Sergio Martinez expected Matthew macklin to come at him, guns a blazing, ready to rumble in the main event at the Madison Square Garden Theater on Saturday but Macklin hung right there with the pound-for-pound ace by employing intelligent and measured pressure, until the 11th round, when he was knocked down twice, and bloodied badly. The Irishman, in front of a full house packed 90% with Macklin rooters, went to his corner and they didn't like what they saw, so trainer Buddy McGirt, against Macklin's desire, told the ref to pull the plug.

Martinez said after he expected Macklin to attack more, and open up in a bout shown on HBO. He also said he'd wait for those big bouts because, "I'm a young man, I'm not as old as they think."

"It was a complicated fight," Martinez explained. "He wasn't open on defense. I knew it was a 12-round fight. I knew that it was only a matter of time. It's like chopping a tree - little by little - and I knew he would fall.

"My right hand to chest, straight punch to the chest, was working for me," Macklin said after. "It was hard for him to nail me. He didn't think I could box smart.

"Buddy stopped the fight, I wanted to continue. (Macklin's co-promoter Brian Peters said, "We called it in the corner. There are more days.') I worked with Buddy on technical things. He polished me but I resorted back in the last two or three rounds. We only had 10 weeks working together (for the first time) to fight the best middleweight in the world."

Macklin said after he didn't want to use reckless pressure, and thought he was in the driver's seat.

Martinez (48-2-2 with 27 Kos; born in Argentina, living in CA) was 157 1/2 pounds, while Macklin (28-3 with 19 KOs; from Birmingham, England, living in NY, from County Tipperary) was 158 .

Don Trella, Julie Lederman and Carlos Ortiz judged while Eddie Cotton reffed.

In the first, we saw a hand and footspeed advantage for Sergio. Macklin looked tentative.

In the second, a straight left, delivered under a jab, sent Macklin stumbling back. The lefty looked in complete control. Macklin landed some rights to the body.

In the third, neithe rman made a memorable round. Macklin waited too long and Sergio moved and feinted but didn't throw much.

In the fourth, a left uppercut had Macklin stumbling. The jab kept Martinez dictating the pace and macklin scored one or two rights to the body, and a clean head shot, but not enough to win the round. Sergio had his hands down to start the round, FYI.

In the fifth, the distance closed some. They traded to end the round and the Macklin fans went berserk. A clean right snapped Sergio's head back. In the sixth, a right at the end didn't steal it for Macklin. He plodded too much, though Sergio could have been busier.

In the seventh, Macklin scored a knockdown, but it was a shove and tangled legs scenario. Sergio perked up to end the round, threw bombs and roared at macklin.

In the eighth, Sergio landed a nasty left which buckled Macklin. In the ninth, the harder, cleaner shorts were landed by Martinez, including a right hook that knocked the Irishman's mouthpiece out of his mouth. In round ten, the men traded to end the round after Martinez sent Macklin reeling. In the 11th, a one-two sent Macklin down, with 18 seconds to go. Sergio then knocked him down again at the bell, Macklin went to his corner and his team told the ref no mas.

Comment on this article

the Roast says:

Kind of a meaningless stay busy fight for Sergio. He didnt look good until he got serious over the last few rounds. Maybe that was his plan as Ameyseng suggests, to lure Floyd out from under the bed after Floyd beats Cotto and gets out of jail. Sergio has no plans to move up to 168 to fight Ward, Bute, Frotch, etc, so his best bet for a big payday is Floyd moving up to 160.

rizzle says:

floyd moving up to 160? lol..... floyd wont even fight Pacman at welterweight, what would make anyone think he will move up to fight Martinez. it sucks for Martinez, but the man just needs to man up and move up to 168, coz we all know floyd aint manning up unless he was fighting a

washed up martinez.

amayseng says:

i am telling you martinez is playing possum, he has no choice no one will fight him he is a high risk.

you saw the straight left when martinez is serious, that left will spell trouble for floyds shoulder roll defense and floyd knows it, first hand.

sergio can make 154 as he weighed in at 157.

floyd walks around at 152, there is no reason why this fight can not happen at 154 or even 157.

well the reason will be floyd wont risk it.

sergio is putting rounds in the bank to maintain his stamina and endurance in hopes of a floyd fight...

dibella is ridiculous saying sergio will even come down to 150, that would be cowardly of floyd after he is nonstop about pac draining fighters. also, an 80-20 split for floyd, i dont get it, but either way lou is calling floyd out and if floyd does not agree then he will look bad.

floyd will have no problem with cotto, who gets hit with everything but the kitchen sink.

floyd has trouble with speedy southpaws, zab swept the first 4 rounds and even knocked floyd down before going zab and a.d.d.

martinez at 154, floyd would not beat him.

mortcola says:

I don't think Martinez is playing possum. He is an extraordinary improvising athlete. But he has real fundamental limitations that make him vulnerable. Unlike Roy Jones, who could compensate for his basic skill limitations through unbelievable defensive anticipation and reaction time, Martinez is as hittable as a mid-level brawler, EXCEPT when his offense is firing on all cylinders. When he couldn't get the timing of Macklin's sneaky-fast, well placed shots, including fast and forceful shots on the inside whenever Martinez tried to clinch, he went into research mode, feeling, poking, trying to avoid trouble. His genius is that he had the offensive speed, intelligence, explosiveness and durability to pull it off in the later rounds. I think his southpaw stance and offensive speed, not to mention real physical strength at 154, could be a real problem for Mayweather. But Mayweather will have no trouble picking him apart with his quick counters, and keeping Martinez on the defensive, as Sergio will likely not figure out any angles on Floyd the way he did on Macklin. As a match-up of strengths, it is an intriguing fight - if Floyd can't hurt him, then Martinez might be able to unload those hyperactive missiles and unload more sheer firepower on Floyd than he's ever faced. Not sure he'll get the chance

though once they get in the ring; also not sure Floyd will ever let them get into the ring to begin with. Risk-reward falls outside Floyd's comfort zone.

Grimm says:

Hats off for Martinez, who did his job against a solid professional who, wisely, choose to not put the pressure on the champ - but reversely planted his feet and tried to suck Martinez into his fighting zone. Martinez ain't as good as some believe him to be, but still one of the best names in the game. Judging by classical criterias, he ain't much of a boxer and has some serious flaws, but has refined his very personal style into mastery. As said in this thread, he probably would run into the wall vs Mayweather, given that Martinez preferred modus operandi is to lure his opponent inte attack-mode and then blitz 'em with his immensely powerful left. Even though he doesnt throw it technically perfect, and often off-balance, he hits while moving in the direction of the punch - and hence the power. It's like a truck smashing ones face at full speed. Martinez is agile, athletic, powerful and smart enough to rule the middleweights without any legit threat in sight, but Mayweather? Nah, he's just the type to negate those strengthes - even though they'll probably never meet.

ali says:

Amayseng, Roast why are y'all not bringing Pac name in the mix he has fought at 154 once and so has Floyd (twice once he fights Cotto)...Mayweather walks around at 152, Sergio walks around at 163 give or take so why can't he move up to super middleweight and fight the top guys there. It always a double standard when it comes to to Floyd. Amayseng you want Mayweather to lose so bad don't you?

ali says:

Another thing amayseng it is ridiculous for you to say Martinez was playing possum he ain't that damn good. Shi*t give Mackin some credit he fought a damn good fight stop being such hater.

amayseng says:

ali ,

sergio doesnt walk around at 163 and then lose an additional 3 lbs under 160 for the fun of it...

that would detrimental health and stamina wise, especially for a 37 year old.

i want to see floyd fight the best, not sell himself short.

when it is all done and over with people will look at floyd about what could have been if he just would have challenged himself to fight the best when they were their best, not a war torn ruined cotto who is a shell of himself now. instead of pac he chose cotto, sad. a cotto who margacheato used concrete against and a cotto who pac beat and battered all over the place.... how is that a respectable fight at this point?

i want exciting fights and i love the sweet science in itself.

floyd has priced himself out of fighting pac, who draws more fans and revenue than floyd and now floyd will not step to fight sergio at 154.

it is shameful..

how can you be such a floyd fan and not be disappointed?

its like having a Ferarri and never taking it out of town past 25 mph...

dont you want to see what he can do?

amayseng says:

macklin is solid, i said so before and still now.. but did you see sergio stay in the pocket defensively? no he just bailed and moved, paced himself to stay comfortable, then at the end he stepped on the pedal, see what happened when he did? i told u guys before this fight he would do this

Kid Blast says:

Merchant was especially noxious last night. Time to leave.

rizzle says:

Martinez doesnt throw the left hand technically perfect? who says that....? im not even a Martinez fan but I do give him props for being so dominant, and not to mention his nasty left hand. Sergio has knocked fools out with precision lefts and someone would have the nerve to say his left punch isnt technically perfect? anyways, nobody south of 158lbs would dare to fight this dude. he needs to stop crying about a big payday bout with floyd and move up in weight. its funny how he calls out and challenges the welter weights but wont do that to the super middle weights. I know at the end of the day the big pay day is with floyd, but Sergio just has to realize it wont happen coz he is to big and powerful and good for the welterweights but to small for the super middle weights, but i personally think he can bang and hang with the likes of Ward,Bute, and the other top guys up there.

DaveB says:

Sergio was frustrating to watch up until round 8 when he had to get serious. There was too much herky-jerky, waiting and bull skating. He keeps his hands low in an attempt to counterpunch or lure people in and fighters are getting wise to his traps and it makes for a boring fight until Sergio gets serious and goes to work. I've never seen Sergio gasping so much for air until last night. Martinez is a good fighter when he goes on the offensive. He will only do this it seems when his back is up against the wall but he does it well when he has to. Taking the initiative early is just not who he is. It takes him out of his comfort zone. He does get hit more

when he takes risks as every one does. He comes up with dramatic late stoppages. I don't feel Floyd has any obligation to fight him. Let him move up to fight bigger guys if he wants to. Otherwise fight guys in his division for smaller paydays. I hate when bigger fighters whine and cry because they want to fight smaller guys but they are not willing to do the same themselves. If the smaller guy wants to call out the bigger guy that's okay but if the bigger guy calls out the smaller guy that's cowardice. You're asking someone to do something you're not willing to do yourself. And personally I wouldn't be willing to weight drain, like Cotto said he is not willing to benefit the other guy anymore.

ali says:

Amayseng Sergio is cool with fight Chavez Jr who weighed 181 coming into the ring in his last fight but Bute & Ward are to big WTF!!!!..Mayweather is challenging himself by fighting Cotto I keep hearing you say Cotto is not the same fighter but neither is Mayweather and he's 4 yrs older so knock it off with that B.S argument. When Cotto in his prime was it when he was getting wobbled by Zab, Torres or Chop Chop im not sure...Why aren't u saying Martinez needs to challenge himself and move up if he ain't getting the big names at 147?

michaelabii says:

I thought it was an intriguing fight and serves Sergio M quite well. By seeming almost beatable he may well be able to lure Mayweather to the negotiating table. Mortcolas observations are quite true. Sergio is a phenomenal athlete and at 37 is extremely fit and welll preserved. I do see a slip in his usually razor sharp reflexes and as we all know reflexes are the first things to go. Then again I have seen the same slippage in Mayweather. I think the difference if and when they do fight is the fact that mayweather does not move as much as he used to electing instead to stand in the pocket and depend on razor sharp reflexes. Sergio has technical flaws, hardly goes to the body and has no real inside fight game. But he knows what he can do really well which is anticipate punches and he sticks to what he knows best. Oh - and he may well be the best puncher anywhere between 154 and 160 LB.

Shoulder Roll Defense says:

Sergio closed the show like a true champion last night. I would like to see him fight Kid Chocolate (Peter Quillin). Macklin is slow and gave him problems, therefore the much faster and slicker Quillin would be an intriguing match up. I can't think of any other fighters in the middleweight division that would give him problems. Maybe Danny Jacobs, but he has a glass chin. Martinez would be best served to stay in the middleweight division and attempt to clean it out. If he travels north to the super middleweight division or south to fight Mayweather at 154, he will taste defeat.

brownsugar says:

Sergio may not be in the class of supurbly physically gifted fighters like a prime Jones, Robinson, Hearns or even Monzon... he's more kin to the dillegent hard working variety of past standouts in the mold of Hagler, Basillo and Fullmer. Not similar in style but similar in work

ethic....the type of boxer who endeavors to compete with enough effort to bring a fight to a conclusive ending inside the distance..

None of his fights have been easy,.. (except maybe the quick stoppage of Paul Williams) But Martinez has the character to do whats needed.

While his competition has been solid and resectable. he still hasn't faced any of the standout middleweights who continually offer him the opportunity to elevate his status by defeating one of his peers who posses equal ability.

Martinez and his management has refused to share the ring with some of the other excellent unsung middleweights in the division who are also title holders but still haven't quite seeped into the consciousness of the casual fan.

At least half a dozen competitive fights await Martinez on an international level.... Pirog....Golovkin... N'Jikam.... Korobov.... and Quillin to name a few (although Quillin primarily fights at 168).

Martinez is a good figher in division packed with similar talent. Talent that most fans don't even know about because the politics of boxing keeps a firm grip on the blinders that keeps them from being exposed to the True Competiton.

While Sergio has proven he is in the top class of his division,... I hope he can elevate his status by facing one of the afore mentioned names. (Pirog would be a good place to start)

I understand Martinez's days are numbered...and he wants to get a couple of big paydays before he walks away for good... but with a playing field this strong, in what's really a highly competitive division... I look forward to seeing Martinez rise above the Barkers and Macklins of the word and try to unify some of those belts held by his European counterparts. I'd even be impressed if he could get by a proven trialhorse like Kassim Ouma.

Hopefully HBO, and Showtime can remove their blinders and focus on some of the more outstanding international talents who would surely guarantee an electric night of sports entertainment If they would match Martinez with some of those deserving Champions and contenders.

to me Martinez is not P4P,..... not yet..... But a comitted and persistant force in the middleweight division....Absolutely.

brownsugar says:

Somebody tell Sergio that Andy Lee has also been calling his name for weeks... a stoppage of Lee would gain Martinez some serious recognition points if he's able.

rizzle says:

i couldnt agree more with Brownsugar.

ultimoshogun says:

I'm in the same boat as brownsugar....couldn't have stated my opinons any better.

brownsugar says:

Thanks Ultimo and Rizzle, I agree..... fighting the smaller guys is a no win situation. Especially when solid opposition is waiting 6 deep for a chance to prove their worth. BTW... don't think I read a bad post on this thread

ali says:

@B-sug your right on point Pirog is where he should start...He has fought in the US and looked great doing so...If that fight is ever made I am immediately going to put money on Pirog some people might think im crazy but im 99.9% sure Sergio won't beat Pirog.

Kid Blast says:

By no stretch of the imagination was that a legit knockdown of Martinez. It is hard to believe the HBO crew viewed the playback and still would not get it right. They continually miss everything and it is getting worse as time goes by including the allowance of Martinez foul proof protector to ride up halfway up his back, in the front it was over his navel too protecting him from legit body shots.

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Second, Martinez fights to the level of his oppistion. That's just his style.

Third, Martinez‘s style is such that he sometimes uses the first few rounds to figure out his opponent and then adjusts accordingly. Tonight the adjustment came late, but it came and the result reinforced Sergio’s lofty pound-for-pound status.

This all said, you still make great points in your fine article Frank. BTW, I hope you know who I am. Cheers.

deepwater says:

ho hum. just as i predicted. sweet lou dibella sold you guys a lemon and told you it was lemonade

deepwater says:

pirog would knock sm out. just like golden child has been jacobs.

Radam G says:

S & M -- I mean Sergio Martinez -- is just the way I have been calling him -- a professional amateur, who is slaughter laying on ____ _____ _____ for a real complete elite to ____ _____! Sacrifice his ___ ___ arse to the boksing gods. Holla!

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deepwater says:

hey amayseng... are you nuts. sm playing possum? yeah ok. sergio martinez is a fine fighter but not a p4p. he got beat by margocheato. he beat up a drunk pavlik and a tall williams .that does not make an all time great. sweet lou dibella is looking for a big payday.and good for him. but dont drink dibellas cool aide. nigel benn,mike mccallum, gerald mcclellon,steve collins,roy jones,james toney, trinidad,de la hoya ,hagler,hearns,duran,barkley all would of slapped sm around.even camacho would of smacked him up

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Grimm says:

[QUOTE=rizzle;14647]Martinez doesnt throw the left hand technically perfect? who says that....? (---) Sergio has knocked fools out with precision lefts and someone would have the nerve to say his left punch isnt technically perfect?[/QUOTE]

Read me again. Or read this: a technically perfect punch is a punch that correlates with all the elements involved. That is, among many things: balance, generating power with the foot that "shoots off" the punch, twistin hips, rotating shoulders, and hitting without reaching off balance. Add movement to that (which Martinez has) and you up the power. Point wasn't that he isn't

precise or powerful. Point was that the law of physics is the law of physics. Or common boxing knowledge.