There is an on-going trend in the fighting world today. The MMA and boxing are in the midst of a ratings war. March 1st will mark the third time in the same amount of months that a live MMA show is being held on the same date as a major boxing event. Here is a recap.

- January 19th Trinidad/Jones was shown at the same time as UFC 80.

- Feburary 16, Boxing has the Taylor/Pavlik II fight on the same day as the Elite XC event showcasing, Kimbo Slice vs. Tank Abbott.

- March 1st Boxing has Marquez/Vazquez III on at the same time as UFC 82.

History has proven that a competitive atmosphere brings positive results. Without opposition, there is less ambition. When you're the best with no competition, there is not much of a reason to try as hard.

Boxing needed a challenger just like the Red Sox need the Yankees. Competing to be the best is what brings out the most in people. Drive, motivation, pride, fear, dedication, failure, and success are all healthy components of competition.

In the past year or so, the sport of boxing has challenged the MMA to recapture some of its lost fan base.

I did a study on successful companies/organizations in sports that thrived on the pressure of competition in recent history. Here is what I came up with.

Boston Red Sox vs. New York Yankees: 100 + years

Every year it's the same story in baseball. The Yankees and Red Sox spend a boat load of money jockeying for the next A-Rod or Dice K and seemingly leave everyone in the dust. Then one of them gets trounced in the 1st round of the playoffs and goes after another 10 time all star the following year, and the beat goes on.

The Sox and Yanks seem to have money growing from trees and can pick and choose practically any player to join their team by simply flashing a good amount of green.

The Result: From a financial point of view, baseball is a lot like boxing. Those that have the most money dictate the sport… Can anyone say De la Hoya vs. Mayweather II?

WWE vs. WCW: late 1990's

Yes, pro wrestling is about as bogus as a block of melted ice on top of the North Pole. However, it does not mean that wrestling is not a competitive and at times entertaining industry.

Since the days of Ricky the Dragon Steamboat, the Macho Man Randy Savage, and the Ultimate Warrior, (by the way, the coolest nicknames ever) the WWE practically controlled the world of pro wrestling.

However, in the late 1990's, a rival wrestling organization called WCW created the ingenious New World Order. The N.W.O. was new, fresh, and led by the good guy turned evil, Hollywood Hulk Hogan. This new group helped WCW momentarily overtake the world of pro wrestling.

It also started a tremendous game of one-upmanship between both companies. First it was the N.W.O. then came Stone Cold Steve Austin. After Austin, came Goldberg. Then the WWF unveiled the Hell in the Cell, and the Undertaker threw Mankind off the top of a 30 foot cage. And the rest was history.

The Result: In 2001, WCW and Ted Turner, was bought out by its rival chairman Vince McMahon and the WWE.

NBA Western Conference: 2008

Probably the most hotly contested NBA Conference in decades. As of mid February, the top 10 teams in the conference are divided by only 6 games in the standings. In order to separate themselves from the rest of the pack, a few of the teams made some moves to strengthen their rosters. The Golden State Warriors signed Chris Webber, the Lakers traded for Pau Gasol, and the Suns traded for Shaq.

Who knows what will happen at the end of the season but the fact of the matter is that NBA teams in the West are going the extra mile to be the best they could possibly be.

The Result: TBA

Madden vs. NFL Gameday: late 1990's

Believe it or not, there was a time when Madden was not the only football video game on the planet. In 1996, a video game called NFL Gameday was created to challenge the fan base of Madden video gamers.

The difference of the two was game play. It was a rarity to find someone that mastered and played both games. For instance, a Madden fanatic normally refused to play someone that religiously played Gameday. Those that played Gameday were just a different breed. NFL Gameday had more of an arcade type feel to it, while Madden used its traditional, realistic style.

The 1998 version of NFL Gameday, (with Jerome Bettis on the cover for those of you counting at home) actually out sold Madden by a wide margin. According to Wikipedia.com, many video game experts consider the Playstation 1 version of NFL Gameday '98 to be the greatest and most enjoyable football video game ever created.

Although Gameday '98 was a breakthrough, the so called greatest football game ever did not

hold on to the throne very long. In 1999, Gameday changed its “arcade style” and began to develop a game with a similar approach to Madden.

The 1999 and 2000 versions of Gameday lost a considerable amount of buyers while Madden stayed strong. When PS2 came out in 2000, NFL Gameday was practically growing extinct which meant that Madden had little competition.

The Result: In 2004, Madden announced exclusive licensing rights with the NFL and the rest, as they say, was history. Many die hard Maddenites felt that Madden, the video game, lost a bit of its edge once it monopolizes the football video gaming industry.

College Sports Teams: Forever

This one is a no brainer. Every year in college sports, the same teams seem to be at or near the top. The best teams attract the finest talent. It is a simple formula. Teams like Duke, UNC, Ohio State, and USC stay ahead because of recruiting, money, boosters, and advertising, among other things.

In a sense, college teams like Duke and USC are similar to Don King and Bob Arum. Without any of the best players or fighters working for them, they would practically be nonexistent in the sports world.

The Result: College sports are great. Without college powerhouse teams, there would be little room for upsets and Cinderella stories. Memo to college athletics: stay how you are.

The Marksman Result: I say, continue to bring the confusion and force fight fans to flip the channels. Is the MMA more popular than boxing? As long as we are enjoying good fights, it should not matter.

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