

Better think again, Shane.

Written by Rick Folstad
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Look out, Shane Mosley. Tighten your jaw, toughen your resolve and spend some extra minutes in the gym every day. Don't smile too often or say too much or act too nice. Attitude means a lot here. Turn surly, cocky, moody. Make sure even your dog doesn't want to be around you.

Finally, keep your fight plan tucked away in a safe place. Hide it where no one can find it but you and maybe your dad. Keep it a secret.

If Mosley thinks his second fight with Oscar De La Hoya is going to be even easier than their first fight, he needs to be slapped around a little, brought back down to earth. Reality needs to be part of his fight plan, and De La Hoya is on a mission. You don't scorn guys on a mission, especially world champions.

Besides, it's been more than three years since Mosley beat De La Hoya in June 2000 in what turned out to be a squeaker. And three years is a long time in the fight game.

Since that first fight, De La Hoya has coasted along undefeated, picking up wins against fighters like Fernando Vargas and Arturo Gatti.

Mosley, meanwhile, has had a rough ride. Sure, he beat Shannan Taylor, Adrian Stone and Raul Marquez, but those names aren't usually tossed around the water cooler at work. They sound more like band members than contenders.

But it's the Vernon Forrest thing that could stop Mosley from a repeat against De La Hoya. Two losses. Two nightmares. Two ego beatings. That might be the real knockout punch that stuns Mosley, the shadowy right hand he never sees coming until it rocks him.

Just when he thinks he might be all the way back from the losses to Forrest, wham, the mental thing kicks in and Mosley is suddenly swinging wildly at all the doubts that have been haunting him since Forrest took away his swagger.

De La Hoya knows how it works. He's wrestled with the same ghost. That's why he's on this crazy Redemption Tour of his, trying to erase the bad taste of losses to Mosley and Felix Trinidad. It's a short list and Mosley is at the top.

That's because De La Hoya also knows he will probably have to live with the Trinidad loss and its sour taste. Felix just isn't coming back to the fight game, and De La Hoya is slowly beginning to realize it. That means his only chance at revenge starts and ends Sept. 13 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas when he gets his second shot at Mosley.

Mosley says his advantage this time is the same advantage he had last time: his superior speed. He claims he has the right style and gifts to beat De La Hoya, and make it look easy.

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"I believe in my heart that I will win spectacularly," Mosley claims. "I have the tools to beat him. I'm looking to win a unanimous decision by a large margin."

Just be happy you don't get hurt.

When De La Hoya gets in the right mood for a fight - when he forgets about his record sales, his promotional company, his love life, the color of his trunks and the size of his purse - he's as good a fighter as they've seen on the Vegas Strip in the last 10 years. And against Mosley, you can be sure he put all the silly games and distractions away.

He also understands what Mosley could be struggling with.

"Sometimes your confidence goes down after not winning," said De La Hoya, who isn't real familiar with the condition. "Physically, (Mosley) will be ready. I don't know about mentally."

There it is. The key to this fight. If De La Hoya beats Mosley, he should donate a share of his purse to Forrest. It's like opening a jar of pickles. De La Hoya may unscrew the lid, but Forrest loosened it first.