Written by The Sweet Science
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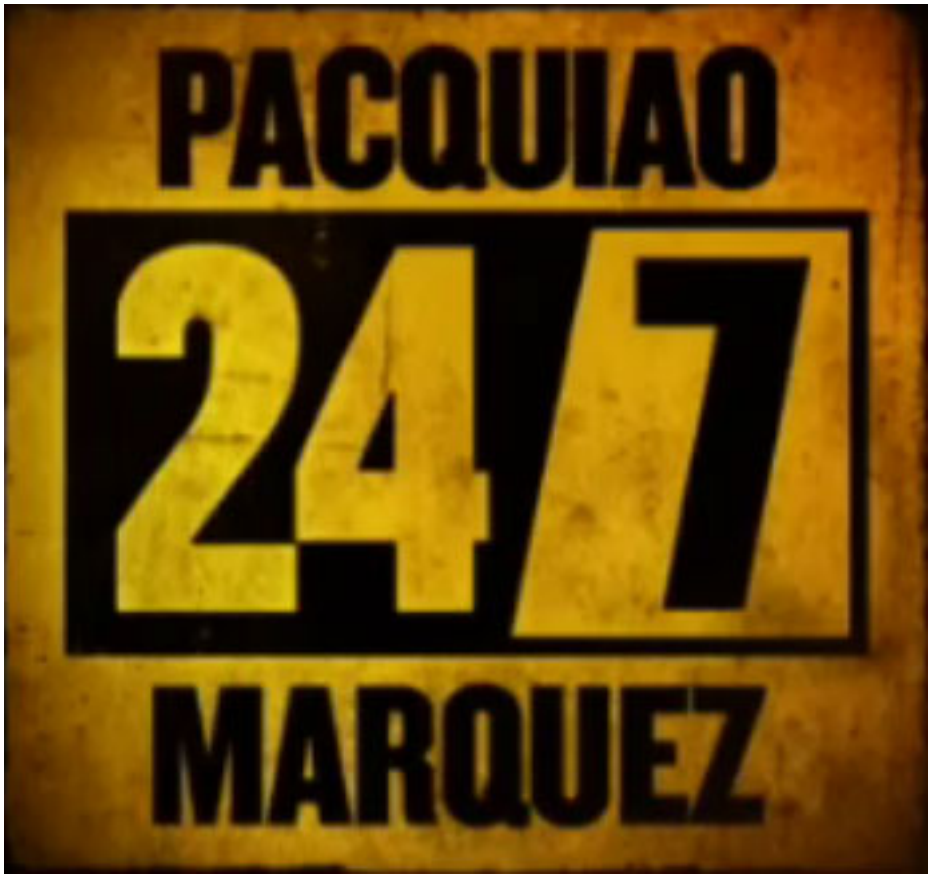


The first installment of HBO's stellar 24/7 series focusing on the third Manny Pacquiao-Juan Manuel Marquez debuted on Saturday night.

"Supremacy remains very much unresolved," narrator Liev Schrieber intoned with the heft of gravity that makes me want to buy the damned pay-per-view three times.

The show kicked off with a look at Baguiao City, where that city's "most famous part-time resident," Pacquiao, worked out at the Shape-Up boxing gym. Pacman is in the midst of a ten week camp to get ready for his eternal rival Marquez.

"Everything in Manny Pacquiao's life is because of boxing," his trainer Freddie Roach says, implying that the Congressman hasn't taken his eyes off the prize, and is still as committed as can be to his ring duties. His S & C coach Alex Ariza says that this camp is "unique" because this fight is personal, because Manny wants to prove Marquez is a liar for claiming he won both fights with Manny. Roach says Pacman is ahead of the game in camp, truly locked in and on message.

Pacman is seen sparring with Jorge Linares, right before Linares scrapped with Antonio DeMarco. "It's the best thing that's ever happened to me," Linares says.

Roach cracks up as two possemembers spar. The entourage is 50 deep, he says, though only about four of them have jobs. The rest are there to entertain the Congressman.

Meanwhile, in Mexico City, Marquez is training to prove the doubters who say he's too old and at too-heavy a weight class wrong. "He knows he hasn't beaten me decisively," Marquez says of Pacman. As feathers seven years ago, trainer Nacho Beristain says, Marquez was too confident. He went down three times in the first, but he did get up, and in the second half he came on. The judges saw a draw, while Marquez says he won, barely. "I'm confident I won the fight," Manny recalls. The 2008 rematch was tight as well. Manny scored an early knockdown, and Marquez again willed himself up, and re-calibrated himself. "I'm calling it another draw," said Larry Merchant on that night. "I felt my guy did enough to win the fight," says Roach of the split decision victory. Marquez says, "We thought we won the second fight." So we do another, to see if we can get a more conclusive ending.

The Baguiao camp was three weeks, and after 24 hours off for jet lag, Manny is at the Wild Card in Hollywood. Viewers see Jorge Linares, days away from the Antonio DeMarco clash. We then shift to fight night at the Staples Center. Manny wishes Linares good luck, and strolls to see his seat.

"Jorge Linares physically has everything," Jim Lampley says of Linares. Cuts sprout on his face, and then the 11th..DeMarco stops Linares. Manny goes to Linares' dressing room, and says, "Breaks my heart," as he checks in with Linares.

In Mexico, Beristain trains young fighters at the Romanza Gym, named for legends Gilberto Roman and Daniel Zaragoza. He talks about Marquez' chance in the third clash. "As the fight gets closer it will be more difficult for those poor sparring partners," he says. Marquez says he's a thinker in the ring. "I think my style is difficult for him," he says.

We see Alex Arixa, who for the last three years has helped Manny get into tip top condition. Linares' loss broke a 16-0 streak for Roach/Ariza working in tandem, for the record. Manny admits that he felt physical deterioration in the second Marquez bout. He felt his legs cramping in that bout and hooked up with Ariza. Ariza says now Manny is a "complete athlete" and Roach says Ariza is a pros pro. "Those last two fights were too close, but now he's a completely different person. I just don't see Marquez as having any kind of shot, aside from divine intervention. I'd be surprised if this thing goes three rounds, " Ariza says. it is the quote of the show.

In Mexico City, the Marquez crew heads to the TV studio, where Marquez shoots an ESPN boxing studio show. He does it on a weekly basis, but this is the last one til after the fight. He then heads with the fam for a sushi dinner and we see his wife and kids, 13, 6 and 4. He is then up at 5 AM to train. We know he isn't in it for the check, a fading guy looking for one last payday.

"Another close decision is not going to be satisfying to me," Roach says. "I want Manny to knock this guy out and shut him up, close the book on this."

What about it, TSS Universe? Will Roach get his wish? Weigh in, in our Forum.

Comment on this article

**ali says:**

I Pac wins....?

**brownsugar says:**

[SIZE=3]if pac can compete with world class welterweights,.. and Marquez cannot. What chance does JMM really have? The size advantage will be insurmountable for the scappy Marquez. KO guaranteed inside 6 or less. Normally I'd pass on a mismatch,.. but who would miss a Pacman fight? Just like I wouldn't miss Tyson or Mayweather, I try never to miss the diminutive Pinoy go to work. I gave Marquez the first 2 fights by a hair... but no way he beats Pac above his normal weight...Pac will finally enjoy a definative victory over his most tenacious rival..... nuff said. [/SIZE]

**Robert Curtis says:**

Manny is just too big and good now. Marquez might have a chance if they could meet at a weight that wasn't too hard on both fighters. But Manny's the champ who calls the shots now. Marquez will have to lug around too much baggage. My guess is Marquez will go down hard and early. When he wakes up, he'll think a heavyweight hit him.

**Radam G says:**

No commento! Not speakee ingles on diz one. Holla!

**FighterforJC says:**

I'd love to see Pacquiao mow down Marquez but I think if Marquez makes it past the 3rd round without getting knocked down, this could be another drag out war. The two guys just "fit."