Time is running out on Oscar De La Hoya.

The multi-division world champion has spent the last month contemplating and pondering. He's done it in his mansions, on his boats, and in his car (as passenger, of course). He's done it in public, in private, in L.A., on the Strip and on the islands.

He's done it over land. He's done it in the air. And he's done it over the sea.

That's a lot of meditating.

Foreign ministers and dignitaries and monks don't do as much reflecting as Oscar has done over the past six weeks.

Hopefully, all of that thinking has paid off. Because it's decision time.

Last week, Golden Boy Promotions CEO Richard Schaefer said the window is quickly closing on the opportunity to properly promote a fight of the magnitude of the proposed De La Hoya-Floyd Mayweather Jr. extravaganza, tentatively scheduled for Sept. 16.

"We can't wait much longer than the early part of next week," Schaefer said last week.

Next week is here. And, guess what? The possibility of no fight is very real.

There are rumors circulating that De La Hoya's rotator cuff problem (and other assorted injuries) are more serious than originally anticipated. So serious, in fact, that plans for De La Hoya-Mayweather could be scrapped for at least a year. Or more.

Whether the rumors are true or not remains to be seen. Schaefer said they were false.

If the fight doesn't happen, he said, the reasons will have nothing to do with the bum shoulder.

So the question is, what is taking so long, then? If it's not an injury issue, then why all this wondering?

Either Oscar wants to fight or he doesn't and, after the way he took apart Ricardo Mayorga, it's hard to imagine it being the latter.

He wants that fight as much as Mayweather. But he also doesn't want to go into it less than 100 percent. Against a fighter of Mayweather's caliber, that could prove disastrous.

So, you can see De La Hoya's dilemma: Take the fight, and risk getting embarrassed by the best fighter on the planet. Delay it and risk the interest waning in such a bonanza. Or, worse,

risk Mayweather getting beat.

So, at that point, does retirement become the best option, especially if the surgery/recovery process is several months?

Don't be surprised if the "Golden Boy" says goodbye. (For now, anyway. Then he'll come back like everyone else and fight sporadically for the next five years.)

• Sometimes draws are horrendous and unsatisfying, like the first Lennox Lewis-Evander Holyfield debacle. But Saturday's stalemate between Jermain Taylor and Winky Wright hardly qualifies.

A draw was perfect.

This reporter had it 6-5-1 Wright, and that one round could have easily gone to Taylor. Next time, though, look for the bigger, stronger Taylor to have an advantage. He's a quick learner, and his association with Emanuel Steward appears to be paying dividends (though it's sad that Taylor told Pat Burns to get lost). At 34, Wright may not have the ability to muster another effort like the one put forth Saturday, against an ever-improving machine like Taylor.

• From the "I can't believe I'm saying this" department: Taylor-Bernard Hopkins 3 suddenly isn't such a bad idea. Though I'd rather see Taylor-Joe Calzaghe or Hopkins-Calzaghe.

• Hey, Bob Arum, the next time you want to put a fighter making his pro debut (Tommy Z) on your pay-per-view slate, how about putting him before his more established boxing brothers? Rather than serving up a novice as the main support to the main event (in this case, Miguel Cotto-Paul Malignaggi)? If I was Kevin Kelley (a former world champ), Bobby Pacquiao, John Duddy, Freddy Cuevas and even Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., I'd be upset.

• Good looking card on "Boxing After Dark" Saturday: Calvin Brock vs. Timur Ibragimov in a heavyweight clash, and must-see Joel Julio against Carlos Quintana. Every fighter is undefeated. When was the last time that happened?

• The trend of Junior fighters appearing on cards all by themselves appears to be taking off. In addition to the July 1 card featuring Ronald Hearns, Jorge Paez Jr. and James McGirt (sons of Thomas, Jorge Sr. and Buddy respectively), a pair of El Paso promoters are considering Aug. 26 for Chavez Jr., Paez Jr., and Pipino Cuevas Jr., at the Don Haskins Center.

• When was the last time a pay-per-view fight happened on a Sunday (Manny Pacquiao-Oscar Larios on July 2)?

• I shouldn't be looking forward to Carlos Baldomir-Arturo Gatti nearly as much as I am.