

Mayweather's Saving Grace: He Matches Up With Everybody Today Stylistically

Written by Frank Lotierzo

Tuesday, 07 February 2012 17:33



What is it about Floyd Mayweather 42-0 (26) that is so frustrating for those who would be described as being his biggest critics? It's not like you have to watch him in the ring long to glean that's he's really a special fighter/boxer. And anyone who is so blinded by their bias that can't admit that he really is spectacular, can't be taken seriously.

The thing that draws fire from his staunches critics is we just don't know how truly great he really is. At his best is he as great as Thomas Hearns or Roberto Duran were pound-for-pound? No. Is he a greater pound-for-pound fighter than say Pernell Whitaker or Juan Manuel Marquez? Probably. However, the problem that ends up being the elephant in the room when trying to find a place to slot Mayweather historically is, he hasn't competed in a truly great era, which makes it that more difficult to judge him.

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The other major factor is, he hasn't fought another outstanding fighter when they were at or near their prime. And there were fighters around named Miguel Cotto, Antonio Margarito and Shane Mosley who would've presented Mayweather with some real problems circa 2003-2007, but mostly because of Floyd, the fights never came to fruition.

Instead, Mayweather fought Mosley in 2010 when it could've been a true super-fight years earlier. Then there's Cotto and Margarito. He never fought Margarito, leaving him for Paul Williams, who Mayweather also managed to miss when Paul was the perceived top welterweight (Mayweather's division) in the world. Now in 2012, he's fighting Cotto when it's at least five years too late to really tell us anything we don't already know. We know at this time Mayweather is fresh and preserved, and Cotto is damaged and has endured a few career altering beatings since 2007.

So it's easy to see why Mayweather has some pretty fierce critics.

Another thing that drives Mayweather skeptics crazy is he not only has avoided the fighters who were best suited to test him when they were at or near their best, he also has a boxing style that matches up with any other fighter around within 10 pounds north or south of the welterweight division. This is a tremendous asset that he always maximizes. Think about his upcoming bout with Miguel Cotto. Years ago Cotto used to be a pretty effective attacker and body puncher. However, due to the tough fights he's had with Shane Mosley, Antonio Margarito twice, Joshua Clottey and Manny Pacquiao, Cotto is now more of a wait and react counter-puncher. That would no doubt be a losing strategy against Mayweather. Actually, he would get picked apart and pot-shotted to death if he chose that style. If by chance it went the distance, he wouldn't win a single minute of a 36 minute fight.

Cotto's other option, and it's really his only chance, he must crowd Mayweather and try to bang him to the body with the hope of slowing and taking something out of him. The only problem with that is, it's a fight, and nobody stands still and lets you hit them. While Cotto is trying to close the distance on Mayweather, Floyd will be ripping him with straight one-tuos on the way in. That will bust up and cut Miguel's face and slowly but surely impede his aggression. Once that happens, Floyd will raise the rent and pick up the pace and the fight will be all but lost for Cotto.

And that's what makes Mayweather so tough to beat, he outright matches up with almost everybody today stylistically. His underrated physical strength enables him to hold off the

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stronger type attackers like Victor Ortiz who think they can impose themselves on him physically. His quick hands and straight punching disrupts their aggression and they eventually end up being a sitting duck for him on the way in. Floyd, regardless of who the opponent has been, has always been able to make them fight his fight and at the same time force them to fight from their weakness.

Some fans and writers think Mayweather is looking to avoid exchanges when he steps back or off to the side, which is an incorrect perception. Actually, Mayweather loves bringing his opponent to him. And he does it in such a way that what they're doing is just moving their feet forward, but they're not pressing him or making him uncomfortable on the way in. In reality, Floyd is directing them where he needs them to be as he's scoring. The bottom line is Mayweather is so versatile that he can match up with any fighter around today between 145-155 with the exception of Paul Williams.

In order to beat Mayweather it requires a fighter who brings something that he must first address before he can plot his own strategy and render them ineffective. A fighter like Sugar Ray Leonard, who was even faster than Mayweather and punched twice as hard along with having a great inside/outside game. Or Roberto Duran who at 147 was more than strong enough to make Floyd back up because he had no other choice, as opposed to him moving back of his own volition. And Duran had the strength and power to more than make Mayweather uncomfortable. Then there's a fighter like Thomas Hearn who at 145-47 was too long, strong and hit too hard for Mayweather to solve.

The only problem with what is stated above is there's no fighter/boxer around close to a Leonard, Duran or Hearn. Actually, Mayweather would be in trouble if there were an Emile Griffith or Luis Rodriguez around, but there's not. It's a testament as to how good Mayweather is that one has to recall names like Leonard, Duran, Hearn, Griffith and Rodriguez when trying to think of fighters who'd present him with some nearly unresolvable stylistic match-ups. Then on the other hand it's an indictment that due to Floyd's paranoia and insecurity we never saw him against the likes of Mosley, Cotto, Margarito and Williams when they were near their best. Because if we know nothing else, nobody declines a fight with Floyd Mayweather if they can get it, nobody.

Say what you want negatively or positively about Floyd Mayweather if you wish. But beware of one thing that's irrefutable in 2012 -- and that is he matches up favorably with any boxer in the world qualified to fight him weighing between 145 and 155 pounds.

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And it is a credit to Mayweather that, aside from the obvious Duran/Leonard/Hearns triumvirate, that I have to go back to Griffith and Rodriguez to find guys who'd unquestionably beat him at the weight.

Reach Frank Lotierzo at GlovedFist@Gmail.com

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maromero says:

Has Floyd fought a Top Rank fighter since he left Arum? Is it really paranoia? Im not going to defend Floyd for every fighter that he hasnt fought but you have to realize the situation with Top Rank. It seems to me like Mr Lotierzo always discredits Floyd after he says that Floyd is a great fighter. I believe that in the year 2003-2007 Margarito and Williams would have both lost cause they have never had technical skills, speed or a decent jab or even good footwork, they were bigger versions of Ricky Hatton. Cotto had a decent shot but Antonio did serious moral, mental, and physical damage to him. And I remember Mosley going through a stage were he noticeably dropped his game huge amount after he lost to The Viper(R.I.P)I would have loved to see Vernon Forrest fight Floyd back in the day.

reyocs says:

Manny pacquiao is above all of them you mention..leonard,,duran,,hearns..

If many face thus guys then taste the canvas...

You praise floyd bcozz..he is undefeated and good defence....if floyd face true welterwieghts in the past he will be gone and retire..he is the type of boxer who cherry picks...opponent..also i remind you that floyd is lose to castillo do you know that??????in the past if floyd fight paul williams who always calling him for a challenge that whould not happen bcozz floyd avoid him...floyd is long gone today..

reyocs says:

Dont forget floyd avoiding thus boxers...bcozzzzzz he floyd knows that he connot win thus guys.

reyocs says:

Plssssss mention joe calzaghe plssss

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reyocs says:

If floyd not cherry pickers he lose,,,,..... Specialy in the welterwieght division...floyd is a type of boxers skills is a basic..platfooted..his good in defence no one els follows..the problem is team mayweathers is not cooperating of thus promoters that have fighters that capable of knocking out floyd ***..and he always protected by some americans to save the last man standing warrior..a coward gladiator called floyd mayweather jr..

Many boxers have capable of beating floyd the reason why not happening bcozzz of floyd cherry pickers style of fighting..that is not good in the boxing business..and of his ignorance itself no confedence...he got a big loud bad mouth..always quacking like a duckling in the forrest that make noise to take atintion.....

nashingun says:

i didnt know that such fighter to beat floyd jr coming from your article on combining leonard, duran and hears does not exist alright! lol

but sadly, you never really exposed floyd jr of his weaknesses coming from a fighter like southpaws with speed and power. i dont really wish to mess up your mind but hey, why arent floyd making this fight with pac??? ofcourse you know why. pac's got the most chances of beating him.

ps, floyd dont have the power and punches to crack cotto's face. floyd cant even bend a hair on mosley's face that cotto beat. your assumption of floyds power is overhyped. lol

ali says:

Stop mentioning Margacheato he would have got his *** beat period it's really a stupid argument...Cotto would have been a little more difficult but his u got to remember 5 years ago Mayweather was on his toes and using the whole ring ...he was really hard to hit then...Williams is my boy but he leaves technically he was too flawed to bear Floyd.

Radam G says:

Money May is a great, great fighter. And a super smart one. Ducking is part of being great. Don't fight those who are a risk to you, when you can get out of it. Money May is the Sugar Ray Robinson of our time. He know when and who to duck. And the sucka got all the luck. He is one smart buck. And no one can deny that he is a muck-a-muck. Holla!

ali says:

Triple OG stop saying sugar ray Robinson was a ducker for real the **** sounds idiotic...

Radam G says:

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I will always call a spade a spade. "Sounds idiotic..." has nothing to do with reality or actuality. Saying that Jesus rose from the dead "sounds idiotic..." too. But it is likely truth, depending of your definition of what dead is. But what type of dead was Jesus? People rise from that so-called dead jive every day of the week. [A sucka was just declared today in San Diego, Cali, but when they took his arse to the funeral home, he undeaden [sic] like a muthareturner. Hehehe!] Beside I wouldn't believe an ancient Roman as far as I can see him].

Which one of those fudgers declared Jesus dead? What was the procedures for declaring one dead? Was the Son of Mary heart dead, or brain dead? Was he clinically dead or legally dead? Was he official dead or stinking, rotting dead? Now if Jesus came back from the stinking, rotting dead, he's a bad mofu. But Dude was just in a coma for three days while he was in that cave. And like always, so writers of those days figure that they could make money out of that by exaggeration that Jesus step out of death and removed the rock and jive from the cave. And that his ho Mary M witness the whole thing. Now who is going to believe a ho?

Anyway, SCLA Ali, you just don't get it. Quit living in fantasy. Have you ever fought in that squared jungle? Ducking opponents is a part of the sweet science just as much as some fighters getting their darn bones broke in the face and torso. A sorry-a\$\$ Cuban hyped-up fat-arse even broke his knee cap when he fought Doc VK. Hehehehe! Sugar Ray Robinson, and even Jack Johnson specialized in ducking "colored fighters." These are facts, SCLA Ali. Quit your demigod making of flawed humans.

You know what, light-skinned South Central Los Angeles Ali, you just like to f*** with me! Cut da crap! You cannot rap! Don't let have to call Uncle Snopp Doggy Dog and tell him to rose on 39th and Middlement. Muthasucka, you are always up in my grill, trying to get a thrill. Hehehehe! Holla!

ali says:

Triple OG. Im Lmao!!!!

nashingun says:

Radam G,

you dont know what the hell you're talking about in Jesus death and ressurection. If you wish to ponder on this matter dont bring them here in Boxing blog.

maromero says:

ah shegahtee powow shigga shigga, i know u aint talking bout the man!! uuuuuuuuhhhh!!!! i aint Master P but im BOUT IT BOUT IT!! let me spread some literature on mixing up things things that dont mix, understood? Lets not start a Holy War in this universe cause we got sum folks already saying bye bye to they folks talkin bout IM READY FOR MY 199 virgins plus one!!!!

dino da vinci says:

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Radam G has officially reached Rock Star status. The most insanely interesting read on the Internet.

Radam G says:

Whatever, nashingun! I didn't claim to KNOW jive turkey about JACK -- I mean Jesus! Read what I POSTED. I simply ASK QUESTIONS! You don't even know what type of DEAD Jesus was, and who in da fudge heck declared him DEAD?

Just use your brain, and not read my posts. Because I'm free to POST my WAY, and so are you. Have a GOOD DAY, and don't worry about what I SAY! Control yourself not to read what I post, because you will never control what I post. Just do that favor for JESUS for GOD SAKE! Get a CLUE! Holla!

dino da vinci says:

My bad. Actually, it's whatever the next notch up from rock star is. (He was at RS status prior to the upgrade).

mortcola says:

[QUOTE=dino da vinci;13376]My bad. Actually, it's whatever the next notch up from rock star is. (He was at RS status prior to the upgrade).[/QUOTE]

Radam is.....Radam. It is a new designation, and no other term captures it. It will be a chic adjective: to be Radam-esque. A new day dawns.

Radam G says:

@nashville -- I mean nashingun -- some peachers holla at me about Jesus's boxing days. And even went ballistic about "Arms are too short to box with Jesus!" So you need to get outta my grill, trying to get blood to spill. I ain't trying to be on Cavalry Hill.

Jesus was one boksing muthascooter. That is why religion is like boxing -- has all those alphabet-sanctioning organizations. During the days of Jesus, it was 10 others dude claiming to be the Prophet Jesus. Danggit! Sounds like nowadays boxing to me. How many champions of umpteen sanctioning organizations in each divisions do you have? I will just let you look that jive up. And tell me how many religious sects and cults are they? Look that up, too.

Anyway, Jesus was the King of whupa\$\$\$. How I wish that TSS reader Isaiah was still with us, and he'd tell you that Jesus Stuff. He Whup the death outta some cat named Lazarus. Jesus Said: "Get yo' arse up, Lazarus! And death ran outta Lazarus like a muthasprinter. Jesus Whup gambling a\$\$es outta a His Father's Temple. A\$\$es were flying all which kinda ways! Hehehehe! Jesus Being The Prince of Peace, IMHO was BULLJIVE! Da Holy Dude even March into Hades and Whup satan's a\$\$\$. When some muthasucka wanted to whip Jesus's Top ho, Mary Ma, Da Holy One Wasn't Havin' it. Da one who has not sinned, cast the first stone,' Jesus Told 'em. MAN! Dat ain't nuffin' but boksing smack talk.

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Okay! How am I doing, nash? Am I spittin' boxing in this "Boxing blog?" See Jesus Was A Smack Talker and an A\$\$ Thrasher. All part of boksing, my man.

WTF! Cats get all crazy if you say that boxing god Sugar Ray Robinson ducked everybodeee and dey momma. And Cats get all pi\$\$ed when you said that Jesus Duck death and that He Shoulda Duck those Romans. Hehehe! It is all good. Just don't read my syet if you are so soft-skinned and full of trying to controll my flow. Holla!

gibola says:

I realise I'll be shot down in flames by TSS contributors around the globe but the guy with the style to trouble PBF the most is a guy who is faster than PBF, with a good jab and a boxers mentality, someone who has a shot at outboxing him and winning seven rounds. Pressuring him won't beat PBF until he's 50. The best, fastest, most mobile boxer around now is Khan. Khan has many flaws (defense, no inside game, etc) but his jab, speed and stamina might allow him to land straight punches on PBF and possibly outbox PBF for a while and maybe even a long while. I think Khan has a better chance than Pacquaio, Cotto, Berto, Ortiz etc. Not because he's a better fighter than those guys necessarily, but because he is a better pure boxer who won't rely on pressure to confront PBF, he has the tools to outbox him (or to try to at least). Hatton, Pacman, ODLH, tried (or would try) to pressure PBF - Mosley and JMM tried to box - but they don't have Khan's gifts. If Khan beats Peterson (who himself has a style to trouble Khan but not PBF) I would love to see a 147lb Khan take on PBF in a year's time. PBF is an all-time great but isn't getting younger or quicker. Khan may well be bigger and faster than PBF in 12 months and an upset is possible (though I wouldn't bet my house on it!). There you have it - Khan has the style to give PBF problems and if he beats Peterson impressively and the Pacman-PBF fight doesn't come off Khan will be next in line come November 2012 or May 2013. Kahn on points anyone?

Gibola

gibola says:

PS - I give a peak Don Curry a helluva chance against PBF and while he might not beat PBF, it would have been interesting to see PBF try and solve Marlon Starling's style and pressure over 15 rounds.

Gibola

Radam G says:

Styles make fights. Money May was never interested in tangling with the late Vernon "The Viper" Forrest. Don Curry is one super, fast, slick boxer kickarse that Money May would have double dutch ducked.

People ought to grow da double fudge UP! And just realize and admit that ducking is a defense of the game and against arse-thrashing. Even Sugar Ray Robinson ducked Don Curry, and instead fought Marvelous Marvin Hagler.

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Most people don't know sh*t about the back-rooming and side deals of da hurt bitnezz. They don't even know jack about the front office either. Holla!

the Roast says:

Radam, you got your Sugar Rays mixed up. I don't like to pick these era vs era dream fights because Boxing is the most unpredictable of all sports. One punch can change EVERYTHING. Lets say Hearns and Duran never fought. Who amongsts us could have predicted Hearns would win by crushing KO in two freaking rounds! None of us. Nobody knocks out Duran. But it happened. I would pick Leonard, Hearns, Duran, Pryor, maybe Curry, maybe Starling over Floyd but you can never be sure. One crazy punch is all it takes. I will take Floyd for sure over McCrory and Colin Jones.

the Roast says:

Gibola, I have been enjoying your posts. Keep them coming.

gibola says:

Cheers - same to you and all the other TSS guys.

I just get frustrated that we get PBF-Cotto, a fight without fascination, where how PBF wins is the only mystery. Bradley-Pacman is the better fight, at least Bradley is young, hungry and unbeaten so he brings some unknowns. Cotto-PBF is just nonsense and a waste of six months of both guys lives. For Christ's sake does PBF not realise a lightmiddle is currently 160lb champ and all PBF has to do is beat someone not that much bigger to win the middleweight title and really touch immortality? Instead we have PBF-Cotto. Would SRL or Hearns have fought Cotto or Martinez? We don't have to answer that and that is why they are held in the esteem they are, and why PBF is never put in that elite company.

Gibola

Radam G says:

Thanks the Roast. I was mixed up like a muthahater. Hehehehe! I shoulda know dat da sharp-eyed [the] Roast was going to catch me trying to sneak by some hatin.' Danggit I was no doubt sublimical picking at the greatest ducker of all times -- SRR. Holla!

reyocs says:

Floyd skills is basic the problem is he is not cooperating all the nigociation of thus boxers willing to face him..he knows that he floyd is in danger he think that he cant beat thus fighters...if his attitude like recardo mayorga that have big large balls....fight who body in pront of him...floyd is long gone today....iam 100%sure of that...also floyds is american..in his country they protect the one left coward gladiator they have...

Just you better mintion joe calzaghe plsssssssss.....he is undefeated to and have a big balls to fight..joe calzaghe is a true warrior...not like floyd a coward fighter....what ashame of the land of

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the brave