

## TSS Fighter of the Year Award Goes To....Floyd Mayweather

Written by Michael Woods

Tuesday, 31 December 2013 13:03

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He is the best boxer on the planet, we can all agree, so that gives Floyd Mayweather a leg up when we start sifting thru nominees for TSS Fighter of the Year. But choosing F.O.Y. means different things to different folks, so I suppose it makes much sense if the criteria that I use to do the choosing is laid out.

First, there is no rule in my nonexistent rule book, the contents of which can morph from day to day lol, which says the F.O.Y. has to be a superlative boxer. Traditionally, that is the case, of course, but mere skills aren't the be all end all to attaining this coveted award.

Second, I think we can all agree that the Fighter of the Year has to have done something quite special in the past year to get the award. Oftentimes, because the special athletes we cover do marvelous things on a regular basis, it helps a nominee's cause if he or she does more than one stellar thing. Call that a tie breaker, of sorts.

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Beyond that, in choosing my F.O.Y., I incorporated some criteria that isn't, frankly, always present when I mull this designation.

My 2013 TSS Fighter of the Year is Floyd Mayweather, and let me tell you why.

Foremost, the man fought twice and made two high-level boxers look something between average and amateurish on those nights. Robert Guerrero is a B plus boxer who couldn't win even a portion of the majority of the 12 rounds the two men engaged in on May 4, 2012 in Las Vegas. This was no small feat, not for a 36-year-old man who'd fought last over a year ago, and who many thought might have left something in the jail cell he sat in for a couple months after getting popped on a domestic charge. Mayweather's work came against a man who was a 5-to-1 underdog but was coming in with some solid momentum after roughing up Andre Berto in his last bout. I gave Floyd extra credit during the nomination process for looking so damned sharp, so at or near his peak at this advanced age, and for upping his game, adapting by using his legs more than he had in recent bouts.

OK, so that win alone wouldn't be enough to award Floyd F.O.Y., right? How about another win, again on a Golden Boy card produced by Showtime, against a young gun with a poundage and strength advantage coming into the bout? How about a win that some smart folks said wouldn't occur, because finally Mayweather would be in with a resolute pressure fighter who would summon the strength of past Mexican fight icons and be the first to force Floyd to taste from the losers' chalice? Remember, some folks thought the age difference would finally catch up to Floyd, that at 36, he'd show his age against the 23-year-old, and the 42-0-1 Canelo would score a win that would put him right there with Julio Cesar Chavez Sr. among the gods of boxing in Mexico.

Folks taking issue with my choice might well point to Mayweathers' insistence that Canelo weigh no more than 152 pounds at the weigh-in for the "super welterweight" title, and indeed, I did deduct a half point off my ballot for that. Floyd's need to gain that sort of edge seems built-in to his personality and, frankly, diminishes his legacy slightly. Back to legacies in a bit, friends...

I'm not one to enter money into the mix when the balloting process is in flow. I don't really care all that much that Floyd was set to earn a base of \$41.5 million to fight Canelo, a record, but that might matter to some folks on the fence when they are deciding to agree or disagree with my F.O.Y. choice. After all, we do attach immense import to money, and how much or little of it people make, but I think that is to our societal detriment, overall. A figure that does factor in to

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my pick is the live gate of \$20 million at the MGM Grand, a record which surpassed the \$18.4 million for the 2007 Floyd-Oscar fight. The reason I focus on the gate is because it speaks to the allure of the bout, and the degree to which it resonated outside of our boxing bubble. Yep, it resonated all right.

People who still think Mike Tyson is the heavyweight champion were aware of the bout, some of them, and since our sport does indeed battle a perception problem of being a mere "niche" sport, I do appreciate it when a fight or fighter rises above the bubble, and inserts his or herself into a wider consciousness. With the buildup to the Canelo fight, and his once again superlative ring generalship against the Mexican, Floyd did indeed do that. Once again, Mayweather made a B plus boxer look at times like a journeyman level talent, with a mix of potshotting, smart movement, and finely-tuned reflexes which prove that his radar is still the best in the business. Even a duncecap like CJ Ross couldn't dampen the regard for the showing, which cemented the choice I made for Fighter of the Year.

The performance cemented it, and my choice was buffeted by Mayweathers' appearances on such mainstream programs as "The Colbert Report" and the Kelly Ripa/Mike Strahan show before and after the triumph. That is a credit to his support staff, his PR crew, but believe me when I tell you, bookers don't allow any guest to be forced down their throat, so Floyd's participation in such programs speaks loudly to the power of his persona.

Slight apologies go to runner up Timothy Bradley, who gave us more than our money's worth in wins against Ruslan Provodnikov, in which he battled through an early concussion to win a tight decision, and Juan Manuel Marquez, in a bout which showed that he belongs, no debate allowed, in the pound for pound top 5 mix. In another year, Bradley would have had my vote, and he deserves oodles of credit and acclaim for what he gave the sport and the fans this year.

Looking ahead, I have a suggestion for "Money" on how he can go into 2014 as my favorite to again snag TSS Fighter of the Year honors and remove a potentially immense asterisk from his name in future decades. He can junk, once in for all, the explanations why he doesn't want to give the fans the bout they want, against Manny Pacquiao. No more talk of take the test, or purse splits, or demands for Pacquiao to sever ties with longtime promoter Bob Arum, who Mayweather apparently blames for not doing enough to build Floyd into a PPV attraction in the mid 2000s. Floyd could and should be a leader, a role model, and be that better man who is able to put aside real or perceived grievances, and give the fans what they want. If he doesn't do so, in his second bout of 2014, then it makes it that much harder for promoter Golden Boy and cabler Showtime to use their "best fighting the best" line.

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Congrats, Floyd, for your superb 2013; here's hoping you surpass that in 2014, with more radiant in-ring work against foes that can test your other-worldly prowess, including the humble Congressman from the Phillipines, Manny Pacquiao. Happy New Year to you, and to all fight fans, and especially the faithful readers of TSS. Be well, all.

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### **Radam G says:**

Mad PROPS to Money May! He is an arch-grandmaster of every iota of the tricks of the trade's optical illusions.

How many kick-@\$\$ greats can anyone name that fought above bums and is selected as FOTY by some of the brightest people in and around da game?

WOW! Mark my words! In 2014, all we see how pathetically weak that the two fighters who danced with Money is. Then to save face, many will say that Money May RUINED "The Cali [humbug] Ghost and young Canelo. These imposters/perpetrators of boxing frauds will be further EXPOSED in 2014 USA mainland time.

BTW, 36 is not OLD in boxing anymore. We just simply know the true-down-to-the-earth-core ages of 90-percent of boxers born in so-called developed countries nowadays.

Fighters use to have to lie about their ages for promotion purposes because of young-leaning societies. Now that the population of the Western World is aging, along with positive verification of ages, tons of boxers will still be doing "da d@mn thang" at the so-called advanced ages of 35 to 55, as they always have, i.e., the late, great Archie "Old Mongoose" Moore, just to name one.

And remember, over a 100 years ago, "Unforgivable Blackness" Jack Johnson didn't win the world heavyweight title until he was 30-years old. And he only lost it at 38-years because the racists that were paid he nicely to take a dive and a lighter sentence for a crime of lady loving outta his group.

The white people of those days mock him and his winning of the title at the then thought of advance age of 30 by saying (and believing) that "Colored people age later because like c\*\*ns" -- "they live a long time." Plus some other jive nonsensical beliefs that this forum won't allow me to post. And I would not want post that sick-arse, deadbeat racism of long-ago yesteryears. Holla!

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### **amayseng says:**

I don't get it. Floyd beat a ghost who was up two weight classes above his best weight.

Then he fights canelo at a catch weight, a man who the world has seen for over two years struggle with making 154 as his detriment is terrible conditioning for a world champion, and floyd beats him easily.

How was floyd beating those two superior to what Hopkins did? Or Kovalev, or Stevenson or the Russian Rocky, who really beat Bradley then won a world title ?

what do i know.

### **brownsugar says:**

Excellent choice. Floyd operates on the cutting edge of everything he does... Not only inside the ring against fighters garnishing praise mediawide... But also outside the ring where Floyd displays the moxy of an international power broker.

I hope he can continue to shock and amaze fight fans in 2014 like he did in 2013... Personally I can't reconcile my non- acceptance of a fight with Amir Khan at premium prices. Khan is actually good enough to bring an interesting and challenging fight to Mayweather.... Only problem is.... Floyd is expected to win ... Who knows, maybe the British will buy it.

### **SouthPawFlo says:**

Easy Choice....

Floyd is just better than everyone else, and he's clearly the biggest star in be sport.... He lands at a higher percentage than everyone & and defends better than everyone....

Good year for GGG, Bradley, Stevenson, Danny G, & some others but Mayweather is on another level.....

### **The Shadow says:**

I can certainly understand Editor Mike's logic.

In a year where he broke the all-time revenue record while also signing the biggest deal in sports history, Floyd accomplished a helluva lot outside the ring compounded with his impressive showing inside it.

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Signing this monumental deal, signaling and spearheading a commitment from powerhouse CBS to invest heavily in boxing, has helped make 2013 the best year in boxing in recent memory IN SPITE of a Cold War.

All things considered, I can certainly appreciate that argument.

Floyd Mayweather, 2013 Fighter of the Year.

### **amayseng says:**

I think he is the best fighter on the planet today, but that does not mean he faced the best opposition to his disposal to win the award for best fighter this year, especially when others have faced better opposition and made greater strides. Floyd did what he was expected to do against two guys who didnt bring about a decent challenge. he should be lb4lb number one, but didnt earn the fighter of the year.

### **the Roast says:**

Happy New Year my boxing brothers. Floyd is not a bad choice for FOTY. I might have leaned toward Rigo based on beating tougher opponants Donaire and Agbeko. As long as it wasn't Snooze Hopkins. Stevenson had a better year than Bernard beating Cloud to a bloody mess, first time Cloud was ever stopped, and 1st round stoppage of Chad Dawson.

### **Bernie Campbell says:**

A well kept secret is that Floyd jr, has a vast collection of charley pride material at home! His collection is unmatched! Much Inspiration is gained! Behind that locked door Aint that right! huh!

### **Bernie Campbell says:**

Sorry Floyd, I cant see that good! Im thinking of Charley Rich! Behind that closed door!!! hey!

### **The Shadow says:**

Bernie, are you still a writer? Let me see one of your articles!

### **Carmine Cas says:**

"Mad PROPS to Money May! He is an arch-grandmaster of every iota of the tricks of the trade's optical illusions.

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[humbug] Ghost and young Canelo. These imposters/perpetrators of boxing frauds will be further EXPOSED in 2014 USA mainland time."

T'is very true, Mayweather as mastered the art of not only promoting his brand but also deceiving the masses in order to dub his opponent as credible. Guerrero looked like he drank a 24 pack to reach 47. He lost all his speed and his footwork looked subpar, at lightweight he was much more versatile and fleet footed. At 135 he was an awkward lefty with quickness and boxing ability but at 147 he has been reduced to straight forward slower fighter And Canelo just wasn't ready, and I don't think he'll ever be for Mayweather.

If you look at this from an overall general perspective; popularity, financial success, and opponents Mayweather nails two of the three. Yet Money is still the best in the game, but the fact that he's the face of boxing also puts in the running for FOTY.

Other notables are Danny G (who I was very impressed by after the Machine fight) GGG, Stevenson, Rigo, and Bradley

### **gibola says:**

PBF had a good year, he's the best fighter on the planet. Adonis Stevenson is not the best fighter on the planet and he probably won't be champion in a year's time. However, the FOTY for 2013 was Adonis Stevenson by a country mile. To go from fringe supermiddle contender to where he is now in the style he did it? It's not even close.

### **The\_King\_AJ says:**

[QUOTE=Carmin Cas;41939]

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This, completely.

Guerrero did not look so good at 147lbs and generally I wasn't very impressed with Mayweather's performance against this version of Guerrero either. I'm not even a fan of Guerrero.

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The Canelo fight is a good legacy win because he was a legit 154lb champion with talent. However, virtually no one saw Canelo winning going into the fight anyway. Canelo looked lost so Floyd deserves his props for making Canelo look like that.

He sure deserves props for it being a 2.2m PPV but to me this has a little impact when it comes to my criteria.

I feel Rigondeaux made his opponents look far worse. Donaire is better than Guerrero AND Canelo. Donaire is a future Hall of Famer who was coming off being fighter of the year, at 122lbs too. Rigondeaux is a small 122lber who rehydrated only to 124lbs on fight night, whereas Donaire was probably close to 140lbs the notorious big weight cutter.

We witnessed sheer and utter domination. Rigondeaux got knocked down but got back up straight away. You have to look at the position Rigondeaux was in when Donaire knocked him down and ask yourself, what 122lber would stay up against a huge guy in Donaire who happens to be a good puncher?

Joseph Agbeko is a very good opponent too. He has wins over Darchinyan, Sydorenko (the fight was a robbery that Agbeko didn't deserve to lose), Perez and only really lost to a top, top fighter in Abner Mares. Rigondeaux won every single round. 'You can't hit what your eyes can't see' applied as well as 'You can't hit what your eyes doesn't want to see'. Agbeko did not want any part of Rigondeaux once he felt Rigondeaux's power. It's a sad shame as Rigondeaux was unfairly given the blame for this as I mentioned in a previous post. Agbeko is a high output fighter with good power..on paper it sounded like it would make for an interesting matchup although Rigondeaux was always the favourite.

Rigondeaux is my fighter of the year. Kovalev and Stevenson have been making good movements at LHW.

Timothy Bradley shouldn't have had to go through what he went through against Ruslan Provodnikov. Bradley definitely gained a fan in me that night but you can't reward going life and death with a B grade fighter which essentially what the fight came down to, when you're a better fighter than that.

### **The Shadow says:**

You're right, AJ! Donaire ballooned up to around 143.

You nailed it on Rigo, he gets the blame from the hype machine.

A guy like ESPN's Dan Rafael should be ashamed of himself. In his weekly chat, someone named him Rigondull, Rafael went with it and started using the term and next thing you know, Jim Lampley is on his show calling him Rigondull.

Jim Lampley is just hyper-intelligent playboy who likes to see some good fights.

That kinda stuff hurts Rigo's earning power because fans now eat it up and the narrative



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becomes a negative one; a narrative of Rigo's "boring style" as opposed to demonstrating complete mastery of the ring to such a degree that top-notch, champion fighters become afraid to throw a punch in a boxing ring.

Either match him better or shut the hell up. When I watch a sporting event, the allure lies in who will win and who's the best.

That's the essence of competition and sports, right??

Don't give me that that "entertainment" over winning bullsh\*t.

If you want winning taking a backseat to entertainment, watch WWE! Watch Shawn Michaels lose to the Undertaker in a five-star match. You will never be disappointed!

Guys who report on these fights and knock a guy for not risking it all when he's up 11-0 already -- especially when the impact of a loss is higher than in any sport! -- should not be allowed to cover a professional sporting event. Ever.

This is an athletic event. Not theater.

Go to the Wrestling Observer and review matches with a star-rating criteria or something.

ARRRGHHHH!!! I'm starting to get angry! LOL

### **Carmine Cas says:**

An astute point indeed AJ! And yeah Shadow HBO's commentators are not the most disinterested. Bradley def deserves more props