This may not be THE year of the upset in the sweet science, but it has been a year of upsets. Margarito over Cotto, Hopkins over Pavlik, Calzaghe over Jones, Dawson over Tarver, Quintana over Williams, Williams over Quintana, Mora over Forrest, Forrest over Mora, Phillips over Spinks, Clottey over Judah, Bradley over Witter, Caballero over Molitor, Ruiz over Bautista, Prescott over Khan, Latimore over Powell, Vera over Lee…the favorite has been dumped arse over teakettle repeatedly this year, making for some entertaining climaxes, and decent buzz for a sport that hasn't grown more than a smattering of new fans in a decade.

On Saturday night, if l'il Manny Pacquaio, who will be outweighed by a good dozen pounds when the bell rings at the MGM Grand, manages to take out Oscar De La Hoya, his upset win would surpass all others in the Boxing Year 2008. Is this likely? Pundits, and vocal share of derisive fight fans, think Oscar will win handily. Too big, too strong, too much reach and height for The Golden Boy. TSS has been surprised at the vehemence of fans writing in, wondering why this "Dream" match has been made, or more accurately, skewering the bout as nothing more than a cynical cash grab by the promoters and participants. They see it as a novelty pairing, something along the lines of an Evil Knievel bus jump.

But what if Pacquaio (47-3-2, 35 KOs, enjoying an eight fight win streak) manages to make Oscar (39-5, 30 KOs, 3-3 in his last six outings, 2-3 if you give Sturm the nod in their 2004 tussle) look every hour of his 35 ¾ years, and uses his handspeed edge to do the unthinkable?

What if that weight disparity is erased by a motivation edge? Manny does after all have a nation of 90 million at his back, lifting him up, serving as a catalyst to endure when the larger man's left hooks are banging off his skull, rattling him, and making him yearn for the relative comfort of the lightweight division.

What if his southpaw stance throws Oscar off his game; that's not a spectacular reach, since the last time ODLH met a lefty in a real scrap was back in 1997 (Hector Camacho).

Here's how Team TSS sees the Saturday beef playing out.

RON BORGES I predict De La Hoya TKO 7. Pacquiao's speed will be a problem early and there will be moments when it looks like he is in command of the fight. But each round De La Hoya will close the gap on him until and Pacquiao will not be able to resist the temptation to throw down. When he does it one time to many, he'll go down.

BERNARD FERNANDEZ Oscar's resume is full of victories over very good but smaller fighters who have come up a weight class for the big payday that he always represents. As terrific as Manny is, he's coming up two weight classes -- and maybe even three, if you think about it. Oscar by late-round stoppage.

RALPH GONZALEZ Oscar will win by decision in twelve rounds with Manny winning three of

those rounds. Both men will have their moments and end up pretty lumped up. Oscar has definitely faded but the weight difference will prove too much. Any way you look at it, it's a silly fight for Pac Maniacs and hard core Oscar De La Hoya fans.

RONAN KEENAN Judging by recent workouts, Pacquiao seems to be carrying the additional weight well, looking strong yet lean. Conversely, De La Hoya may be struggling to get to 147, and judging by his lackluster performance versus Steve Forbes, shedding those extra pounds could damage him. If Forbes can crack Oscar's cheekbone then Manny should be able to bust him up too, but I expect De La Hoya to use his reach and catch Pacquiao with enough power shots to take a competitive decision.

MIKE LYNCH Count me among the group that considered this bout a farce when it was first announced. The idea of Pacquiao jumping up 2 (or 3) weight classes to challenge an aging man that hadn't seen 147 pounds on the scale in 7 years did not particularly appeal to me. But as the fight approaches, I can't help but be intrigued. Part of what actually makes this fight work (in the build-up at least) is that the 147 lbs issue makes for a great debate. Which fighter is more negatively impacted? I'm banking on the older man, Oscar, having a more difficult time adapting. It's easy to imagine De La Hoya cruising to an easy win over the smaller Pacquiao and 147 isn't too radically different from 150. However, I'd prefer to imagine the younger, hungrier, more aggressive Pacquiao showing up stronger than ever and pulling off the upset. Give me Pacman by any means necessary. And give me a rebate if DLH wins a snoozer.

RAYMOND MARKARIAN This fight will go one of two ways, a De la Hoya win by knockout or a Pacquiao victory by decision. Do not believe the hype, De la Hoya will not get stopped by the smaller man. Even though the Golden Boy is long on the tooth, he has still taken a much stronger punch than Pacquiao will throw at him on Saturday night. For instance, De la Hoya withstood the punches of Shane Mosley and Tito Trinidad at 147 when the Golden Boy was much more hungry, younger, and faster than he is today. The problem for Oscar is that he has trouble with the smaller quick guys, like Whitaker and Mayweather; therefore I think Pacquiao will have the edge. In retrospect, since the Ike Quartey fight, De la Hoya has only won one big fight and that was against Fernando Vargas in 2002, a slow methodical type of boxer. Pacquiao is fierce and relentless. Nothing against Oscar De la Hoya, I'd hate to see him retire, but it is just Manny Pacquiao's time. Manny Pacquiao by close decision.

JOHN NGUYEN Those who think this will be a mismatch are wrong. Manny's speed and aggressiveness will definitely bother Oscar. If little Stevie Forbes could mark him up, Manny will do damage. However, this will ultimately come down to styles. Oscar has never really had problems with fighters who come straight at him. He's always been bothered by slick, clever technicians (Hopkins, Mosley, Mayweather), descriptions that have never been applied to always forward-rushing Pacquiao. On the other hand, Manny has been proven vulnerable against boxer/punchers who know how to manage the pace of a fight (see first fight with Morales and both fights against Marquez). Factor in the bad style matchup with the size advantage, and the edge has to go to Oscar. I love Manny, but I have to lean toward De La Hoya by late-stoppage or close, unanimous decision in an exciting, competitive fight.

MICHAEL WOODS Got to go with the pack here. Oscar will be much bigger than PacMan on

Saturday. The only thing I wonder is, how much energy will ODLH have in Vegas after paring down that weight, and keeping at around 150? He's a tall man, and wasn't able to eat more than 2400 calories a day, so it's possible Manny pulls off a mad upset on a depleted Golden Boy. Possible, I say, not close to probable. I foresee Manny being effective early, in the first two rounds, and after Oscar feels his power--or lack thereof--he will advance on the Filipino with impunity, and start to crack him with hooks. ODLH will be eating straight rights, sharp ones that will impress the crowd, and they will puff his face up some. Oscar will bang with the jab, and be frustrated that he gets countered with that straight right. He will get PO'd, and swarm on Pacquiao, rough him up, use his bulk advantage. Oscar's face will look the worse for wear at the end of the night, but he will take the decision, and I see Manny hitting the deck once enroute. The difficulty ODLH has with the smaller man will have pundits like yours truly wondering if he should even bother gloving up anymore.

PHIL WOOLEVER Getting PacMan at 2-1 odds isn't the worst bet you could make, especially after Oscar's uninspiring performance versus Forbes, possible weight loss issues, and how good Manny looked moving up versus Diaz. Still, I've learned to trust casino handicappers. If Oscar the businessman is thinking big buck legacy and Hatton in a soccer stadium, think De la Hoya - Gatti, but it will most likely be the Golden Boy by 5 or 6 points.

OK, the writers have had their say. Now it's your time, TSS Universe. How will it go down in Vegas? Will David slay Goliath? Or will we see a gruesome mismatch? Weigh in!