

RINGSIDE REPORT Mayweather-Canelo Tour Hits Houston

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Tuesday, 02 July 2013 13:48



Fans in Houston started gathering together at 5 o'clock in the morning on Monday to secure a view of boxing superstars Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Saul "Canelo" Alvarez as the two descended from on high to Minute Maid Park, home of the Houston Astros, for a press conference slated for 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

Golden Boy Promotions grabbed a big venue. Minute Maid can hold a capacity crowd of 49,950

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souls, but Richard Schaefer told the media he only reserved a space big enough to hold the same number of folks who showed up back in 2007 to see Mayweather and opponent Oscar De La Hoya come through town on a similar tour.

It was a huge mistake.

The line of fans hoping to file into the comparatively tiny space reserved for them was absolutely massive. It wrapped around the gargantuan baseball park all the way to the direct opposite side of the structure well before the doors were scheduled to open. There was absolutely no way all of them were going to be able to attend, so many of those who didn't get into the room lined the glass planes surrounding it like sad little fish hoping for a morsel.

This fight is going to be huge.

Canelo Alvarez was first to arrive. He made his way up to the private media room for one-on-one interviews with the press. The media attention the undefeated junior middleweight titlist received dwarfed any I'd ever seen before in a town that's served frequent host of top shelf boxing stars like Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., Erik Morales and Nonito Donaire.

Alvarez answered questions in Spanish when posed to him as such, and was translated by Golden Boy matchmaker Eric Gomez when English was thrown his way. Through it all, Alvarez appeared calm, comfortable and confident. It was hard to believe he's just 22 years of age.

Alvarez talked to TSS about the 152 pound catchweight.

"That's what was negotiated...obviously I accepted. I was willing to go down two pounds, and I think I'm going to be fine," Canelo told TSS. "I think I'm actually going to be a lot faster in the ring being a little lighter."

Alvarez confirmed it was the Mayweather camp who requested the two pound reduction in

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weight from the junior middleweight limit of 154 pounds.

“All I can tell you is that I fight at 154,” he smirked. “Why would I ask for it?”

Mayweather skipped the prefight media gathering to make a fashionably late entrance. Fans cheered and jeered for the world’s top boxing star as if he were a polarizing political figure. Chants of his opponent’s name were deafening at times, though Mayweather did lead a group of his followers in attendance to The Money Team’s rhythmic call of “Hard work, Dedication” to help turn the tide.

The fighters appear to be similar in height and weight through the video lens, but standing close to each offered a different perspective. Mayweather is a true welterweight, meaning he appears to walk around very close to what he typically weighs in on fight night. Alvarez, meanwhile, was thickly muscular and appears not long for the junior middleweight division he now competes in. He’s the bigger man, no doubt.

After the two men did their obligatory faceoff for the cameras, and after each promotional entity had their say, both men read their lines for the gathered throng of onlookers.

“Fans can’t fight for you,” Mayweather said to the decisively pro-Alvarez crowd.

“It’s my time now,” said Alvarez to his gushing admirers.

After the proceedings, Alvarez made his way around to sign autographs and take pictures with the lucky fans that had squirmed their way to the surrounding media gates. He’s a hero to them already, it seems.

Meanwhile, Mayweather came over to talk about the fight with media television crews. He wore an affable smile and seemed as good natured as ever. Having seen him now on a few different occasions, it appears he genuinely enjoys all the attention he receives for being the best fighter

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in the sport of boxing today, from both fans and media.

“This happens every day,” said Mayweather with a smile. “I can’t go to the mall. I can’t go to the movies. I would like to, but like I said before, without the media, the writers....without them, I wouldn’t be where I’m at, so I’m happy.”

Some of the credentialed media must have taken that as a sign, because soon after, he was signing autographs for not just those behind the gates, but those inside as well.

He truly is a star.

Floyd Mayweather versus Canelo Alvarez is the hottest fight of 2013 and for good reason. The stars have aligned to bring the two top 154-pound boxers in the sport into the ring together at the exactly right time. One (Mayweather) is the best and biggest star in the sport. The other (Canelo) is the brightest young celebrity boxer on the planet. It can’t help but be the biggest fight of the year.

Still, despite attending the largest boxing media event the city of Houston has ever seen, there is a bit of somberness which filled my soul afterwards. No, it wasn’t because I’m not going to attend the fight live in person. And it’s not because I believe it’s going to be a boring or one-sided fight either.

The truth of the matter is that this gigantic, multi-city press tour circus, the largest one imaginable really, only reminded me of something we fight fans will never get to see.

You see, no matter how big Mayweather-Canelo is or how great a fight it is this coming September, it will serve only as a poor reflection of the biggest and best fight this era could’ve possibly made, but didn’t.

And so leaving the venue late in the afternoon, I am left with only one feeling really:

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Mayweather-Canelo is huge; Mayweather-Pacquiao would've been...

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Carmine Cas says:

It's sad I know, both sides are to blame for the fight not happening

Radam G says:

Now all a sudden Money May is taller than Canelo in Houston. Wow! I luv boksing promoting. Holla!