

48-1? Predicting Who Will Defeat Floyd Mayweather

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Wednesday, 19 February 2014 15:31



Floyd Mayweather is expected to face either Marcos Maidana or Amir Khan on May 3rd at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Nevada. Of the two proposed options, Maidana makes the most sense to me, something I've [already opined about](#) enough. In short, I think Maidana earned the bout with his shocking upset of Adrien Broner last December, and I would rather see Mayweather face someone who comes at him and throws punches from all angles.

But truth be told, neither Maidana nor Khan really stand much of a chance against Mayweather. Though brave, Maidana would be too easy to hit, and for all his speed Khan wouldn't be able to sustain anything noteworthy over 12 full rounds against Mayweather. Each man would have his moments against the aging great, but only in spurts. Mayweather would likely defeat both by decision rather widely.

But just because the two men Mayweather wants to fight next don't have much of a chance to beat him, doesn't mean there aren't opponents out there who do. After all, Mayweather isn't exactly known for seeking out his best opposition.

Therein lies the problem for predicting who will defeat him, or at least who would stand the best chance at it.

In reality, Mayweather has many more options than the two proposed for May 3, Maidana and Khan. In fact, I think we should evaluate where those two opponents land in the overall scheme of who Mayweather, the best in the sport, should actually be considering for his next bout. While

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Top Rank and Golden Boy don't work together, Mayweather is the one fighter in the sport who could cross that line and work with both if he only wanted to. As he likes to often point out, he calls the shots.

So for me, before I get to either Maidana or Khan on the list of who Mayweather should fight next, I have to first cross off Erislandy Lara, Manny Pacquiao, Timothy Bradley and Danny Garcia, who in my opinion easily outrank Maidana and Khan as potential opponents. Moreover, I believe welterweight Shawn Porter and junior middleweights Alfredo Angulo (who would've ditched Canelo in a heartbeat for a fight with Mayweather), James Kirkland and Demetrius Andrade grade out evenly or even slightly above Maidana and Khan as opponents.

There are two groups of candidates. The first are opponents Mayweather would likely never fight for one reason or another. Let's call these guys Category A. These aren't "wishful thinking" fights that border on asking him to do too much, so no Gennady Golovkin or Andre Ward on the list. Rather these are legitimate tests one should expect an undefeated fighter in the twilight of his career to undertake, especially someone espousing himself as the best ever.

First and foremost in Category A is Manny Pacquiao (of course). For all the reasons your favorite Money Team friend gives you for why Mayweather has not and/or never will never fight Pacquiao, the truth of the matter is simply that Mayweather sees Pacquiao as too great a risk. Pacquiao has a rare combination of speed and power that can give any fighter fits on any given fight night, even the mighty Mayweather. This one has been beaten to death, though, so let's move on.

A relatively new entry into Category A is No. 1 ranked junior middleweight Erislandy Lara. Mayweather holds an alphabet title at 154 and is also the lineal TBRB champion. But Lara's larger natural frame, southpaw stance and Cuban boxing style would be a tough puzzle for Mayweather to solve. There's little chance he'd be able to outbox the longer Lara from a distance, and walking towards a laser-punching stalwart like Lara down is bad news for anyone (ask granite-chinned Alfredo Angulo). Mayweather will avoid Lara like the plague.

Undefeated welterweight Timothy Bradley is great at nothing but good at everything. It makes him a tough out for anyone at welterweight, and his ability to adapt to different styles has helped vault him up numerous pound-for-pounds lists. But like Pacquiao, Bradley has a double whammy going against him. First and foremost, he's good enough to beat Floyd. Second, he's promoted by Bob Arum.

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Category B consists of people Mayweather is more likely to face before he retires. That means the risk they pose to him is less than those in Category A and Top Rank does not manage them. Moreover, and despite Mayweather's titles at both 154 and 147, it means these men campaign at welterweight and below. Also note that any junior welterweight would likely have to come up to 147 to face Mayweather. He takes all the advantages he can get.

Before moving onto discussing the two men I feel who have the best *actual* chance of handing Mayweather a loss (meaning they both have the ability and might actually get to fight him), I first want to propose a dark horse candidate. Shawn Porter is undefeated and holds the IBF welterweight title. These two things would make him an attraction for Mayweather, who likes to hand fighters their first losses and collects alphabet straps to help bolster his claim at greatness. But Porter seems to really have come into his own against Devon Alexander last December. He didn't just use his natural advantage of physical strength in the bout. Rather he showed real boxing skill and strategy against a solid fighter. His natural ability and improving skill set make him someone to watch going forward, and I could see him posing problems for Mayweather.

That being said, if Mayweather is to lose before retiring, the man to do it will either be junior welterweight champion Danny Garcia or undefeated welterweight Keith Thurman, and here's why. Garcia would appear at first glance to be out of his league against Mayweather. But Garcia is the unassuming type who almost always appears to be out of his league. He was an underdog against both Amir Khan and Lucas Matthysse, and he dominated both with relative ease. Moreover, Garcia swings for the fences enough to keep Mayweather cautious and careful, and his power has grown enough over his last few fights to make one believe he could hurt Mayweather if he lands clean. Garcia might be able to get Mayweather to lead with a long right hand that Garcia could counter with one of his hard hooks. A hurt Mayweather would not take risks, and Garcia could eke out a narrow decision.

Thurman, on the other hand, might be Mayweather's worst nightmare. He's tall, lanky and powerful and he has shown real skill and strategy as he's moved up the ranks. Thurman is the type of puncher who can put anyone to sleep with either hand. But he's smart enough to not rely solely on power. This makes him dangerous the way Thomas Hearns was back in the 1980s. Don't get me wrong: Thurman still has much to prove. He has some nice wins on his resume, most notably Jesus Soto Karass, but he hasn't yet faced staunch enough competition to warrant a Mayweather bout. But Thurman's talent should keep him winning, and his connection to Al Haymon should help him land the megafight when the time is right. And when he does, don't be surprised if he pulls out the win. In fact, I'm predicting he's the one that eventually keeps Mayweather from reaching 49-0.

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Other News and Notes

-Middleweight Andy Lee is seeking a fight against Gennady Golovkin. That would make Lee one of the few Top 10 middleweights who actually want to fight GGG, something I think should be commended.

-It appears more and more likely junior middleweights Erislandy Lara and Ishe Smith will meet on the undercard of Mayweather's May 3 card. While it won't be visually appealing, it should help the winner grab a bout against another top name.

-Super middleweight Bryan Vera will rematch Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. on March 1. Many thought Vera deserved the nod in the first fight, but Vera told me he's going for the knockout this time around. Don't be surprised to see him sit down on his punches more and make it a slugfest.

-In reality, I believe Mayweather should be pushing the envelope his last few fights and going after guys like Sergio Martinez at middleweight. But I can't see Mayweather ever moving up to test himself like that. Can you imagine if Mayweather had fought during the time of Hagler, Hearns, Leonard and Duran? Would he have faced any of them?

-I've been denied entry into the Boxing Writers Association of America a couple of times, but [sentiments like this](#) from Bart Barry make it all worthwhile. I certainly would've liked to have been considered a boxing writer by the BWAA membership committee when I applied, but since everyone else seems to consider me one, I suppose that's good enough.

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amayseng says:

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Garcia is just good at everything. A good left hook to the body can go a long way. Plus Garcia is never rushing or flustered, he weather storms well and when he loses exchanges he always comes right back to even the score. However, his feet are slow and he doesnt have elite quickness. One other thing, the Lucas fight was close until an ELBOW landed on Lucas and ruined his eye. Replay showed it was not a punch. so who knows how that fight would have gone have that not happened. That eye closed mid fight, not round 11. Garcia would definitely keep a Floyd fight close though. I dont see him rushing into rights all night. He picks his spots well and dictates pace very well. Ring generalship wins fights. SEE 49 year old Bhoppy.

Thurman has good bang and boxing ability. He just doesnt have the stamina to carry that power for 12 rounds which is what you need. Plus he is untested against a great fighter. He does have however good physicality, in close he wont be bullied or pushed around. He is a young gun for sure.

Madaina's best asset is not just his power, but his ability to throw and land combinations. He has a high motor and high work rate. Sure he is linear in his attack, but he does use angles at times and throws punches from all angles. Sure Broner has a poor mans shoulder roll but it was preparation for the angles Chino has to use to hit the target. A good left is needed against floyd and Chino used a good left hand, jab, hooks, body hooks. He mixed it up quite a bit. Of course Broner is not an A fighter so there is always that level of comparison.

Chino's game plan should be to walk Floyd into the ropes and throw meaningful but not exhausting combinations to score point.

Cotto won 5 rounds from Floyd from both boxing and mainly outworking and scoring Floyd on the ropes. Floyd is a buzzing puncher but he doesnt have enough firepower if he is on the ropes and if Madaina is shooting 4 punch combinations Floyd cant land one shot and stop him in his tracks.

4 half landed punches beat one solid punch scoring wise. SEE Hopkins vs Calzagne.

Pac, best asset is footwork and agility. Pacs footwork is good enough to stay with Floyd and land more than one punch. Pac has power through both hands and is a combination puncher from new dimensions unseen to the human eye. I remember watching the Pac vs Cotto fight with my dad and my dad made a great observation, during a slow motion replay my dad specified, "my gosh his feet arent even on the floor as he is throwing and landing combinations". pretty remarkable as they werent. His whole body can be behind his punches at times.

Khan....quicker than floyd, at this point a better combination puncher. horrible footwork on defense, does not slip or dip, just gloves up. canelo just gloved up and Floyd embarrassed him, terribly.

Also Khan has no chin. cant take a punch.

I got off subject a bit.....apologies.

Radam G says:

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Keith Thurman is an over-hyped sidewalk fighter. Dude couldn't touch Money May with any shot. People like KT a lot. But the skills and savvy to defeat Money May, he just ain't got. You can see the dude's shots coming a mile and a minute away.

OUT! His arse Money May will LAY. Holla!

SouthPawFlo says:

Shawn Porter is good fighter, but he's a B+ fighter, he easily outmuscled Alexander who has no fire in his punches.....

Garcia is a Stud and has a good shot against anyone at 140-147.

Thurman's Boxing Ability ain't there yet, but if he keeps progressing this time next year he'll be a monster, he's the "Boogie Man" of the welterweight division...

Carmine Cas says:

Garcia is a solid all around fighter, he's not slow by any means but what he does against faster fighters is time them and punch with them. See Khan and Judah fights. He's smart for not taking the Mayweather fight right away, develop a little more than fight him later on.

As Amayseng pointed out, Khan is faster than Floyd but that's about it. Yeah he's got fast feet but his footwork sucks, Floyd will pick him apart if not stop him late.

I want to see Thurman beat better opposition, Soto Karass was there to be hit.

Sean Porter like any other fighter would win a couple of early rounds against Mayweather but then Floyd would just adapt.

Pacquiao and Bradley both present issues to Mayweather with their speed and footwork.

I would love to see Sergio get a shot against Floyd.

Carmine Cas says:

And yes the left jab is very effective against Floyd when performed from the right angle.

The Shadow says:

[QUOTE=Radam G;44126]Keith Thurman is an over-hyped sidewalk fighter. Dude couldn't touch Money May with any shot. People like KT a lot. But the skills and savvy to defeat Money May, he just ain't got. You can see the dude's shots coming a mile and a minute away.

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That's exactly what I thought when I read that silly stuff. The author must be on some crunk juice. Thurman is a poor man's Diego Corrales.

Here's the breakdown on Thurman: what he does well is visible to the naked eye. What the real master do well is not. Therefore limited fighters get unjustified hype.

People like to say he's a good mover, a well-rounded fighter. Get someone like Angulo on his a\$\$ and you'll see exactly how clumsy and uneducated his feet are.

On the GBP roster alone you have several guys who beats him. Overall, Bradley, Porter, Lara, probably Trout, Garcia, Pacquiao, possibly Ortiz, believe it or not, Collazo, Canelo for sure, and maybe Angulo all will beat him.

Mayweather definitely outpoints him.

He's future star so he will be matched very, very carefully. I think he beats Demetrius Andrade, Maidana, maybe Ortiz, Guerrero if he can hurt him, which he probably can't, guys of that stature.

He'll probably fight Josesito Lopez or someone next. He's being guided in the fashion Maidana was a year ago.

Eventually, I think, they'll throw him in with Porter and say, "here it is, Keith. Time to sink or swim."

I favor Porter but he stands a chance. Versus Mayweather I favor Floyd and Thurman stands none.

I will consider it a massive upset if he even wins a round One Time.

amayseng says:

[QUOTE=Carmin Cas;44143]Garcia is a solid all around fighter, he's not slow by any means but what he does against faster fighters is time them and punch with them. See Khan and Judah fights. He's smart for not taking the Mayweather fight right away, develop a little more than fight him later on.

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exactly Garcia has great timing, which negates speed. but he is too slow for floyd.

porter is solid but a poor mans Hatton, who Floyd had a real fight against and finally flourished.

2 years ago a Sergio M I picked on here all the time would beat floyd at 154. now he is shop worn.

Thurman needs to step his game up.

the Roast says:

Must be a slow month.

brownsugar says:

Porter is good... Like Bradley he's an all-around hustler who is consistent and well prepared..nothing else stands out about him to me But he's no where close at this stage.. I'd still watch it.

Thurman would be an interesting fight. I like how the kid is progressing and he's been matched with some decent gatekeepers from 154 to 147. Nobody else at 147 wants to fight him although he calls out the entire division daily... Good stamina movement and work rate but leaves himself open at times..although the chin has proven reliable so far..

There are no real standouts... No hitmen.. No monsters or Beast men lurking in the woods at 147.....Guys like Spence and the Russian(can't think of his name) are years apart.

I think Floyd could beat Martinez...but would struggle against Lara who would keep the punch count down to half a dozen per round(please don't make that fight)

Malignacci.... The trash talk would be more entertaining than the fight itself.
Berto would be a fun challenger. But not PPV worthy.

Bhop....get out of here... You too Roy Jones.
Like the Klitschko brothers ... Floyd stands alone in an era he never made...
Outlasting the good names and left with a bunch of guys nobody knows.

brownsugar says:

Wow if the Roast is up its past my bedtime...

the Roast says:

[QUOTE=brownsugar;44157]Wow if the Roast is up its past my bedtime...[/QUOTE]

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Damn right buddy. The night time is Roast time. Hide the women and children. I'm like the TSS Batman. Watching, waiting, reading. Thinking of stupid syit to say.

The Shadow says:

[QUOTE=the Roast;44154]Must be a slow month.[/QUOTE]

My sentiments exactly.

brownsugar says:

When the big dogs come out... WOOF!!

.early day for me tomorrow ..guess I'll get my milk and cookies and turn in. and oh yeah ...make sure my girl is hand cuffed to the bed post..

Ive already warned her about the Roast