

## Merchant The Fan Would Like To See Pacquiao Fight Brandon Rios Next

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 18 July 2012 20:01

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Yes, there is one fight that makes more sense than others, but since it seems like we are more than likely to see the Manny Pacquiao-Floyd Mayweather fight in Neveruary, the question begs: Who should Pacman fight next?

Promoter Bob Arum is hashing that out as we speak. But I weighed in with boxing's poet laureate, Larry Merchant of HBO, and asked him, speaking as a fan, who he would like

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Pacquiao to fight next.

"Someone like Brandon Rios," said Merchant, who next shows up on HBO air Sept. 8, for the Andre Ward-Chad Dawson scrap. "At 143 or so. Someone like that. Tough, aggressive, a go-for-it fighter, who makes the fight." Merchant noted that of course the ability to help conjure an audience is a factor and that he isn't sure if Rios passes that test, like a Juan Manuel Marquez does. (Marquez' third scrap with Pacman did 1.4 million buys, while Timothy Bradley, who it could be argued like Rios doesn't have an immense fanclub, mustered 900,000 PPV buys in his tango with Pacquiao.)

What about Timothy Bradley? Would Merchant not like to see "The Decision" clarified? Help reduce the swelling from that recent black eye for boxing?

No, it turns out. "My problem with a rematch is if the Bradley rematch, which I think can happen anytime, is the next one, it fans the conspiratorialists, who will say (a dubious decision was rendered to encourage drama and impetus for an immediate rematch)."

Merchant told me that he has suggested to promoter Bob Arum that he have a card topped by Pacquiao vs. Brandon Rios, with Bradley fighting fan-friendly banger Mike Alvarado underneath. "After that, if Pacquiao and Bradley won, then a rematch would be OK," he said. "But to make that rematch after such a bad decision, that leaves a bad odor."

To sum it up, this is how Merchant views rematches, by and large. "A rematch is warranted when the first one was a terrific fight, and people say, 'I want to see that again.' There's not a call for a rematch to deal with a bad decision."

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### **Radam G says:**

NO! I don't LIKE it. Da Manny does not need to jump on the bandwagon of fighting the smaller man. Leave that for the redheaded hype Canelo, Vicious Victor and Money May. Da Manny fights and whup da big arses of the sport. Holla!

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### **deepwater says:**

I think it would be a nice gift for pacman. Rios only fights one way ,straight ahead.rios is tough but would be stopped early. PAC deserves to give us a quick devastating ko since he got robbed lol

### **ali says:**

A smaller Margacheato SMH!!!!!!

### **brownsugar says:**

Ditto Ali.

### **Matthew says:**

I like the idea, but I doubt it will happen. Rios hasn't done anything at 140 yet, let alone 147, and we know Pacquiao isn't going below welterweight. I think it would be an exciting fight while it lasted, but Pacquiao would bust him up or kayo him in the middle rounds. As for a rematch with Bradley, I don't really care to see it. The vast majority of knowledgeable boxing people know who really won the first time around, regardless of what the judges said.

### **Radam G says:**

BTW, Matt. There is no reason that Rios should do anything at 140lbs even more than Homicide Hank Armstrong, Iron of Fist Roberto Duran and Sugar Shane Mosley skipped that division and didn't give it a second thought.

There is a littered trail of fighters hopping from lightweight and going straight up to the glorious welterweight division, which from the beginning of gloved-up pugilism has been a magnet for the BEST squaring off and getting those pockets deep.

The only SUPER, SUPER money-making bout at 140lbs was between HawkTIME Aaron Pryor and Alexis Arguello. And 75 percent of elite-on-the-top fighters, with an iota of a brain, are prizefighters, not pridefighters. Holla!

### **MisterLee says:**

Frankly, I think Rios is bigger than Pacquiao, even on fight night as a lightweight. He fights around 160's on fight night as a lightweight. Think at 143 or 145 where he'd be? Like 170ish. He'd be like the Chavez of welter. However, Ali is right, ti'll be another marg fight, tho Rios has crisper punches (when he's on than Marg) and straighter punches, and slightly better defense. Def. not the best fight to be made. If acosta can hurt Rios, think what Pac can do. Also, Pac's aren't what they once were, nor his stamina, so Pac will take some shots too, so all for a non mega fight. I'd like to see Pac cash out on some very top notch fights or prime fights like agst someone up and coming or a skilled veteran like Floyd, Cotto, etc. Holler!

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### **Radam G says:**

Size the night of the bout doesn't matter. Size ain't yet. Punch taking is what matters and if that person has been fighting at that division, and is use to taking the punches in that division. The Filipino Flash goes up to a 145 pounds, but he cannot take the pressure of punches of a pugilist that big because he has not been fighting in that class. It is about getting adjusted. And some people never can get there, that is why they state at the smaller division. [They can't take the punches of the bigger boys even though they blow up to their weight division.]

The "Old Mongoose" Archie Moore walked around being bigger than more heavyweights of his era and he fought the light heavyweight of his division being a heavyweight after weight ins four to six hours before the bout back then, but when he went up to the division to fight 'em in the heavyweight division, he got KTFO, because he was not use to talking the punches of heavyweights. [Rios is not use to taking a Pac-punch or the punch of an welterweight.]

Lightheavyweight King Bob Foster was the same. He'd balloon up, but he got KTFO by heavyweight champions Ernie Terrell, the late, great "Smokin' Joe Frazier and "GOAT" Muhammad Ali.

### **SouthPaul says:**

I double dare Rios to step up. Not like he can't gain the weight. Been killing himself to bully smaller men, homey needs to get hiss \*\*\* in the right division. PAC would wreck 'em! Do it, motor mouth, step up!!!!!!

### **MisterLee says:**

You know, the Rios Ortiz fight would be interesting about now!

### **Matthew says:**

Radam, let's not forget the St. Patrick's Day showdown between Julio Cesar Chavez and Meldrick Taylor. That fight had close to, if not equal, the anticipation level of Pryor-Arguello and lived up to the billing.

Yes, there are lots of great older fighters who hopscotched between lightweight and welterweight. However, most of those guys were far more active and had fought much better opposition than Rios. In the eyes of most who saw it (except, unfortunately, for the judges), Rios had his butt handed to him in his last fight. I think he needs a quality win at 140 (and soon) to erase the stigma of that performance before he can call himself ready for the likes of Pacquiao.

### **Radam G says:**

@Matt, YUP! That was the fight of the year winner back there in 1990. I'll never forget that one. It was awesome. Holla!

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### **puncher says:**

I think that Pac Man should go after Cotto again. Yes...we all know that Pac-Man put him away, but Cotto had some great moments (Pac-Man got his ear almost torn off) and with his showing against Mayweather this should be a good scrap. We all know that with Cotto you will always get a good fight...plus it gives him a chance to revenge his loss.