

Pacquiao Looked Terrific Against Rios, But.....

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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Well, now that welterweight sensation Manny Pacquiao 55-5-2 (38) is back on the winning track again, the proverbial talk of who and what's next for him has begun. Going into his recent fight with the game and iron-chinned Brandon Rios 31-2-1 (23) there were many questions regarding whether or not Manny (*seen landing on Rios, in Chris Farina-Top Rank photo*) was as an upper-tier world class fighter. Was he still hungry and dedicated enough to put in the time and necessary preparation needed to regain his stature as a fighter that he held two years ago? Did he still have it physically as a fighter and would he be able to shake the memory of being counted out face-down in his last fight?

Going by what has been said and written since he dominated Rios enroute to an overwhelming unanimous decision victory, I've come to the conclusion that many boxing observers believe Manny answered every question that was out there lingering over him as a fighter - and he did so, in their eyes, in a very positive way. And why wouldn't they feel that way, Manny did whatever he wanted to against Rios. He was never hurt or shook once during the fight and was able to hit Brandon at will with his newly developed straight left to the body along with whatever else he threw. Pacquiao's speed looked as good as it ever did and he was mixing up his attack beautifully whether he was pushing the fight or fighting in retreat just to set Brandon up.

It was a very entertaining fight despite it being completely one sided. However, I'm not sure if we really learned anything that we didn't already know regarding Pacquiao. Let's be honest, Rios may be very tough and determined with a great chin, but he's very limited. If you stay in front of him he'll push you and maul you all over the place. He's not really a big puncher and he must have his feet set to punch and get off. It's no secret that he's gonna come straight forward and try to pin his opponent against the ropes or corner. The problem he had in Pacquiao was that Manny kept his feet moving and didn't afford Rios much to hit. And while he was giving him different angles and getting away from Brandon's telegraphed shots, he was peppering him like a buzz-saw at random.

Rios didn't have tool one to beat Pacquiao with. The reality is there was nothing he could do other than mock Manny for not being able to really hurt him or knock him out. The fight was no

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contest and it wasn't because Manny turned back the hands of time and fought again like it was 2008/2009. The reality is, Rios was the perfect fighter for Pacquiao to look great against and he did. Toughness is a great asset, but toughness without weapons and tools in the tool box will only carry a fighter so far when he's got a super talented and skilled fighter in front of him who is just as tough. Manny was sensational against Rios, but it was Rios' limitations as a fighter that really made him look spectacular.

It was good to see that Manny can still get up for a fight, but I don't think he's the fighter he was two years ago. Based on how he looked against Rios, I'm not sure I'd favor him to beat Timothy Bradley in a rematch. I'm not convinced he can go get a fighter who is not right there for him. Sure, he's still plenty quick and can pop, but I think, despite what he showed against Rios, he's much easier to hit and is vulnerable to quicker fighters who also use their feet as we saw against Bradley and Marquez.

I'm not saying Paquiao has deteriorated dramatically, but I do think he's eroded enough to the point to where he's vulnerable to speed/quickness and fighters who box and move more than trade and fight. Couple that with he's not a great puncher at 147, and I can't make even a tiny case for him to beat Mayweather. I think Mayweather's size and style would be his undoing.

I read where Freddie Roach said that Manny's speed would bother Mayweather. I think the key word there is bother. I'd be stunned if Manny and Floyd fought and Manny didn't at the very least bother Floyd, but bothering him isn't close to beating him. I think Mayweather's straight punching and physical strength would bother Pacquiao a lot more. Let's be honest, every time Pacquiao fights most observers and non Mayweather fans are looking to find something to hang their hat on to suggest Pacquiao could defeat Mayweather. Perhaps some gleaned a little hope in what they saw from Pacquiao against Rios, but I didn't. I for one hope the fight never happens, but it will.

It will because Mayweather now knows he can beat Manny, two or three years ago he only thought it. He also knows that Manny isn't going anywhere and the fight is alive as long as he wants it. Sadly, the boxing public will go crazy and hysterical over a dud fight that's almost five years past the sell-by date when it finally happens.

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Radam G says:

Bam Bam Rios admitted that he fought Da Manny not to get knocked out. He clearly said that if he would have put more pressure on to try to compete with Da Manny's speed that he "would have probably been knocked out...."

Wow! Da Manny would kayo the sorry-arse Bradley, PERIOD! The dude has benefited from hatred of Da Manny by U.S. mainlanders and a crooked Sin City woman judge who was notorious for shady scoring and an old angry judge who was upset at Da Manny for delaying the fight to warm up after watching a Pinoy-coached basketball team win the championship. And those in the loop and in the know know why. But political rightness won't let them speak the KNOWN truth. Whatever! In our shady, shifty, seedy sport, we have a lot of cowards, weasels and the likes who go along to get along.

No matter how long it is past due for Money May to fight Da Manny, Money May ain't gonna do it, because Da Manny will KAYO him! His pops and uncles know it. That is why they talk about fighting and beating Da Manny instead of being about it. The oldest art of propaganda war in the world = TOUGH JINGOISTIC TALK with no intent to ever made it a reality.

When it comes to mano-a-mano combat and war, to too many American fans, fanasties of victories have always been more powerful and satisfactory than engaging realities.

Sugar Ray Robinson ducked the "Black Murder Row," and most consider him the greatest pound-for-pound ever over Willie Pep, who ducked nobody and had a better win-lost-draw record than the Sugarman. And the Wiz Willie won a large percentage of his victories after breaking his back in a plane crash. The Sugarman -- with a well-put-together bidy -- couldn't match the boxing wizard. The most breaking the Sugarman would do is women's hearts and jaws from him whuppin' dey [sic] @sses.

Money May has clearly ducked Da Manny and lost a lawsuit against Da Manny for lies about Da Manny being on dat syet. Money May has been nailed by the crooked, weak-testing NASC a few times for being over the limit for roids and PEDs. NASC even raised the ratio allowed to better protect their boy Money May. And if it is a lie, Money May can sue T. Hauser and the other journalist who reported it.

Money May is a great undefeated fighter, who cannot beat everybodee and dey momma in his era like Finito Lopez, Slappy Joe Calzaghe and Rocky Marciano did. They didn't duck and make excuses to stay undefeated. Holla!