

Pacman's tall foe loves to defy odds

Written by Abac Cordero

Monday, 01 September 2014 13:29



Manny Pacquiao (left) and Chris Algieri strike a pose during a pre-fight press conference in Shanghai to drum up their WBO welterweight title fight in Macau on Nov. 23. (Photo by Abac Cordero)

SHANGHAI — Chris Algieri has this great ability to win fights that he's supposed to lose.

He said nothing's bound to change when he meets Manny Pacquiao in November.

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"I'm here to win the fight and be a multiple world champion. Mark my words," said the undefeated boxer from Huntington, N.Y. in last Tuesday's press conference here.

"I'm not here just to be in the ring with Manny Pacquiao," said Algieri, a 30-year-old fighter with a masteral degree in clinical nutrition and the looks of a GQ model.

Algieri's manager, Joe Deguardia, referred to Pacquiao's next foe as someone who's always "favored to lose."

But last June, Algieri became the WBO junior-welterweight champion when he rose from two knockdowns in the first round to beat Russian beast Ruslan Provodnikov on points.

Algieri wasn't really known before he fought Provodnikov.

But the victory earned him a million-dollar ticket to The Venetian in Macau in November for the Pacquiao fight.

Again, Algieri is "favored to lose" this one.

Early betting odds suggest a mismatch.

But Pacquiao's chief trainer, Freddie Roach, said there's no mismatch to talk about because there's no such thing as an easy fight for the reigning WBO welterweight champion.

"Manny is not going to have an easy fight for the rest of his life," said Roach as he stepped out of the packed afternoon press conference.

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Pacquiao is putting his welterweight title on the line at a catchweight of 144 pounds.

“Chris is here to succeed and he’s coming here to win. You guys are gonna see who Chris Algieri is in November,” said Tim Lane, who’s in charge of Algieri’s training.

Pacquiao and Algieri are in the second stop of a six-leg press tour.

From Macau last Monday, they dropped by Shanghai on the way to San Francisco, Las Vegas, Los Angeles and New York.

Chief promoter Bob Arum promised a great fight between two great fighters.

Pacquiao smiled a lot during the press conference.

He said Algieri is a “nice guy and an educated person.”

Algieri, just a couple of seats away, nodded.

“He’s not like others,” said Pacquiao, and the room burst into laughter.

“Why are you laughing? He’s not like the others who talks too much and lots of things coming out of their mouth, and say things that are not a good example for everybody,” Pacquiao said.

“We should make an example and be an inspiration for young boxers to be a champion — like me,” Pacquiao said, and the laughter continued.

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After the press conference, the two boxers stood in the middle of the stage for the awaited staredown.

It was a friendly one.