Macau, China.

The fight will be produced and distributed live by HBO Pay-Per-View, beginning at 9 p.m. ET / 6 p.m. PT.

The day started with a visit to ESPN The Magazine where award-winning writers such as Tim Keown and TSS Editor Michael Woods churn out plenty of magazine-style content for upcoming issues.

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Next up was a special ESPN.com chat featuring the two fighters. First up was Rios. The hard punching slugger addressed his previous association with the polarizing Angel "Memo" Heredia. Rios said he had worked with Heredia for previous bouts but that the two couldn't agree to terms for this one.

"He is a great conditioning coach though. I've worked with him before, the only reason we aren't working together is because we couldn't agree to terms."

Rios admitted Pacquiao hasn't looked like the same guy who demolished the likes of Oscar De La Hoya, Ricky Hatton and Miguel Cotto a few years ago, but also said he would be prepared for the best version of Pac-Man.

"Yes, he hasn't looked like the Manny of old in his last two fights. But I can't worry about that. I know he's going to bring it for our fight just to prove to people that he isn't done yet."

Rios believes Pacquiao and team selected him as an opponent because they are badly in need of a win after successive losses.

"I think Manny wanted to fight me because he and his team think that I'm easy money. But I think that was the wrong decision for him. I'm bringing it this fight."

Pacquiao was his usual curt but courteous self in the chat. When asked by a fan if he believes Rios compares to Ricky Hatton, who Pacquiao obliterated in just two rounds back in 2009, Pacquiao didn't take the bait.

"I'm trying to make the fans happy, and I will give them my best for the fight," he said.

Pacquiao said he is looking forward to fighting in China for the first time in his storied career.

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"This is a great way to promote boxing in China," he said. "It also gives people a chance to watch the fight in person that wouldn't otherwise."

He also dutifully answered the obligatory questions about Floyd Mayweather. If they are ever to fight, he said, it's simply up to Mayweather.

"I'm already satisfied with what I have done in boxing. But I want the fight to happen for the sake of the fans...I'm hoping for that fight to happen, but it's up to him. If he says yes, then the fight will be on."

The all-action welterweights also appeared on ESPN2's First Take alongside polarizing talking heads Stephen A. Smith and Skip Bayless. During the discussion, Pacquiao candidly discussed his knockout loss to Juan Manuel Marquez last December as well as his opponent, Rios.

"I never expected what happened in the last fight," Pacquiao said. "But it's part of boxing. I have to accept that."

Rios, who was ringside for the debacle, said he thought Pacquiao had Marquez hurt and that Marquez just caught him with a perfect punch. Stephen A. Smith asked Pacquiao why he would fight a fighter like Rios so soon after getting knocked out.

"I want to show I'm still okay," Pacquiao said.

Skip Bayless asked Pacquiao if it was safe to assume he'd never fight Floyd Mayweather.

"If he wants the fight, the fight will be," said Pacquiao.

Smith asked Pacquiao what his fight with Rios would be like. Pacquiao said he thought it'd be a

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great fight because both of the fighters employ an aggressive style.

Rios said he'd be ready. He said he thinks Pacquiao's camp thinks he's "another Margarito" who will just come forward to take a beating.

"It's not going to happen," said Rios emphatically. Moreover, Rios said he'd be ready for the "best Manny Pacquiao ever." He said he believes he will win but would not predict a knockout.

"I'll be ready," said Rios.

The men ended their discussion by rehashing the Fight of the Century that never happened, Pacquiao vs. Mayweather. Rios and Smith said they would've picked Mayweather to win the fight had it taken place a year ago, while Pacquiao and Bayless both chose Pac-Man.

The men rounded out their day in Bristol by appearing on both the late morning and early afternoon editions of SportsCenter as well as visiting the folks over at ESPN Deportes.

Pacquiao vs. Rios will be promoted by Top Rank in association with MP Promotions and Tecate. Stay glued to TheSweetScience.com and BoxingChannel.tv for all your pre- and post-fight needs.

{youtube}f4_8l6P0dDM{/youtube}

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