

Should Adrien Broner Stay at Welterweight?

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Saturday, 11 January 2014 09:35



Adrien Broner (27-1, 22 KOs) announced via Twitter this week that he wants an immediate rematch with Marcos Maidana (35-3, 31 KOs). Broner suffered the first loss of his career against the rugged Argentine slugger on December 14, 2013 at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas.

“...Ya’ll [are about] to see me back in the ring in some weeks,” Broner tweeted. “And I ain’t fighting nobody until I fight [Maidana] again...I’m a warrior.”

Broner was dismissive of Maidana before facing him. He ridiculed the fighter as someone who did not belong inside the same ring as Broner, saying Maidana was basically a steppingstone who would be "easy money." Broner even said he would "flatline" Maidana.

But Broner’s tune has now changed.

“I’ll give props when it’s due and [Maidana] out hustled me that night, but this rematch with be different,” Broner tweeted.

It was Broner’s second fight at welterweight since jumping up to the 147-pound division from lightweight. Broner’s first foray at welterweight was a split decision win over Paulie Malignaggi last June. While Broner appeared to have advantages over Malignaggi in both speed and power, Malignaggi was able to peck away at him through all 12 rounds, to the point that many at ringside believed he actually deserved the nod over Broner.

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And against Maidana, Broner was simply outslugged. Maidana put Broner down to the canvas in Rounds 2 and 8, hurt him numerous times and outworked Broner in the late rounds to take home a clear victory.

One has to wonder whether Broner, 24, just moved up in weight too high, too soon. I posed that very question to renowned boxing trainer Ronnie Shields recently at his gym just outside of Houston.

“If I was in his corner,” said Shields. “I’d tell him, look, you have to be smart about this. Another loss would hurt you really bad. Take a couple other fights.”

Shields said he’d advise Broner to move down to 140 pounds for at least a year or two.

“Because to me, he’s not strong enough to be a welterweight right now. He’s a good fighter. You can’t take that away from him. But he’s not strong enough at that weight, and the guys at the weight are really, really strong.”

Shields is one of the smartest guys in the sport today. In an age when far too many in boxing earn the title of trainer simply by throwing a towel over their shoulder, Shields is a throwback to another era. He’s the real deal.

“Just think. If he’d have beaten Maidana, the next fight would probably have been Keith Thurman. He’s way too big for [Broner], way too strong for him.”

He’s right. Isn’t he? Having sat ringside for Thurman’s last two fights, I can tell you the thud of his powerful punches is a sonic boom compared to the punches Broner and Maidana land. Jumping into the ring too soon with a guy like Thurman would be bad news for Broner.

Still, Shields said he knows what Broner is thinking in wanting to jump right back into the ring at 147 against Maidana.

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“You have to understand that Broner is a fighter. That’s what a fighter wants to do. He wants to avenge his loss.”

But Shields said in order to be successful in the sport of boxing a fighter and his team have to think long-term. Boxing is not a sprint; it’s a marathon.

“This is a career you’re talking about, and boxing is a business...so [Broner should] let these guys beat themselves up a little bit. Maybe go down to 140 pounds, win that belt there, you know, unify that belt, then in a year or two go back up to 147 pounds. Those guys are still there. They’re not going anywhere.”

There are many good fights for Broner at junior welterweight, including the division’s premier talent, undefeated lineal champion Danny Garcia. Shields told me he absolutely loves that fight.

“He can compete with Danny Garcia. Danny Garcia is a really good fighter. It’d be a great fight.”

Shields said Broner’s natural size fits in nicely at 140, but not 147. He believes Broner would be wise to recognize that, and make the move down instead of facing Maidana again.

“That’s the best option.”

Shields knows how to guide careers. He’s trained some of the very best fighters in the world, including legendary champions Pernell Whitaker and Evander Holyfield. Presently, Shields’ marquee talent is oft-avoided junior middleweight Erislandy Lara. He also trains undefeated prospects Jermell and Jermall Charlo as well as middleweight contender Bryan Vera. Broner would be wise to heed his advice.

“He’s still a small guy. He’s got no height on him, and he doesn’t have the power to compete

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with those guys at [147]. I mean, look, skill-wise, he can fight anybody...he can fight anyone because of his skill. But be a smart guy...take a step back. There's no shame in it."

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amayseng says:

Can he make 140?

At WW he gets destroyed by the top guys. I say stay at WW so i can see him beat up a few more times.

Glass Joe says:

[QUOTE=amayseng;42308]Can he make 140?

At WW he gets destroyed by the top guys. I say stay at WW so i can see him beat up a few more times.[/QUOTE]

Absolutely!

SouthPawFlo says:

He shouldn't have skipped 140 in the first place, but that's another story....

Go back to 140, and win about 4-5 fights down there, fight Garcia to Unify the titles and then move back up....

There are some good names at 140, and he can have big fights there.....

Broner Vs Matthyse will definitely be a big draw!

The Shadow says:

The public/boxing fans are funny. Motherfuckers can't seem to figure out if they're shrewd managers, bloodthirsty fans or promoters.

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Then he actually gets beat in a tough match and that same public wants to advise him to go back down.

Now he's stupid because he's risking his career by rematching Maidana at 147.

Had he won, people would've said he should "challenge himself" by going to 154.

He can't do anything right, can he?

At some point you start to realize the public's frustration with a fighter isn't rooted in his choices but in the perception.

There's money in comeuppance.

If I was a fighter, I'd be the biggest heel in the fucking world and totally manipulate the public.

This is the rough, and perhaps sad, truth of boxing: a fan ain't worth sh*t if he ain't coming out of his pocket.

The Shadow says:

A few gems and tidbits:

[B]And as an aside,[/B] people say Floyd won't be a draw without his "0" are grossly wrong. Completely wrong. He'll be even bigger.

All a loss would do is make people love him and support him in the future. Trust me. That a loss would kill his drawer is nothing but uninformed nonsense from Youtube posters and marketing neophytes.

(I have some pretty remarkable quantitative and qualitative data to unequivocally support this.)

Vinnie Mac figured this out a loooooooooooooong time ago.

His drawing power won't take a serious hit until he takes at least two or three losses in a row.

[B]Speaking of Vinnie Mac[/B], the announcement of the WWE Network is sending shockwaves through the industry.

I've spoken in the past of these PPV giants finding a way to distribute without satellite. WWE, the innovators of PPV, just found a way to cut them out -- something every PPV content provider has been dying to do FOREVER.

Without getting into too much detail. Instead of using the somewhat outdated cable model to

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distribute PPVs, they're using a diverse assortment of digital platforms to deliver HD telecasts to the audience.

(UFC is working diligently towards that, too. They launched a service. Even Top Rank even bought a lotto coupon to test it via PC but they don't have the infrastructure to do it.)

Keep in mind, you guys see all these outlandish figures -- \$150m PPV revenue, \$136m, all humbug. Like an angry ex-wife, distribution takes HALF! -- and think the fighters and promoters just get so rich. NO. The real breadwinners are cable and satellite.

[B]For that reason,[/B] I wouldn't be shocked to see a similar approach tested or implemented completely by the end of Floyd's contract.

Serious question: Would you guys pay \$9.99 a month for SHO-GBP network a la Netflix that shows nothing but boxing-related stuff, includes all past GBP PPVs, SHO, HBO - and FS1 telecasts AS WELL AS every PPV (including Floyd's) ALL IN HD at NO extra charge?

Basically, for under \$120 a year, you get every SHO PPV in HD -- Floyd, Canelo, Broner etc. -- as well as every PPV ever produced by Showtime and GBP.

I really want your opinion on this so I might pose/post this question elsewhere as well.

(Swizzy, I'm doing you a favor. Holla at ya boy.)

ultimoshogun says:

I would totally be on board if it were somehow a unified boxing channel...there's only so much Showtime and Golden Boy content to watch before you get bored. The reason It'll work for WWE is because they own the rights to all the now defunct promotions like, WCW/NWA, AWA, and World Class Wrestling...years of classic wrestling. Their library is endless.

Radam G says:

Ditto U-Shogun! Boxing was born the way it is. There is no fix. And there is always gonna be bycthing and itching. Hehehe!

Like my late, great god uncle, Musicman Tiny Tim said: "(Da game) is like a banana -- naturally crooked.... And [everybodeee and dey momma] will keep going apesh*t. Hehehe! Holla!

The Shadow says:

[QUOTE=ultimoshogun;42320]I would totally be on board if it were somehow a unified boxing channel...there's only so much Showtime and Golden Boy content to watch before you get bored. The reason It'll work for WWE is because they own the rights to all the now defunct promotions like, WCW/NWA, AWA, and World Class Wrestling...years of classic wrestling. Their library is endless.[/QUOTE]

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You're absolutely right Ultimo, that would get boring and WWE owns it all. But guess what, there's a library out there that's even bigger than the WWE's, already compiled and easily accessible.

Remember that Jimmy Jacobs collection of every significant old school fight in history that Tyson used to watch? ESPN has it and they're not monetizing it. They show maybe 15-20 of the same fights and recycle them on ESPN Classic.

SHO/GBP could license that or partner with them rather easily, just like McMahon bought WCW's trademarks, contracts and library for just \$5m because AOL/Time Warner were just looking to dump them.

As for the linear channel, SHO/GBP new events would just be the new content, ie. the PPVs plus the on-demand lineup of their collective libraries of PPVs dating back to the '90s when SHO was producing King PPVs.

That would be cool to have the Iron Mike PPVs, weigh-ins, buildup etc on demand, don't you think?

With a library of PPVs, documentaries, All Accesses, ESPN's classic fights, maybe some of the reality shows they're talking about to help build new stars, maybe even that silly About Billions show Broner is producing.

On top of the PPV's that would go for upwards of \$70 a pop through your cable provider, wouldn't fans be ecstatic about that? I think that would be awesome.

And I think the possibilities are endless. You can build new stars, monetize nostalgic fans who long for the good old days...etc. etc.

Anyway

The Shadow says:

Uh-oh! The satellite providers are already shook! This is going to revolutionize the pay-per-view model.

Look at the statement from DirecTV, who traditionally count on PPVs as a significant, an EASY, source of revenue:

"Clearly we need to quickly re-evaluate the economics and viability of their business with us, as it now appears the WWE feels they do not need their PPV distributors," DirecTV said in a statement, adding that the audience for its events "has been steadily declining, and this new low-cost competitive offering will only accelerate this trend."

Just a matter of time, my friends.

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SouthPawFlo says:

Broner should fight Amir Khan and Floyd should fight Chino, Broner needs to stay away from Punchers for a second.....

The Good Doctor says:

[QUOTE=The Shadow;42315]The public/boxing fans are funny. Motherfuckers can't seem to figure out if they're shrewd managers, bloodthirsty fans or promoters.

First he was "ducking" 140. (Right, that makes sense. What's funny is I wouldn't be shocked if some morons will start making the fallible case that he did, which will just prove my point.)

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When talking from the fans or boxing public I agree with everything you said. Fan is short for fanatic meaning that there is often an absence of logic. However from a truly informed boxing point of view some of those ideas above are true. I don't think its out of the question to say he should go down to 140. 140 has good, decent to great paying fights available (Lucas, Ruslan, maybe Zab as a warm-up). In addition, it did not look like his power did not translated to 147. I thought he had some heat, but at 135 he was throwing absolute bombs.

In addition, fighting Maidana immediately after is a very risky proposition. However the greater the risk, the greater the reward so I do not think it is necessarily a bad idea. If he wins, Broner at worst sets himself up for a big time rubber match or some money fights with Ortiz, Alexander, Porter, Guerrero, or maybe even a catchweight with Canelo. If he gets beat, he could easily drift into Andre Berto land. If he gets beat decisively, he will have a tough hill o climb to get into the spotlight again.

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All the other things you said are spot on though. Broner didn't duck 140 and challenging himself and go to 154 is dumb. I also agree with the heel part too. There is a lot of money in wearing the black hat well.

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Doc, thanks for your comments and great points.

I might have been a little unclear. I agree with you. I totally think that he should go to 140 as well. And his power doesn't really follow him up there where the big guys are.

What I meant to say was that it doesn't matter what he would do, people would still come at him. The criticism is really irrational at this point.

If he had went to 140 -- which everyone, including his detractors, seems to think is the best move for him -- people would be calling him a coward for not trying to rematch Maidana right away in a fight he clearly lost.

I saw this comment earlier today from someone about the move. I'm paraphrasing slightly but it went something like this:

"Broner is channelling his inner Gayweather. Gay got beat by Castillo, however he got a gift win and had a rematch to change that. The Ohio Idiot is going to try to do the same but get pulverized."

It makes no sense. Beneath the hate, he's really giving him props. Unbelievable.

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So yes, there are some good matches for mom at junior welter but apparently Broner is proud individual. The only way you can somewhat remove the stench of a loss -- and it mattered wildly to him, with his Floyd obsession and all -- is by destroying the guy that gave you the loss in the first place.

Kinda like Leonard and Duran. I think it's gutsy, which is what boxing fans generally say they want more of.

I also think it's quite unwise.

jzzy says:

It's pretty obvious that Broner should be at 140. He needs to cut down on the party life and keep his weight down between fights so he doesn't suffer cutting weight. One more loss and he's history.

The Good Doctor says:

[QUOTE=The Shadow;42364]Doc, thanks for your comments and great points.

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Cool. You are right. People often play both sides of the fence when being critical, especially with characters at which the vitriol level is on max. I would not be surprised that if Broner happened to come back and beat Maidana, people will still find a way to be critical of him. It is always amazing how much people get a pass on when they are liked and how overly scrutinized they are when they are not.

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Exactly! Case in point: Brandon Rios. The Slugging Warrior got popped for drugs and nobody has even criticized him, much less brought it up.

The Shadow says:

here it is [url]<http://www.boxingscene.com/fighting-words-make-break-canelo-broner--73572>

amayseng says:

Hey I will admit I enjoyed seeing Broner getting his *** kicked all over that ring. The only thing he did was

hit Chino late as fu\$\$ after the bell in the tenth. A bitch move. Just like rolling around on the mat looking

for a way out.

Broner isnt a top gun , he isnt an elite fighter. He is a skilled and entertaining fighter at times, he is flashy

like Radam said, he is flashy fast but doesnt hit through his targets so at 147 he wont have any power.

If he goes to 140 he will still get beat up by the top guys Garcia, Mattysse and the likes.

Broner will have to learn how to dig deep, what true conditioning is, lay off gaining weight and learn to

punch through his targets.....

But he wont, he will keep living his nasty life and cash out of the game early, and come back late.

Carmine Cas says:

Broner is a clown, he does not take the sport seriously. There others who are just as talented if not more, who better deserve his position. People say they give Broner props for showing heart against Maidana. By flopping, hitting after the bell, or when his opponents head went through

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the ropes? Yeah he made it to through the fight but his skirt was lifted up from a strong wind via South America. And now he's going against "Big Bro's" advice and taking the rematch, he should just pull a Ghost and fight MP to get pulverized once and for all.

amayseng says:

@CC, I concur. Pac would destroy that kid. That is what he is, a 24 year old kid who has kids.. all over the place

Bernie Campbell says:

Nevermind the insignificant Office! I believe he should be initiating seminars to implementing write in ballot promoting