

Add Mikey Garcia To The List Of Future Must See Fighters

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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Yes, Bernard Hopkins and Floyd Mayweather won't be around much longer. Hopkins will be 49 in two months and Mayweather will be 37 in three months. Yes, Bernard and Floyd have two of the highest boxing IQs in fistic history and are clearly the two most cerebral fighters of their era. However, their careers are going to come to a close soon and boxing will need to replenish itself with new stars. Well, let your heart not be troubled because we've already seen the emergence of the best super-middleweight in the world, Andre Ward 26-0 (14) and arguable the best middleweight in the world, Gennady Golovkin 28-0 (25), along with rising junior welterweight/welterweight star Adrien Broner 24-0 (19).

Ward, Broner and Golovkin have been on the radar for a little while. If their management teams are smart and the boxing establishment doesn't interfere with the hope of making a super fight, Ward and Golovkin will be kept away from each other. Ward has cleaned out the super-middleweight division and should move up and onto the light heavyweight division where there are a few stern tests for him, the likes of Bernard Hopkins 54-6-2 (32), Adonis Stevenson 22-1 (19) and Sergey Kovalev 22-0-1 (20).

As for Golovkin, there's still the recognized middleweight champ Sergio Martinez 51-2-2 (28) for him to fight and clear things up regarding the middleweights.

And for Broner, there's an abundance of big fights for him to partake in between 140/147.

This is where a fourth name must be injected into the mix regarding boxing's new superstars of tomorrow, and his name is Mikey Garcia 33-0 (28). (*Garcia landing above on Martinez in Chris Farina-Top Rank photo*). Garcia is the newly crowned WBO super-featherweight title holder who looked sensational this past weekend stopping former title holder Rocky Martinez 27-2-2 (16) in eight rounds with one of the best liver

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shots you'll ever see a fighter land. I haven't seen anyone get hit harder in some time. It was a great, great punch. Mikey's really good and he's going to get better. He is a technically nearly flawless fighter, beautifully trained. He's a little like Donald Curry in that sense--he does everything by the book. I'd put him equal to Mayweather in terms of natural talent.

Here's what impressed me most about the finishing shot versus Martinez: first, that he saw that small window of opportunity to land it--that Martinez's liver was exposed. Second, that he placed the punch calmly, but perfectly, and third, that he knew how to throw a perfect left hook to the liver, three things that all got factored in within a split second. That's good boxing IQ at work. Seeing it from the outside, it might not look like anything special, but you have to know how hard it is to put those things together so perfectly.

Garcia is about as proficient as any fighter we've seen in a long time. He doesn't waste a single punch and seldom misses when he cuts loose. Even when he does miss, it's by millimeters, not inches. His punch anticipation is unbelievable and everything he throws is with meaning. He covers his center beautifully and forces his opponent to pick a side to which he then proceeds to disrupt and hit them in between exchanges. His balance is terrific and he hits with power because he usually has his points of power in line when he connects.

His boxing fundamentals and basics are textbook without being robotic and he has a very efficient corner. Mikey is very quick to implement what his brother tells him. Watching him fight it looks like he's not the busiest guy you'll ever see, but that's due to him biding his time and waiting for the right opening for him to get off cleanly. It's clear to see that he's a real thinking fighter. Even when he got caught and dropped by a Martinez right in the second round, which wasn't a fluke knockdown, he was very cool and collected as he took the mandatory eight count. He realized at that point he was giving Martinez a little too much space and starting in the third round he began to cut the distance and forced Martinez to engage more on his terms instead of when he wanted to.

Based on the early returns, Mikey Garcia is must see from this point forward. Technically, he's already better than Golovkin and soon may be on the heels of Ward. Granted, just because he's great technically, punches hard and is nearly faultless from a fundamental vantage point, that doesn't guarantee that he'll evolve into a great fighter. Then again it cannot be said with impunity that Ward, Golovkin, or Broner are great either, but what we've seen looks very encouraging. Ward, Broner, Golovkin and now Mikey Garcia look every bit as good as Hopkins and Mayweather did at the same stage of their careers.

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brownsugar says:

Brilliant article Flo-Lo.
You speaketh the truth.

ultimoshogun says:

He was on my must see list a few fights back.

Hop says:

[QUOTE=ultimoshogun;39901]He was on my must see list a few fights back.[/QUOTE]

Mine too, and ironically he dropped down a notch or two for me (I'm still interested, though).