

## Pacquiao sets May 5 fight date with Floyd

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 20 November 2011 12:04

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**CHAMP PREVAILS:** Manny Pacquiao (left) and Juan Manuel Marquez go toe-to-toe for the World Boxing Organization welterweight title at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas on Nov. 12. Pacquiao defeated Marquez. More stories and photos in sports section. □ *(AFP photo/Jewel Samad)*

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HOLLYWOOD — The possibility of boxing's richest fight ironically came up in the aftermath of Manny Pacquiao's controversial win as he challenged unbeaten Floyd Mayweather Jr. to a showdown the world has long wanted to see.

"Let's make it happen on May 5," Pacquiao told sports analyst Max Kellerman inside the ring as the Mexican crowd loudly protested the majority decision favoring the Filipino champion over Juan Manuel Marquez at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas last Saturday.

"Let's give the people a good fight. Let's get it on," said Pacquiao.

The 32-year-old pound-for-pound champion stretched his win streak to 15 fights with the win, but lacked the overpowering form he had shown in seven fights since a previous controversial triumph over Marquez in 2008.

Mayweather, through adviser Leonard Ellerbe, announced two weeks ago that he would return to the ring on May 5 against the "little fella," which should be no other than Pacquiao.

If that fight happens, both fighters can make no less than \$50 million each.

Promoter Bob Arum dismissed Mayweather having already set a date and site for the fight and Freddie Roach, Pacquiao's trainer, said he has no business trying to set terms.

"I'm kind of tired of Floyd. Shut up and fight or don't," Roach said.

"He wants to dictate everything. Who is he to make the rules? Then he sends his gopher out to make a speech. Leonard Ellerbe, he's a gopher. Floyd, speak up. Coming from Ellerbe, who gives a damn?"

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After outpointing Marquez, Pacquiao said that he's open to another fight with the Mexican but called on Mayweather's name as well.

He said he's ready to take on any fighter his promoter puts in front of him.

"It depends on Bob Arum," he said.

Twice, negotiations for the fight between Pacquiao and Mayweather bogged down.

The fight may or may not happen, but what's positive at least for now is Pacquiao calling Mayweather's name.

### **Fourth fight possible**

Pacquiao needed 28 stitches to close a cut over his right eye suffered in a 10th-round head-butt and had two judges who gave him the final round scored it the other way, the fight would have been scored a draw.

Arum dismissed Marquez's talk that he might retire, saying the likely \$10-million payday for a fourth fight could change his mind and that he would try to stage a fourth Marquez-Pacquiao fight next May.

Roach said he felt Marquez deserved a rematch before the pound-for-pound king faces Mayweather.

If nothing else, the possibility of turning back to Marquez would give Arum some leverage in

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talks with Mayweather's camp about terms for a long-sought fight that figures to bring each fighter about \$50 million — if it happens.

Mayweather also faces an evidence hearing next month on felony charges of grand larceny, coercion and robbery from a 2010 incident with former girlfriend Josie Harris and two children.

He faces up to 34 years in prison.

### **Money matters most**

Just as Pacquiao's side wants Mayweather to call out the Filipino star, Mayweather's co-promoter, Oscar De La Hoya, told the *Los Angeles Times* that he basically wants to see Pacquiao call out Mayweather.

"Mayweather wants the fight. If Manny wants Floyd, there's nothing stopping that fight from happening," De La Hoya told the newspaper.

"Pacquiao fights for the people and the people want him to step up and fight Mayweather."

Marquez, who claims three wins over Pacquiao but was handed a draw and two losses by judges, also dropped a 12-round decision to Mayweather in 2009 after the American ended a long hiatus.

He said Mayweather's defensive style could give Pacquiao trouble, creating a fight lacking the excitement Marquez helped make.

"Commercially it will be a big fight but technically I think the style of Mayweather would get very complicated for Pacquiao," Marquez said.

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Commercially figures to be what will matter most.

After the controversial 2008 fight, Marquez begged Arum for a rematch but Arum said no, waiting for a more profitable time.

Even Pacquiao agreed that was the right move, in some ways undercutting the idea for a fourth fight now.

“I don’t think the people were going to watch again right away,” the Filipino boxing sensation said last Tuesday about the timing of a rematch after the 2008 fight.

“Boxing is a business. You have to make money.”

Mayweather might like his chances more against Pacquiao after seeing the Filipino hero struggle for the first time since he faced Marquez in 2008, but boxing history offers a cautionary tale about such judgments.

Evander Holyfield lost to Riddick Bowe in 1995 and struggled to beat Bobby Czyz in May 1996, helping entice Don King into booking Holyfield as a foe for Mike Tyson.

Holyfield stopped Tyson in the 11th round in late 1996 and won a 1997 rematch, the infamous “bite fight,” by disqualification after Tyson bit Holyfield’s ears twice, tearing out a chunk of flesh the first time.

**Pacman: ‘I clearly won’**

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Looking back at the Marquez fight, which could have really gone either way depending on how you saw it, Pacquiao felt “it was very clear I won the fight.”

It was a fight that was too close to call, and the judges gave it to Pacquiao, one of them scoring it a draw (114-114), and the two others calling it for the reigning World Boxing Organization (WBO) welterweight champion (115-113 and 116-112).

Marquez felt he was robbed in the same manner he was robbed the first two times they fought in 2004 and 2008.

But ring experts close to the ring agreed that Pacquiao was the aggressor and did more to win the fight.

“Marquez played it too safe and that was a big, big mistake,” said Emanuel Steward, who worked the HBO panel for the fight witnessed by a crowd of 16,368, and millions more from around the globe.

“I clearly won the fight,” said Pacquiao.

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