(photo by Chris Farina-Top Rank)

He is no mere mortal. He is Manny Pacquiao, the king of the ring and the sultan of swagger, by boxing's standards at least. He has won more division titles than pretty much anyone ever. He's

coming off one of the most impressive fifteen-fight runs in the history of the sport, and he's facing Timothy Bradley, an undefeated, prime and gritty championship-level opponent, in what is sure to be one of the biggest boxing events of the year.

And I can't help it. I…just…don't…care. Okay, okay I do *care* (I'm a boxing writer after all), but I assure you it isn't as much as I wish. Let's do a bit of root cause analysis to see if we can ascertain why.

Maybe it's because no matter what happens in this fight, it most assuredly won't be as big of a fight as the one we just saw when Floyd Mayweather decisioned Miguel Cotto in May. Nothing's bigger in boxing than Cinco de Mayo, right? And if anyone has a bigger name in boxing than Manny Pacquiao, it's Floyd Mayweather.

Still, there's more to it than that. Mayweather and Pacquiao are equal buzz generators for me, so it must come down to the opponents. In his own right, Miguel Cotto is a superstar, too. Minimally he's much bigger of an attraction at this point in his career than Bradley, and, more than likely, he will carry with him when he retires a greater historical significance judging by his desire to take big fights against top opponents at the right time. Miguel Cotto has a legion of admirers, all who make his fights against other PPV box office superstars buzz-generating bonanzas.

Or maybe it's because no matter how great a battle this fight may actually turn out to be when the bell rings (and I have my doubts), I'll still be thinking about all that it won't be. It won't be Pacquiao versus Mayweather, the massively significant bout I'm frankly sick of pining for.It won't be Pacquiao against someone who's favored against him, no matter what your favorite, trend-hopping boxing journalist might say, and it won't be a battle of two of the best fighters of all-time. And no matter who I want to blame, be it Mayweather for not agreeing to the 50/50 split, or Pacquiao for not agreeing to a 40 million dollar guaranteed purse, or Bob Arum for just being Bob Arum, or Ms. Jackson for apparently not having a first name – I DON"T CARE I JUST WANT THE FIGHT – the Fight of the Century isn't happening. Again.

Who knows? Maybe it's just the fight itself. Look, Timothy Bradley is a world class fighter. He's won titles in the junior welterweight division and has beaten some top notch guys along the way, but when exactly did Bradley become elite status? Did I miss something? Sure, he's a tough, well-skilled and aggressive competitor who is sure to come to fight, but is anyone filling out their top ten pound-for-pound lists giving him serious consideration for a spot in their top three? Top

five?

I'll admit it: Bradley is one tough dude. He reminds me a bit of Marvin Hagler in that way -- not in fighting style so much as his demeanor.He is the type of guy who looks right through other people -- the type of guy who's been successful exactly because of his indomitable will and no-nonsense approach. It's commendable for sure and should help propel him to an excellent career, but is Bradley any more impressive to this point than Ricky Hatton was before he faced Pacquiao? Moreover, didn't Hatton seem to have more pop in his fists and an even rougher, tougher style than Bradley?

For all the talk of Pacquiao's so-called lackluster tussle with nemesis Juan Manuel Marquez last time out, you'd think Marquez was some bum off the street. No, Marquez is a historically great champion who has given Manny tough fights every one of their three encounters. Marquez is adept at the things one has to be in order to be successful against a fighter like Pacquiao. He has superior boxing skills augmented by inexplicable timing, and he's probably one of the best combination punchers in the history of the sport. For all the things Timothy Bradley is good at, none of them seem to be of the Marquez variety.

Styles make fights, and Bradley doesn't have the style to beat Pacquiao, at least not in my eyes. Bradley can't outbox the faster, more accurate Pacquiao from the outside, so coming right to Manny (one way or another) will be his only option. He'll need to take as little punishment as possible, land what he wants to land and then wrestle Pacquiao around the ring to keep him from teeing off. Unfortunately, doing something like that against a fighter like Pacquiao is much easier said than done, and using a style like that requires real pop – the kind of power Bradley's twelve knock-outs in twenty-eight fights doesn't lead me to believe he has.

Prediction – As we get closer and closer to Saturday night's fight (where I expect Pacquiao's speed and power to allow him to win handily), I somehow get much more intrigued about the fight than I am now, even going so far as to convince myself that Bradley has as much of a chance as trendsetting journalists and twitter analysts would have you believe. Ultimately, of course, I come to my senses, call it for what it is and still enjoy the fight anyways, because hey – it's boxing.

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

Let me make this interesting because I'm down with O-P-P. Yall know me!

The Sin City controlling sweet science scums -- I mean powers -- that be are trying to making this bout a bit interesting to see. The bout has been assigned to a shakey referee. No! Not Joe "I'm fair, but [floppy -- I mean] firm" -- Joe Cortez. It's Robert Byrd -- an allowing-a-headbutt cheat. To him, Tim Bradley's trick of the trade cranium crash-straight-to-your-mutt crush may be tolerated as a-down-with-da-brotha treat. But it won't stop Bradley from getting viciously beat. Da Manny, with his new Godly-Inspired Faith, will have too much hellbent heat.

Just as Redcoat Ricky Hatton did, Bluecoat Timmy Bradley will go down in easy, early defeat. RRH couldn't last two rounds. BTB won't last three. I don't care how it sounds. Hehehehe! Holla!

deepwater says:

pacman by ko 5 round or less. dont believe the bob arum bs. this fight will not be close. bradley has no power. i will not buy this fight as i will be at yankee stadium watching mets yankee game. better to save my $$ and catch it on hbo for free the next week. also i think the ppv #s will be weak compared to floyd . (cotto sure does have something to do with it because no one knows or cares who bradley is.)

ali says:

Im going to watch it but I ain't paying for it cuz I do not think the main event is going to be close either deepwater. Matter of fact I don't want to see any of the fights on the undercard.

Megarodon says:

Very fanboy-like article... Crying over spilled milk and public appeal stuff

Who cares? at this point Timothy Bradley is a far more dangerous fighter than Miguel Cotto was against Mayweather... It's a real risk fight and we should all appreciate it's happening

It's articles like this that legitimize when great fighters with not so much appeal are constantly dodged and ducked by other fighters... Let Bradley have his shot! let Molina have his shot! Let Lara have his shot!

over with this bs

amayseng says:

with such a poor undercard this ppv is not worth the risk of pacman blazing bradley out in a few rounds.

i dont see the sales being anywhere close to cotto and canelos last ppv with their fan bases, oh

and also the few people who buy floyds ppv just for floyd