

I Like Roy Jones To Knock Out Manny Pacquiao

Written by Lee Wylie
Monday, 02 April 2012 12:59



Last week, I talked about what I thought could happen if Roy Jones Jr and Floyd Mayweather Jr were ever close enough in weight and time to face off, which came about as a result of Jones' comments in a recent interview. Jones stated that if he and Floyd were the same size, Floyd would be an easy fight for him. While I don't think it would be an easy fight for prime Roy, I do agree that his style would have been well suited to that of Mayweather.

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Which brings us to our next topic: prime Roy Jones versus Manny Pacquiao.

In case you've forgotten, Roy claimed that Pacquiao, as opposed to Mayweather, would have given him many problems to contend with - in particular, his southpaw stance and power. Before we go any further, I must stress one important point. By saying that Pacquiao would be a tougher fight for him than Mayweather, I don't think Jones is suggesting that Pacquiao is the better fighter of the two. I believe Roy, whose boxing brain was one of his greatest assets, is aware that more than anything, styles make fights. Roy's twelve rounds of experience with James Toney - a defensive shell based counterpuncher-would give a thinking fighter, like Jones, somewhat of a blueprint to work from in a fight with Floyd Mayweather. On the other hand, Roy Jones never faced a fighter that resembled the stylistic characteristics that Manny Pacquiao would provide.

In some ways, prime Jones and Pacquiao are a lot alike. Pacquiao's greatest attribute, like Jones' was, is his footwork. Lately, many observers have been mesmerised by Manny's handspeed; while clearly upper echelon, is somewhat misinterpreted. At his best, Pacquiao blindsides his opponents by feinting them into covering up, then using his tremendous mobility, he snakes around their guard and unleashes his trademark combinations. As a result of his opponents being discombobulated, Pacquiao's opponents all share the same notion, that because his hands are so fast, that they cannot see where his punches are coming from. The reality is, Pacquiao's feet are so fast, that his opponents don't see where his punches are coming from.

Both prime Jones and Pacquiao utilised a lot of foot movement. Both fighters could be defined as having an "in and out" style of boxing, and yet there are some stark contrasts. Pacquiao likes to bounce in and out of mid-range, using a lot of head movement, before attacking in an ultra aggressive manner. Jones on the other hand preferred to be out of range, backing up, before countering his opponent. Pacquiao, a rhythmic fighter, instigates the attack, whereas prime Jones, a fighter who fought using broken rhythm, instigated his opponents into attacking him.

As a result, I'd have to say that Jones would have the advantage in ring generalship. Pacquiao was forced into following Juan Manuel Marquez in all three of his fights. It's not hard to imagine Jones backing up, luring Manny onto him. In a twelve round fight, this could prove to be problematic of course. Pacquiao's punch output is normally in the higher range, whereas Jones' was often in the lower range. Over the distance, Pacquiao would be the busier fighter. However, unlike Juan Manuel Marquez, who allowed Manny to outwork him, Jones would have some

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trump cards to play.

During their last bout, Marquez did a good job of neutralising Manny's left hand attack. By stepping to his left, Marquez kept Manny off balance and kept out of the way of the left hand. The main problem Marquez encountered was he was so concerned with Manny's primary weapon - the left hand - that he did not produce enough offense of his own. This is the area in which prime Jones' style would prove better than that of Marquez'. When it came to defending, prime Jones, like Marquez, preferred to step out of range as opposed to blocking. However, Jones' combination of handspeed and power was light years ahead of Marquez. With Pacquiao following Jones, I can envision Pacquiao running into sharp, heavy counters all night long. The two best weapons against a southpaw? A straight right hand and a left hook. Jones' straight right hand was sublime. He would throw it with laser precision and move off before his opponent knew what was happening. I consider the left hook lead of Jones to be one of the best in boxing history. The power and speed he could generate from that shot with such little leverage was astounding. The lighter hitting Marquez was able to land his straight right and left hook often against Pacquiao. A faster-harder hitting Jones would be able to land for keeps.

More bad news for Manny is the fact that prime Jones would be able to match, or even surpass him in the footspeed department. Pacquiao is at his best against fighters who defend by blocking and using upper body movement. Jones was able to leap in and out of range within the blink of an eye. Because of his legs, supreme athleticism and subtle head movement, Jones had an uncanny ability of evading offense. In terms of hitting without being hit, Jones was one of the best I've ever seen. Pacquiao however, can be tagged. Sometimes, Pacquiao's answer to offense is more defense. Against a fast, powerful counterpunching attacker like Jones, Pacquiao could not afford to take clean shots.

Apart from his obvious handspeed, Jones was a master of timing and distance and every bit as good as Carlos Monzon during his prime. Jones had a way of making his opponent overcommit by standing there with his right hand out and taking small backward steps. Thinking Jones was within range, his opponents would attack, only to fall short and be countered. This technique gave Jones' opponents a false sense of distance - a Joe Louis dynamic. In his prime, this was Jones' bread and butter. Take a look at any fight involving Jones from '94 until 2003. You will see Jones stun opponents with his left hook and straight right hand using this very technique. Pacquiao, who often reaches and finds himself off balance, would be open for Jones' signature counters.

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I would have to disagree with Jones on this one. I think Manny's style equates to a Jones win..and not only a win, a knockout win. I believe Manny's style is tailor-made for Jones. Imagine if Marquez had the footspeed to get back in range after evading Pacquiao's assaults, and possessed the power to hurt Pacquiao after he countered. This is what Pacquiao would be up against facing a prime Roy Jones. Jones would be able to use Pacquiao's aggression against him by luring him onto his sharp, fast counters.

I'm a convinced that if Manny and Floyd ever decide to get in the ring with each other, Floyd will have the toughest night of his career, because of a conflict in styles. [For more on that, check out my Pacquiao could have the blueprint to defeat Mayweather article <http://www.thesweetscience.com/news/articles-frontpage/14184-pacquiao-might-have-blueprint-to-beat-mayweather>]. Manny's offense is best suited to opponents who utilize upper body movement, like Mayweather, as opposed to lateral movement like Jones. This does not mean however, that I consider Manny a better fighter than Mayweather, only a fighter who would hold a style advantage over his opponent.

During his prime, I would pick Jones over Mayweather - likely a decision win - and Jones over Pacquiao - likely by knockout.

A final word on Jones, Mayweather and Pacquiao.

Because of their popularity, and the fact that most observers regard them as the best today, Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao suffer from hyperbole. You will not only find them on top of current pound for pound lists, but in some cases, [and mind bogglingly so] at or near the top of all-time lists as well. The truth is, from a skill perspective, Mayweather and Pacquiao may not even be the best fighters of the last 20 years, let alone all time.

Nevermind Pernell Whitaker and Julio Cesar Chavez, Mark "Too Sharp" Johnson and Ricardo Lopez may have actually been better than both Mayweather and Pacquiao, but because they were competing during the Tyson era, they went relatively unnoticed outside of hardcore fans. Roy Jones, on the other hand, should rank higher because he was simply better than everyone else during his best years.

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Don't get me wrong, Mayweather and Pacquiao are clearly upper tier fighters, who possess all-time talent. But I could make the case that we've seen their likes before. Sure, Mayweather's defense is phenomenal, but wasn't Wilfred Benitez' defense just as phenomenal? Yes, Mayweather's technical skills are to die for, but weren't prime Donald Curry's just as impressive? I agree, Manny's footwork and use of angles are exceptional, but I believe Orlando Canizales' footwork and use of angles were even better.

The point is, we had not seen anything like Roy Jones during his prime. He was incomparable, at least to other boxers.

Let's think back to when Roy Jones became the first middleweight champion since Bob Fitzsimmons to hold the heavyweight title. Many thought he was on his way to replacing Sugar Ray Robinson as boxing's greatest.

Now imagine, if someone had told you back then, that one day, Jones would be in danger of becoming UNDER-rated, you would have a hard time believing it, wouldn't you?. Sadly, that's the predicament now facing Jones. This is where boxing differs from other sports. Imagine if Roger Federer never won another game of tennis. He would still probably be considered the greatest of all time. Defeated at the end of the game, he can walk over to the centre line to shake his opponents hand and salute the applauding crowd. Boxing is not as forgiving. We have seen Jones lay unconscious in the centre of the ring. It is this visual that is so unforgiving for Roy. It did not matter that his first defeat did not come until he was 34-years old. The G.O.A.T should never be carried out of the ring, at least not in the mind of most.

We should remember Roy at his best, not his worst. He was boxing's version of Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt - he turned wrong into right by using his supernatural athletic gifts. At his best, Jones was so much better than the opposition that he probably only lost a handful of rounds in over ten years of title bouts. There will be those who will point to the Eric Lucas' and the Glenn Kelly's of this world, but in response, I will point to Bernard Hopkins and James Toney, great fighters who were shut out like every other Roy Jones opponent during his prime.

Such was Jones' level of dominance in the late nineties, that he made us think to ourselves: Am I watching the best to ever do it? I've never thought that once when watching Floyd Mayweather or Manny Pacquiao.

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Radam G says:

You don't always get what you like, but it is fine and dandy to yearn for it. I like for Peter Pan to knock out Santa Claus's big, old arse. But the jolly, old, fart in red will probably fly off like a bytch with Rudolph, the red-nose reindeer leading that lying-arse sled -- I mean flying-a\$\$ sled. Wow! They may just bump into Jesus riding that white horse on a cloud. Hehehehe! Fantasy is da BOMB! You can believe that ____ ____ ____! Holla!

"B" says:

I first want to qualify this statement by saying that Roy was my favorite fighters for a long time. But How mentally tough was he really? And also How tough was his opposition? I mean he is way more talented then Floyd and Manny(and thats saying alot) But if they were close to the same size and if the fight could happen between the two..ummm.....I mean if the fight was tough and somehow close after about six rounds Who would you guys pick. I would take Manny or Floyd because of the Mental aspect and for the simple fact that I know they FLoyd and Manny will dig down and grind. There is the one factor that keeps me guessing. And that is that I believe Roy could knock either guy out with one punch,(even a body shot)

the Roast says:

Yeah but what if Manny rode on top of Floyd's shoulders and the fought Roy Jones using four arms? Then who wins huh? Another slow week. I saw elsewhere that Hector Camacho got arrested for child abuse today. Not cool. Well, Hector never did hit very hard so I'm sure the kid is ok.

Radam G says:

Hehehehe! That was funny, but coldhearted, the Roast. Don't be hatin' on "Macho Time." False arrested are made all the time. Holla!

ez da fez says:

If there was a Manny Pacquiao in Roy Jones's weight class we would've found out far sooner than we did that Roy had a glass chin...peace