



COUNTDOWN TO MAY 7: Manny “Pacman” Pacquiao (l.) and “Sugar” Shane Mosley strike a fighting pose during their press conference at the Chelsea Piers in New York City on Feb. 14. (Filipino Reporter photo by Robert dela Cruz)



Exclusive to the Filipino Reporter

There was no hint that boxing’s pound-for-pound champ Manny Pacquiao was taking “Sugar” Shane Mosley lightly as he addressed the media on an international conference call a week

before his May 7 World Boxing Organization (WBO) welterweight title defense at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

Despite the former eight-division champ Pacquiao being seven years younger than the 39-year-old former three-division champ Mosley, "Pacman" says he doesn't see an old target in front of him.

"Shane Mosley is still strong and he moves like [he's] 29 years old," said the Sarangani, Philippines congressman Pacquiao, who holds a record of 52-3-2 (38 KO).

"He's the kind of fighter that you can't underestimate. He's bigger in size than me and stronger. He's a former pound-for-pound champ and still good."

Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach, who will receive his fifth Trainer of the Year award the night before the fight at the Boxing Writers Association of America (BWAA) Annual Awards Dinner, was also cautious about counting out the future Hall of Famer.

"Mosley brings speed, power and all that," said Roach.

"He's got a good team behind him and we have a good challenge in front of us. Manny is motivated for a reason, because he respects Mosley. That's what excited me about it.

"The first five rounds will be very critical and the way we attack him will have a lot of thought behind it. If we just walk in he'll counter punch the hell out of us."

Mosley, 46-6-1 (39 KO), hasn't been impressive in his last two outings, which include a one-sided decision loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr. and a draw with the unheralded Sergio Mora.

Still, Mosley said he relishes his position as the underdog.

In his biggest wins — a knockout of Antonio Margarito and two decisions over Oscar De La Hoya — Mosley was a prohibitive underdog.

“They said Margarito was going to kill me. People said they were scared for my health and all that crap. I had about three different things going on in my life, including a divorce. But I just listened to myself and came out with the victory,” said Mosley.

Despite his six losses, Mosley has never been stopped and has only been knocked down twice.

Both knockdowns came in the second round of his first fight with the late Vernon Forrest in 2002.

Roach said he would like to see Pacquiao become the first person to stop Mosley, but Pacquiao is content to assure that the fight will be fan-friendly.

“We’re not really focused for the knockout, but what we do is work hard and, if the knockout comes, it will come,” said Pacquiao, who has gone the distance in his last two fights against Margarito and Joshua Clottey.

“We prepared ourselves that we’re fighting twelve rounds. My concern right now is the fight we can give to the people and the fans.”

“Shane is a tough guy and very durable and it’d be a feather in Manny’s cap to be the first one to stop him and show how much better he is than the guy who couldn’t stop him [Mayweather],” Roach said.

“Manny will fight at a fast pace and we’ll force the action and we’re gonna go for it this time. If it comes, it comes.”

For Mosley’s part, he is perhaps the biggest puncher Pacquiao has ever faced.

Mosley has produced knockouts over physically larger fighters than Pacquiao with both fists, and will have one of the sport’s greatest tactical masterminds — trainer Naazim Richardson — in his corner.

Richardson has carved out a niche in the sport for helping older fighters — like Bernard Hopkins and Mosley — overcome the physical advantages younger opponents have had over them.

He feels that the recent success of Erik Morales and Hopkins proves that age doesn’t negate ability.

“We keep counting these guys out. These aren’t just old men who box. These are legendary fighters who have age on them now. There’s a difference between a legendary fighter who has age and an old boxer. These aren’t just men.

“When these guys were in their prime they were exceptional. Michael Jordan could probably still come out now and make the starting five on any team in the NBA. We discount these older guys but we forget these were special guys. When special gets old, you can still be extraordinary.”

Mosley has had mixed success against left-handed fighters.

Against the much larger Winky Wright in 2004, Mosley was outboxed in two wide decision losses at junior middleweight.

Three years later, Mosley dominated Luis Collazo, who was considered one of the welterweight division's most avoided fighters at the time.

But of his six losses, not one can say they outfought him in a fire fight.

And that's exactly what Pacquiao plans to attempt.

"I'm excited for this fight because Mosley throws a lot of punches and wants to fight toe-to-toe," Pacquiao said.

"That's what I want, he throws a lot of punches and it's good for us to give a good fight."

Pacquiao-Mosley Fight Camp 360° programming note

The third installment of the behind-the-scenes coverage of Pacquiao and Mosley's training camp will air Saturday, April 30 at 8 p.m. ET/PT on CBS.

Promoter Bob Arum said "this is a significant event because boxing returns to prime time terrestrial television. Because of that, it's a real game changer to find out the elements of this fight in both camps. It's a must-see, should be great entertainment."

Vegas arrivals

Pacquiao is set to arrive in Sin City on May 2, while Mosley and company hit the strip on May 3.

The final press conference will take place on May 4.

The weigh-in on May 6 will be hosted by James Brown, who hosts “The NFL Today” on CBS and Showtime’s “Inside the NFL.”

Boxing fans will remember him for hosting some HBO Pay-Per-View events in past years.

(Editor’s note: Ryan Songalia is a member of the Boxing Writers Association of America [BWAA] and contributes to GMA News and the Filipino Reporter newspaper. He can be reached at ryan@ryansongalia.com. An archive of his work can be found at www.ryansongalia.com. Follow him on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ryansongalia).