Written by Michael Woods
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It is my educated guess that on May 6th, Oscar De La Hoya will see himself no longer as an active fighter, but rather a full-fledged promoter. It will be the day after Floyd Mayweather schools the 33-year-old Golden Boy No More, and persuades him that he no longer has the reflexes or the hand speed to bang with the upper echelon, and convinces him that it's a helluva lot easier putting the fights together and collecting the cash, than it is participating in them.

But none of us should shed a milliliter of tears for Oscar. Because when all the tallies are done, the abacus will show that no fighter has grossed more pay-per-view monies than Oscar did.

As of today, Tyson's the man when it comes to raking in the green. In his career, to this point, I'm not shutting the door on the man while he still has a pulse, Tyson has spurred $545 million worth of PPV orders. Evander Holyfield trails Tyson slightly, at $543 million, and when Real Deal hooks up with Wladimir Klitschko in 2008, that figure is certain to kick up a few notches.

Oscar, meanwhile, has done $492 million worth of PPV business, and needs just 965,000 homes (at $54.95 a pop) to pony up for his May 5th uphill climb against the sport's most technically adept practitioner to vault into the lead of all-time PPV grossers.

That's a cinch. With all the hype HBO has put forth--and it feels like the buildup for the bout has lasted longer than the campaign for the 2008 Presidential election will--this bout will do 965,000 homes in illegal black boxes. Tyson/Holyfield in 1997 did 1.9 million legal buys, and with the marketing push ODLH/PBF has gotten, one would think---and the suits have to hope---that the May 5th attraction will break that mark.

But I'm wondering what it will mean...

If it does break the mark, does it mean boxing is back?

If I'm right, and Mayweather rather easily outboxes Oscar, and convinces him that his fighting days are over, will this fight serve as boxing's final last gap hurrah, at least until a transcendent personality emerges?

Will massive buys counter the seepage of coverage, from the newspapers to the Web, that is rendering the savage science an also-ran of a sport, to be lumped in with horse racing on the ladder of relevance? (Maybe you noted that another print guy, Kevin Iole, has jumped ship, or been gently tossed overboard, to Yahoo?)

I mean, if HBO marketed me against Flattop like they've marketed Oscar/Floyd me and the Fightnews boss could do half a million buys.

I'm not certain what May 5th will prove, other than it will put a combined $35 million or more into Oscars' and Floyds' pockets.

As a defender of the sport, though, I am certainly hopeful that the fight isn't a snoozer, and that Floyd does stand in the pocket, and trade, and that we all get our $54.95 worth.

Because there will be an extra half million or so people tuning in who don't ordinarily watch boxing, and if this bout doesn't deliver, well...I don't want to go there. Let' s just say, the sport needs a pick me up.

Like Alec Baldwin needs anger management classes, this sport needs a pick me up.