

Arturo Gatti MIA in New York City

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NEW YORK (March 23, 2005) - Inclement weather and questionable health sidelined Arturo Gatti today, making him unavailable for the press conference at the Copacabana announcing the Gatti-Mayweather fight scheduled for June 25 at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City. But even in Gatti's absence, he was the subject of much discussion.

Floyd Mayweather told the assembled members of the press: "I told you Gatti wouldn't show up. He's got a bad case of Floyd-itus. He's going to get extra punishment for what he did to me today . . . I feel disrespected. When you disrespect me you get punished."

Floyd sure talks the walk. Floyd sure also walks the walk. *The Sweet Science* asked Buddy McGirt, Arturo Gatti's trainer, how the "human highlight film" beats Floyd Mayweather.

"Everyone thinks we're fighting God, man," McGirt said, "and that's what makes me laugh. The guy is not unbeatable. Believe me when I tell you. Floyd makes a lotta mistakes in there, but his speed gets him by. The key is to nullify his speed and capitalize on the mistakes."

Gatti has done it more times than anyone can count, but he's going to have to elevate his game against Mayweather.

"We're gonna go to another level - whether it's against Floyd or Mickey Mouse – we're gonna go to the next level. If we was going to fight Floyd, right now would be the best time. A year from now - no. Right now Arturo's at his best. Who knows what a year from now's gonna bring? But right now, he's ready for anybody."

When asked about Gatti's medical condition, McGirt said, "He's sick, man. I had to take him to the doctor. He still wanted to come. I'm like, 'It don't make sense to come here if you're sick, man.' I says 'If it's that bad stay home.'" McGirt glanced at the buzzing media and said, "In a way, I'm glad he's not here."