

How Will Floyd Mayweather Be Remembered?

Written by Raymond Markarian
Monday, 22 August 2011 10:56



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Fifty years from now if we are not paying to see robots fight instead of humans, boxing fans will discuss the accomplishments of Floyd Mayweather Jr. At some point after the welterweight has thrown his last punch, future fight fans will compare his defensive abilities and quickness to other men who are best of their time.

Retrospective looks are at the core of this sport. We measure who would win a fight between Sugar Ray Leonard and Oscar De la Hoya as a healthier debate than contrasting the home run prowess of Babe Ruth and Barry Bonds. But in sports as well as in life, we fail at times to look at the current day from a historical sense.

Today, Floyd Mayweather Jr. is 41-0, a six-time champion in five different weight classes. At his peak Mayweather is the best fighter in boxing. But over the last four years, he has fought more battles in a courthouse, than a boxing ring. Numerous run ins with the IRS, misdemeanor, and felony charges including a domestic violence dispute with a former girlfriend and physically assaulting a security guard outside of a nightclub have the 1996 Olympian putting up his dukes with the law.

Some think of Floyd's legal issues as signs of a life spiraling down. Others say Mayweather's personal problems will not affect his boxing performance. Then again, there is an argument that Floyd Mayweather's undefeated record has flaws because he has only fought two times in nearly four years, did not accept an eight million dollar payday to fight Antonio Margarito in 2006 and ducked many fighters including Miguel Cotto and Manny Pacquiao while they were in their prime among other things.

What gets lost in the mess that Mayweather has created for himself is his place in boxing history. Because fifty years from now, when we have flying cars and our minds have the power to look at a wall to project a television screen, Floyd Mayweather's boxing archives will be there. Then fans will study Floyd's dominate victories over Diego Corrales, and Arturo Gatti, appreciate his speed to counter a charging Ricky Hatton and buffoon Juan Manuel Marquez and Zab Judah, and respect the defensive skills he used to defeat Oscar De la Hoya and chin he provided to withstand two knee buckling shots from Shane Mosley.

Unfortunately some boxing legends have had trouble with pleasing the masses and issues with the law in the past. The names of Jack Dempsey, Joe Louis, and Muhammad Ali are just a few.

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Dempsey, in today's terms, was a duck artist. The heavyweight champion in the 1920's, only defended his title seven times in six years, held the title for three years without fighting from 1923-1926, and refused to defend his crown against Henry Wills, a worthy African-American opponent. Dempsey lost his first bout after a three-year layoff, in 1926.

Joe Louis defended his heavyweight title 26 times in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's against mostly no name talent that the media called the Bum of the Month club. Then the Brown Bomber fought well past his prime to pay off gambling debts and money to the IRS.

In 1967, Ali refused enlistment in the U.S. Army. He was charged with a felony, lost three prime years of his boxing career; boxing commissions throughout the country suspended his boxing license, and stripped his heavyweight title. He then returned to have storied fights against Frazier, Norton, and Foreman, but held on to the sport for too long, and fought well after his skills had eroded him.

Despite their shortcomings history remembers Dempsey, Louis, and Ali fondly for the excitement that they provided in the ring. Now, no one talks about Jack Dempsey taking time off to be a celebrity. They talk about his ferociousness. No one talks about Joe Louis fighting to make a buck. They talk about his long heavyweight reign. No one talks about Ali dodging the draft. They talk about his unique boxing ability.

At 34 years old, Mayweather returns from a 16 month boxing hiatus to fight Victor Ortiz on September 17th. Maybe Floyd will go the road of Dempsey and lose his skills overnight. Maybe he will take the path of Joe Louis and continue fighting to pay his bills. Or maybe he will go the route of Ali and just fight for too long.

Win or lose, Floyd has already etched a place in boxing history. Ortiz is a southpaw he is taller, 10 years younger, and apparently stronger than his foe. Although the odds are against Ortiz, most are giving the rising star that recently defeated the undefeated Andre Berto to win the welterweight title, a puncher chance. Critics view Mayweather's gap in competitive fighting, his personal battles outside of the ring, and his long age as signs of slowing down.

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The future is not written. One thing is for sure, Floyd Mayweather's fight tapes will be easier to find than his court papers.

In the interests of time enjoy this moment with Floyd Mayweather Jr. Enjoy his performance. Enjoy his charisma. Soon Mayweather will join the likes of Robinson, Leonard, and Roy Jones Jr. before him. He will be another face in the history books.

There are those that love or hate Floyd Mayweather. I am not going to convince you either way. Fifty years from now when our grandkids talk about the talents of this lightning quick welterweight, who started off at 41-0 with 25 knockouts, they are going to ask your opinion. And there is no denying that you will have something to say.

You can follow Ray on Twitter @RayMarkarian.

[Comment on this article](#)

Radam G says:

In fifty years -- and I will probably still be living well and kicking good -- Money May will be remembered just as Sugar Ray Robinson is, superhyped and umpteen exaggerations about his skills, and playing down of his ducking and jiving. Oh YES! Many will call him the greatest fightest whoever lived. Wow! So many people like bullsh*tting and mythology about the actuality of the past. And the jokers will be saying to the youngans, "You can tell how great Mayweather was by seeing him on film." WTF! History always repeats its fudging self. For my whole complete life, I've heard the same thing about SRR by his fanfaronades and nuthuggers. But honest eyes with knowing minds who saw SRR say that he was darn great, but not the greatest. IMHO Willie Pep is the absolute greatest P4P boxer/fighter of all times, PERIOD! Nonetheless, to each his own.

If nobody, who better than Money May, comes within fifty years, I will say that Money May was the best pure boxer that I ever saw in person. On film, it will be Willie Pep. In person, the best fighter will be Irish GOAT Ali. The best defensive fighter will be Pernell Whitaker. The best defensive boxer will be Hector "Macho Time" Camacho. The best southpaw puncher/banger/finisher will no doubt be Da Manny. The quickest fighter will be Mark "Too Sharp" Johnson. The best overall finisher/banger/puncher was Afro-Japanese fighter Aaron "Hawk Time" Pryor, Roberto Duran and Ernie Shaver. The smoother boxer/puncher was Sugar Ray Leonard. The best shift puncher was a tied between Marvelous Marvin Haglers, Mike Tyson and Tommy Hearns. Holla!

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Condor says:

I think he'll be remembered as a guy with great, off-the-charts potential, that was simply risk-averse. He made so much cash that taking on risk became a losing proposition. An inverse relationship. I don't know. I'm old school (39 years old). I loved, LOVED, the Leonard, Hagler, Duran, and Hearns round-robins. Phenomenal. I believe Hearns - Duran was on REGULAR tv on cbs in the afternoon. Digest that for a moment ... And Hearns, who came up on the short end of the stick, generally, with regard to those icons, flattened Duran spectacularly. That said, Mayeather is brilliant. But the era is just so safety first that it wasn't conducive to revealing his greatness. I recall in 2001 (I believe January - not going to confirm on boxrec; think pre 9/11) when he decimated the great then-undefeated warrior Diego Corrales. He wasn't safety first then. He was unknown to the mainstream. When he dethroned Genaro (RIP) it was in 1998. 1998. Floyd deserves credit, and he is superb, but his historical greatness remains a question mark. I always thought he should have fought Pavlik 2 years ago and won the middleweight title. Pavlik was damaged goods, but still well regarded, and Floyd could have easily outboxed him. A big-time missed opportunity. Anyway, peace all. Sorry for typos (on android).

brownsugar says:

Excellent article... where can I send your bottle of champaign?

If Floyd can get past this latest challenge, and win another fight or 2 against top contenders, no doubt his name will be spoken with the same reverence, respect and awe given to previous ATG phenomoms like Sugar Ray Leonard, Sugar Ray Robinson...and Alexis Arguello. (and maybe even W. Klitschko) to name just a few.

The biggest knock against him is when he was at the height of his boxing prowess, he dissappointed a nation of boxing fans by taking a sebatical after his most high profile wins. Leaving fight fans wanting more.

Never challenging Cotto, was the point at which public dissatisfaction and outrage fueled an intense overflow of public dissatisfaction which manifested itself in the form of vociferous internet attacks against his character and will to fight.

To Be fair Cotto never,.... at anytime..... issued a discourteous or contentious word towards Mayweather.(not even his manager Bob A) Even though he was at ringside for some of his biggests fights... "I fight who the company tells me to fight" was Cotto's only reply.

But I'm not surprised since Bob Arum, Floyds previous manager probably wanted to protect his prize money maker at the time.

it was only after Cotto became shopworn after his loss to Margarito and close win over Clottey that the BobFather cashed him in against Pacman.

One attribute Floyd will be given is that he is the greatest fighter/manager in the business bar none..By cutting out the middleman.... he's created a situation where he can sit back on the

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sidelines... and fight any champion on the planet, at any time while earning premium rates not even knowing the fights will be automatically cleared thru the sanctioning bodys.... (and he doesn't even own a title)

of course the frequent vacations or big paychecks don't benefit fight fans,(we don't care)but it must suit Mayweather perfectly.

Google "Pacman, VisionQuest, Arum" to find some interesting financial articles about the worlds current P4P.

You know what they say,... Life ain't fair.. but I believe that Floyd does reach ATG status when it's all said and done.... regardless of the outcome on sept 17.

Radam G says:

VisionQuest has been fired. It's full of syet. Da Manny is PHAT with da moola! Holla!

Condor says:

Right on Brownsugar. Most people that summarily disregard Floyd's skills are the haters, and one simply can't reason with that situation. But Floyd's rise was remarkable. Pure boxing pedigree, rock-solid Olympic career (lost a decision to Augie Sanchez, I believe, which always stunned me (but amateur; AS was no slouch then), and won Bronze in 1996). But as an early pro he kicked some old school ass. Evidently he had a poor outing early on that ESPN keeps vaulted, but otherwise he ascended rapidly. Beat an accomplished, hard as nails vet like GH in 1998. Corrales in 2001 in a battle of undefeateds on free HBO. I remember Floyd lobbying to fight Hamed post-fight that era, and Merchant laughing and saying, "He's not going to fight you..." Once Floyd cashed in his handlers grabbed him, and himself as well, I imagine, and he just didn't take the risk. I still would put my money on him beating Pacquiao though (my opinion). I say that without authority obviously (and who doesn't love MP, the cat's terrific in every way), but I just think FM would prevail (these guys could write a chapter in boxing history - hope it happens).

I too, my friend, look forward to a month from now. Ortiz is real so it'll be electric.

brownsugar says:

Condor... he also lobbied to fight Kostya Tzu, Shane Mosely at lightweight, and Del La Hoya when he was still 130lbs and Oscar was defending 140...they wrote him off as being too much risk, too little reward.... I have it on DVD. But yeah I'll be on the edge of my seat 9/17

Condor says:

"Condor... he also lobbied to fight Kostya Tzu, Shane Mosely at lightweight, and Del La Hoya when he was still 130lbs and Oscar was defending 140...they wrote him off as being too much risk, too little reward...."

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No doubt about it. Not enough credit is given to what Floyd did then, and many have chosen to forget that the elite at the time were in no rush to fight him. Mayweather's not a flash in the pan to me. He's been a pro 15 years, and on HBO nearly that long. When he's hungry, motivated, he appears unbeatable.

FighterforJC says:

Yep. Mayweather definitely coulda woulda. lol.

nashingun says:

floyds skills dont approach the rewarding boxing greats skills for crying out loud! who wins a dance with the stars skills in the ring? with jabs as his gifts on the sidelines? BOXING IS FOR ADULTS, NOT KIDS. YOU PUNCH YOU KNOCK YOUR OPPONENTS. floyd jabs and dances, you call that boxing? floyd alright has good foot movements and shoulder rolls, but have you seen him whacked and gets hit! yes! zab judah manage to snap at floyd jaw. mosley gave one good blow to floyds head. now you tell me whos really on to boxing... pac's short left hook on mosley's jaw! there, and you see this scene once in a while the great rarely hurt mosley is down and his eyes dont give him the reality that he has fallen. cotto was in this array as well and with blooded face almost wanted to quit. margarito with his meat size brutally banged up face. these are what we call ADULT BOXING. kids love dancing and jabbing, no hurting, no KOs. ye, the homo boxing for kids mostly cherry picked fights, from a lightwelter hatton that took 10 rounds to finish to lightweight marquez whom floyd needs to cheat to gain advantage, then a regular spar with mosley in the ring. you call this great fights? dumb idiots who call themselves genius in boxing, open your eyes!

nashingun says:

ow, who? mayweather? you mean the one whod ducked pac, cotto and margarito? umm... i remember him, chicken floyd mayweather jr.

brownsugar says:

when you look at all the other ATG or HOFmers who were around 15 years ago.. whose left. DLH is done, Corrales RIP, Shane finished. Gatti RIP, Hatton retired, Marquez : soon to be eliminated, Calderone: shaked and baked, Martinez: can't get a fight, Kostya Tzu finished, Cotto: just fighting for retirement benefits, BHOP: surprisingly the only remnant left from his generation.. and this is only a few,.. what professional fighter is still beating opposition at the champion ship level who was fighting professionally in 1997?... out of hundreds of champs... only 2 names immediately come to mind (outside of Mayweather).... and thats BHOP and Pacman (because he started boxing pro so young)... I'm sure I probably missed a few, (Chris John maybe, Vitali Klitschko) but it's not that many.

It takes special aptitude, ring IQ and ability to remain on the throne in as dangerous a sport as boxing for 16Years!!!!.. Mayweathers accomplishments can be considered nothing less than Sensational!!!!

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FighterforJC says:

If that's the case, then Mayweather will rank well below Joe Calzaghe, who fought and beat the best of his generation and avoiding none. Mayweather's undefeated record means nothing. Even Nikolai Value went further than him in going undefeated.

Real Talk says:

One of the best pure boxers, one of the best all around fighters, one of the best defensive wizards. His career isn't over but I'd say one of the all time greats. Cut from the cloth of Willie Pep and Sweet Pea Whitaker. He's in good company and he has work to do. The best thing is he can still mold, etch and chisel his name and legacy. Go Floyd, it's ya birthday, do ya thing and forget about the naysayers. You think you'll never get the credit you deserve, depends on who they ask. Make as many as you can believers. They hail you one minute then nail you down the next. They talked bad about Jesus and your a disciple. No student is greater than his master. Pick up your cross. GOD's opinion is the only one that matters. Dueces

Shoulder Roll Defense says:

[QUOTE=Real Talk;8772]One of the best pure boxers, one of the best all around fighters, one of the best defensive wizards. His career isn't over but I'd say one of the all time greats. Cut from the cloth of Willie Pep and Sweet Pea Whitaker. He's in good company and he has work to do. The best thing is he can still mold, etch and chisel his name and legacy. Go Floyd, it's ya birthday, do ya thing and forget about the naysayers. You think you'll never get the credit you deserve, depends on who they ask. Make as many as you can believers. They hail you one minute then nail you down the next. They talked bad about Jesus and your a disciple. No student is greater than his master. Pick up your cross. GOD's opinion is the only one that matters. Dueces[/QUOTE]

Well said Real Talk, I concur! I think the main thing with Floyd is that you are arguably looking at the best defensive boxer of all-time. He has never legitimately touched the canvas. He broke his hand in a fight and took a knee because he was in such pain, but that doesn't count. His opponent's connect percentage is usually in the teens against him (%12-20%). Marquez landed roughly %12 percent of his punches against him, which is unbelievable. I prefer the nickname "Pretty Boy" over "Money" because they guy rarely gets hit solid. The Mosley fight was the exception to rule and look what happened after round two.

Robert Curtis says:

Floyd Jr. basically, in the latter half of his career, let Manny fight all his contenders for him(at catchweights that made big men starved, or now in Marquez's case: too fat to waddle to the toilet, much less fight for a title). It was cool when Manny handed Oscar's ass back to him. It was almost revenge for the way Oscar stuck his tongue out and gloated after beating an ancient Chavez Sr. I cannot get excited about who Manny or Floyd fight anymore. Who gives a rat's hairy azz. And they probably will fight each other in 2012 for a ridiculous payday, and the most ridiculous part will be us who pay for a snoozer fight that should have happened years ago

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when it might have actually mattered.

Robert Curtis says:

I watched two game amateur gals fight each other at a Koreatown boxing gym last weekend and was more excited than I am about Mayweather/Ortiz or Pacquiao/Marquez.

Shoulder Roll Defense says:

[QUOTE=nashingun;8757]floyds skills dont approach the rewarding boxing greats skills for crying out loud! who wins a dance with the stars skills in the ring? with jabs as his gifts on the sidelines? BOXING IS FOR ADULTS, NOT KIDS. YOU PUNCH YOU KNOCK YOUR OPPONENTS. floyd jabs and dances, you call that boxing? floyd alright has good foot movements and shoulder rolls, but have you seen him whacked and gets hit! yes! zab judah manage to snap at floyd jaw. mosley gave one good blow to floyds head. now you tell me whos really on to boxing... pac's short left hook on mosley's jaw! there, and you see this scene once in a while the great rarely hurt mosley is down and his eyes dont give him the reality that he has fallen. cotto was in this array as well and with blooded face almost wanted to quit. margarito with his meat size brutally banged up face. these are what we call ADULT BOXING. kids love dancing and jabbing, no hurting, no KOs. ye, the homo boxing for kids mostly cherry picked fights, from a lightwelter hatton that took 10 rounds to finish to lightweight marquez whom floyd needs to cheat to gain advantage, then a regular spar with mosley in the ring. you call this great fights? dumb idiots who call themselves genius in boxing, open your eyes![/QUOTE]

The name of the game is "hit and not get hit." That is the true essence of the "sweet science." Real boxing fans and students of the game can appreciate a Master at this art form, such as Floyd Mayweather jr.

FighterforJC says:

[QUOTE=Shoulder Roll Defense;8790]The name of the game is "hit and not get hit." That is the true essence of the "sweet science." Real boxing fans and students of the game can appreciate a Master at this art form, such as Floyd Mayweather jr.[/QUOTE]

Agreed 1000%. They should outlaw KO's and put a cap on punching power. I'm all for 22-oz gloves, helmets and full torso shields. Also, 50-punches max per round with one point deducted for every punch over that limit. That should put Mayweather on equal terms with Pacquiao should they ever fight.

brownsugar says:

thanks for the response Fe'Roz,... how do you see the fight goin down on Sept 17?

Radam G says:

Hehehehehehe! FJC is becoming quite the comic. Holla!

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Radam G says:

Where in the heck is The roast? Somebody send out a search team. Ain't no tellin' what type of syet The roast has gotten himself into. Maybe he is down ind Indiana searching for Isaiah. Hehehe! Holla!

Real Talk says:

Great comments B-Sug and shoulder roll defense, Real Talk award goes to the 2 of you for the month of August. I don't respect anyone who blatanly disrespects one of the best to lace'em up in the last 30 years. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to perform at p4p level for your entire career. To attempt to right that off is what suckas do. I'm not going to say anything bad about Pac, he trains hard and fights with courage an is one of my favorite boxers an I enjoyed watching most of his fights. Bob Arum is hurting his legacy with the match ups of late. If and when they fight I will be in attendance somewhere on the edge of my seat. I got Floyd pulling it out but it will be intense til the final bell is what I believe. If Floyd throws combos and puts punches in bunches together he will do magor damage, whatever his fight plan is I'm cool with that because I admire and respect his fight game as well as Pacquiao. Ortiz is a formidable opponent who is game and coming to win. Can hardly wait for the opening bell. It's been a long time coming to watch another display of boxing skills on a once a generation level. Respect. I also remember Floyd calling out many opponents but haters don't LOL....funny. He fought Baldomir for more money and the strap en route to the Golden Boy pay day which Arum was attempting to block because no former partner wants to see you do extremely well after you part company with them. It is what it is, hate'em or love'em your going to watch'em Sept 17 an if not then don't bother comenting on'em up in here. You're a fan cut the jokes. Dueces

brownsugar says:

Real Talk I think you should move up in weight,... Super HeavyWeight Class,.. you posts are landing with heavy impact..

FighterforJC says:

[QUOTE=Robert Curtis;8779]I watched two game amateur gals fight each other at a Koreatown boxing gym last weekend and was more excited than I am about Mayweather/Ortiz or Pacquiao/ Marquez.[/QUOTE]

You need to get a girlfriend.

Robert Curtis says:

No doubt. But these were and will be lame fights.

[QUOTE=FighterforJC;8970]You need to get a girlfriend.[/QUOTE]

Radam G says:

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No! Bobby C, you need to get a wife! I know just the Pinay for you. Hehehehe! Holla!

Radam G says:

Danggit! Now, I'm match making, or is that hookin' up? Well, at least, I'm not crookin' up! Holla!