

THE FLURRY: No Wylie, I Say Pacquiao Beats Bradley in Rematch

Written by Blake Hochberger
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Bradley-Pac 2: You're wrong, Wylie.

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If you haven't had a chance to read any of Lee Wylie's stylistic breakdowns of fights on TSS, you're missing out. On top of being entertaining and informative, he's almost always right. When he says a jab from a different angle wins a fight, he's usually spot-on. But in assessing a potential rematch between Manny Pacquiao and Timothy Bradley, I wholeheartedly disagree with his belief that Bradley beats Manny. I just don't see it.

Bradley may have been battling two bad wheels (which is incredibly impressive in retrospect) when they first met, but his inability to avoid and/or win exchanges is why he won't beat Manny. In past fights, he has shown a desire to exchange punches. Particularly in a firefight when bombs are being thrown, Bradley (seemingly on competitive instinct) has too much pride to leave the pocket. He did not win one exchange against Manny, nor will he. Manny is faster, straighter, and more accurate with his power punches than Bradley. Bradley has immense will and determination, but his inclination to plant his feet and fight fire with fire will be (and was) his downfall. It takes an expert tactician/extremely accurate puncher to slow him down. Bradley's hand speed is top-notch, but it's not just hand speed that is needed to slow down PacMan. Juan Manuel Marquez has good, not great hand speed. He consistently slows Manny down by beating him to the punch (hand speed obviously helps here—but throwing first and landing first are two different beasts), and winning plenty of exchanges with his laser-like precision. Bradley seemed to try this approach, but he doesn't have the God-given counter-punching abilities of Marquez. He simply needs to alter his strategy, and I don't see him having the tools to develop a winning one.

While Manny's attack has become that of a stalker (to Wylie's point), and I agree he's not adept at changing his style mid-fight (to Wylie's point), he won't have to (my point). The only thing Manny did wrong in the last fight was take his foot off the gas. He was on cruise control for large portions of the fight, and if you believe in the competence of the judges that night, it's what cost him. He will easily win a rematch simply by pushing the fight for a full 12 rounds and throwing more punches (namely lead uppercuts) to neutralize Bradley's jab, and I predict this time by knockout. Manny will leave no doubt.

Alvarez-Ortiz, scratch that, Lopez

It's a real shame Ortiz fell out because Victor Ortiz was the perfect fight. He's a big enough name to make Golden Boy happy, and a good enough fighter to make the fans happy. The kicker is that Ortiz is always in exciting fights, and he'd bring out the best in Alvarez. We'd see if Alvarez can beat a guy who's in his athletic prime and really comes to win. I'd also like to see Canelo's chin tested, and although Ortiz is smaller, he can definitely hit.

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I thought Cornelius 'K9' Bundrage would be the best choice for the matchup, aside from Miguel Cotto. What he lacks in pretty he makes up for with gritty. He's just a tough dude. He might've made a Canelo fight ugly, but he'd have forced Canelo to really *fight* and adapt on the fly. K9's recent win against Cory Spinks didn't do him any favors regarding securing this lucrative matchup, but he did win that fight with a pretty dominant stoppage. His time spent on 'The Contender' series gives him some marketability, and the seasoned boxing fan knows his name well enough to avoid any sort of public outcry to Golden Boy. I'm sure Canelo would handle him, but it would prove that he could handle a scrapper, and in reality it would probably be his toughest test to date.

It looked like Erislandy Lara and Vanes Martirosyan would be fighting one another (pending Al Haymon's *expert* advice) to see who Alvarez would fight after his September TBD matchup. Both of those names would have been nice fill-ins for Ortiz in September, it would've been fine to let the contenders to decide with their fists who gets the big payday. It's tough to pick a winner in this #1 contender matchup since Lara only shows up to fight at 100% sometimes, and Vanes hasn't fought a serious opponent in what seems like years. I'll take Lara, but I wouldn't bet the house on it.

Carlos Molina hadn't even been mentioned to get the Alvarez fight. Poor guy. Within boxing circles, it's well known that Molina could give a test to any of these contenders. In fact, he already gave Lara all he could handle and I doubt the powers that be are looking to line that rematch up. This brings me to my next point:

Every weight class should have ongoing 4-man tournaments to determine genuinely mandatory contenders. K9, Lara, Molina, and Vanes (Austin Trout needs to earn entry here) should be FIGHTING for the right to take on. This should be done in every weight class. It helps the promoters, too! It gets the big ticket matchup additional marketability by adding credibility to the contenders. If you don't think much of Lara, beating Vanes on a televised broadcast would go a long way in convincing doubters that he deserves Saul Alvarez and the paycheck that comes with him. Sigh.

Sergio "Maravilla" Martinez-Julio Cesar Chavez Jr

I'll take Martinez, but I don't think this is a gimme. I'm really curious to see what the betting line

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looks like on this fight, because JCC, Jr. could definitely be a live dog (if he's more than 3-to-1) with his body punching, chin and tenacity. If Martinez can't hurt him or at least back him up with his straight left, this is going to be a dogfight. That said, I'll take Martinez's and his sublime movement and boxing ability.

At the end of the day, if Andy Lee could 'outbox' JCC in spurts, Marvalla should put on a clinic. Even though Junior walked right through Andy Lee, I think Maravilla is on another level.

In theory, this should be a night of the jabs. Sergio, for a 'boxer', does not really use his jab all that effectively. Rather, he leads with straight lefts and dissects his opponents with precise counter-punching. If Sergio doesn't use his jab to dictate the range of this fight, he'll make it a much tougher night than it needs to be. If JCC, Jr. doesn't jab to find his range, he'll be on the end of straight lefts all night long and lose in a landslide. I'm confident Sergio will use his jab, not just a show-jab but as a means to back up the younger foe, and follow up with multiple-punch combinations.

The size of the ring will actually be very important in dictating where this fight takes place. Obviously, a smaller ring limits the dancefloor for Maravilla, but it would encourage the majority of the fight to take place in the center of the ring (i.e. Advantage: Sergio) as Martinez cannot afford to sit on the ropes against JCC, Jr. While Martinez is known for his movement, he showed in his first fight with Paul Williams that he can definitely trade shots effectively in the center of the ring. Sergio is simply the more creative puncher. Creativity coupled with accuracy typically wins out in close quarter unless there's a massive power discrepancy, and I don't think either is a pure KO artist. I can only see Chavez winning if he can pin Martinez up against the ropes, and I just don't see Sergio allowing him to do that.

I think it's safe to say JCC, Jr. is the best fighter Sergio has faced since Paul Williams. Against the aforementioned Punisher, Sergio showed an ability to take a punch, last 12 hard rounds, go toe-to-toe, and in the second of their memorable matches, he showed that he can take you out with one punch. All of these qualities (coupled with his ability to move and counter effectively) will be on full display in a fight-of-the-year candidate victory. Yes, I said fight-of-the-year candidate. JCC, Jr. has the necessary heart, power, and aggression to make this a barnburner. Fortunately for Martinez, he's already been in these types of fights with better fighters than Chavez, which is why he'll take home the belts.

Nonito Donaire looked explosive, but not incredible

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After seeing his weekend win against Mathebula, it's safe to say that Donaire could be a bit one-dimensional. Granted that one dimension is explosive lead power punching, he doesn't seem to offer much else. His movement is fun to watch, but it's not as effective as it looks since he took a number of clean punches from Mathebula. Fortunately for him, Mathebula hits like a 122-lb fighter.

Mathebula was very impressive in his application of the sweet science, although he was underwhelming to the common eye. Short, straight counter-punches landed cleanly for him for much of the second half of the fight against Donaire. After recognizing Donaire's plan to simply leap in with his lead left hook, Mathebula did a tremendous job neutralizing it (Well, after he got dropped by one).

Sidebar: Hot trainer Robert Garcia did his best Freddie Roach impersonation by giving little to no help to Donaire in altering his game plan despite being out-landed in most of the middle rounds.

For the record, I'm a huge Donaire fan. I love the way that he brings it and consistently throws power punches. He's a treat to watch and I look forward to seeing him fight again. Just seeing Mathebula take away his left and take few clean punches (except a vicious right that probably broke his jaw in the 11th) makes me wonder how great he really is. It sounds like he wants to unify titles before moving up in weight again, but the obvious choice is seeing him fight Guillermo Rigondeaux. The explosive, aggressive punching of Donaire would make for a perfect style clash with the cerebral counter-punching excellence that Rigondeaux showed in his last bout with Teon Kennedy. It would be a true display of the sweet science. I'll take Rigo since Mathebula was able to slow down Donaire so well.

Kelly Pavlik's win more than meets the eye

Pavlik's win on the Donaire undercard didn't impress me (or anyone, really) all that much. However, his post-fight interview made me re-think what he had shown us. In his last few fights, including Saturday night's, he has utterly outclassed the B/C-level fighters he's faced. He said it himself in the interview: "That's the caliber of fighter I am". He's totally right. While he didn't look spectacular, he never once looked vulnerable against these guys, and completely dominated them in lopsided victories. He's supposed to dominate these guys, and he is doing just that.

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He's admittedly trying to get his rounds in, so I'll personally look forward to a step up for him. At the end of the day, his only losses are to Sergio Martinez (largely recognized as the #3 P4P fighter on the planet) and Bernard Hopkins, who's not only a first-ballot Hall of Famer but just a horrific style matchup for anyone. Bring on Lucian Bute! Let's see who can bounce back to the top of the 168-lb fold.

Khan-Garcia Prediction

Khan by dominant decision. The only way I see Khan losing this fight is if he gets knocked out. If I'm wrong, I'll blame Freddie Roach big-time. There's a noticeable skill discrepancy between these two fighters, so Khan needs to exploit Danny Garcia. Garcia is a very good fighter, and I truly believe that Khan has an elite skill-set. He should be able to overwhelm Garcia.

Props to Donovan "Da Bomb" George.

As many expected, Andre Dirrell backed out of his fight with Adonis Stevenson. What also comes as no surprise, Donovan George didn't balk at accepting the fight. The heavy-handed fighter (who, like me, is from Chicago and, unlike me, has a huge following in Chicago) has a big time right hand, and always comes to fight. Showtime will get their money's worth, and hopefully Da Bomb gets back in the 168-title picture.

Follow me to hear more predictions and fight analysis @Blakehoc

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Radam G says:

If there is a fight II, Da Manny will bumrun that Tom -- I mean Tim -- Bradley and put him to sleep. Holla!

GANZ says:

What he said.....Quick KO, under 5

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Frank Z says:

you guys need to stop predicting quick KOs by pacquiao.