

## Do Non-American Trainers Get Discriminated Against?

Written by Mitch Abramson

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They are synonymous with the sport of boxing: trainers who appear in the corners of so many big fights you'd think they were employed by the networks.

They are supreme motivators like Teddy Atlas, smart tacticians like Emanuel Steward, expert technicians like Buddy McGirt.

They are all bright, talented, highly visible, and they are mostly American.

But what of the successful trainers who don't get the notoriety of a Freddie Roach or a Joe Goossen?

Why aren't they showered with praise when their fighters win and forgiven when they lose like some of the aforementioned names?

Colin Morgan, a Guyanese-born trainer who lives in Manhattan, trains out of Crunch Fitness on 38th Street off Broadway, and has guided several fighters to championships, believes that too many foreign-born trainers are overlooked because of their transoceanic passports.

Morgan yearns for the respect of a Floyd Mayweather Sr., yet feels he is often overlooked because he is not American.

It's a significant charge but one that is probably not without merit. Sitting quietly at a press conference for Cedric Kushner's Gotham Boxing show on November 3 at the Roseland Ballroom, Morgan stood up when the affair was over and laid down the nuts and bolts of his argument.

"I'm not crying," he said, "but after 22½ years as a trainer, after you've had fighters win world titles and regional titles, you'd think your name would be thrown in there with the other big-name trainers, but it hasn't happened for me. My honest opinion is that trainers only get credit when they are American trainers. I know I'm going to get in trouble for saying this, but this is what I believe, and I want to change the situation. You name me one trainer who is Latin American who has gotten the credit of one of the famous trainers. They overlook us. They overlook foreign trainers."

Morgan has notable credentials to cement his reputation. He piloted Wayne Braithwaite to a WBC cruiserweight title, had former welterweight contender Andrew Murray for 12 fights, and groomed former welterweight champion Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis for a time before he became champion.

He currently trains heavyweight Larry Donald (42-4-3, 24 knockouts), light heavyweight Elvir Muriqi (32-3, 19 knockouts), and super middleweight Peter Quillin (7-0, 6 knockouts), who fights Friday at the Roseland Ballroom.

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The tie that bonds Braithwaite, Murray and Lewis together is their shared Guyanese roots with Morgan. Muriqi (2) and Quillin (7) are riding winning streaks and Donald has performed well in fights with Evander Holyfield (UD), Ray Austin (Draw) and Nikolay Valuev (L MD).

Morgan has done particularly good work with Donald, turning the relaxed, uninteresting fighter into a more aggressive participant, and he has resuscitated Muriqi's career after Muriqi lost two of three fights during one recent stretch.

"I don't think it's racism because most of the fighters themselves are black and Hispanic," Morgan said. "For some reason, we just don't get the credit of some of the other guys. I'm not saying that American trainers aren't good, but people should be judged on their ability, not their nationality or race. A lot of fighters go to certain [American] trainers mostly because they have a big name."

Morgan wouldn't provide names of trainers he thought have gone unnoticed or who get too much attention, but a cursory check of overlooked foreign-born trainers revealed these names: Enzo Calzaghe, Joe's dad; Evangelista Cotto, Miguel's uncle; Jose Lemos, Carlos Baldomin's trainer; Lennox Blackmoore, Vivian Harris' trainer; Javier Capetillo, Antonio Margarito's trainer, and Kwame Asante, Joshua Clottey's trainer, to name just a few.

"You have so many great trainers and they never get mentioned," Morgan said. "I don't understand it. I don't want to take away from the [American] trainers who are doing well, but there are trainers out there who are just as good as them who need to catch a break. Hopefully, other people will see my point of view and things can change."