

MANAGERS SHOULD PASS THE TEST

Written by Charles Jay
Saturday, 01 June 2002 18:00

A boxing manager, at least in the theoretical sense, is in a position where he (or she) is exerting a major influence over the development of someone who is trying to establish a career in a very difficult business. Any wrong moves can be potentially disastrous to a fighter's health. And the manager could very well control a fighter's finances, or at least might direct that fighter as to what to do with them.

I don't think it's absurd to ask that the manager have certain qualifications in order to be granted the privilege of being in that kind of position.

There is a licensing process that takes place in each and every boxing jurisdiction, and which would certainly take place on a national level should boxing fall under Federal regulation. Perhaps a manager's "test" should be part of that process.

No one's asking that such a test be designed to keep people OUT of the business. Instead, what we'd be looking for is to facilitate a more effective orientation for those who get IN the business. The manager's exam would have that effect.

What should such an exam consist of?

* MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST ON STATE RULES AND REGULATIONS -- You don't want to have managers running into problems along the way because they don't know the rules in their own state with regard to limits on managerial contracts, rights of the promoter, suspensions, etc. And the system only gets weakened if the fighter winds up being a victim of a "technicality" along the way. At the very least, you want to have the manager aware of the rules that govern boxing in the jurisdiction where he is applying for a license, and any national laws or rules that would apply as well. Hey - even if it's an "open-book" test, so to speak, at least they've taken the time to look the rules up and ascertain the answers.

* SHORT ANSWER SECTION -- Stuff like - What does the "WBC" stand for (not morally, in terms of an acronym)? What does a cutman do? What is a purse bid? What does it mean to give up options? These are the kind of questions you may want to ask when trying to determine the prospective manager's overall knowledge of the boxing industry.

* SHORT ANSWERS - NON-BOXING -- I would think the manager could answer some simple questions about 1099 forms, expense reports, balancing a checkbook, things of that nature. Nothing too "taxing", if you pardon the pun. But if he's going to have any contact at all with a fighter's finances, you want to know he's somewhat literate with these things.

* ESSAY -- That's right, class. Why shouldn't the manager have to write, say, a 100-word statement as to what his overall philosophy about management is, and what his general plan is for the fighters he will wind up managing, not just now, but in the future? How will he

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approach the personal and professional development of the young man (or woman) who is in his charge, and how will he help the fighter deal with life aside from, and after, boxing? You can get a pretty good idea about the general attitude of a manager by reading his statement, especially if he's the one who actually wrote it.

Naturally, the "test", once taken, will be valid throughout all boxing jurisdictions across the United States; it's not practical for the manager to continue to repeat the test over and over from state to state.

But not only will this give us a barometer as to what level of aptitude the fledgling manager has when entering the boxing business, it may also serve as "preventive medicine", so to speak, for many of the disputes, misinterpretations, and blunders that regularly get managers into hot water in the first place.

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