

Show: I'll Launch Mayweather Satellite

Written by Michael Woods

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The Hard Rock Café in Times Square was jammed to the gills on Wednesday afternoon, packed with media curious to see if Floyd Mayweather would haul off and smack 7-0, 441-pound Big Show on the schnozz again, leading up to Sunday's Wrestlemania pay-per-view show taking place in Orlando, Florida.

No, Money didn't get into it with Show in NYC, but he did instigate some furious tussles when he tossed a few handfuls of hundred dollar bills from the Hard Rock stage down to media and fans, who battled to get their hands on the green paper. Judging by the hundreds in attendance, who applauded and booed their WWE heroes and heels with ample passion, there will be plenty of green paper going into WWE, and Mayweather's pockets, when the PPV tally is done.

WWE exec Shane McMahon has been overseeing this promotion, as the corporation begins the process of stepping down father Vince McMahon's involvement, and allowing fourth-generation promoter, son Shane, to ascend to the promotional throne. He took a gamble bringing in Mayweather, the boxing icon, and risking the wrath of the passionate rasslin fans who are quick to denounce an unlikeable persona or dud angle, vociferously. He drew some solid heat, to use the wrestling parlance, and the fans present booed mightily when a Mayweather promo video was shown. He did draw some laughs as he held up a mammoth pair of Big Show jeans, and promised to make drapes or bed sheets out of them.

Mayweather mostly played up his heelish braggart side, taunting the fans in the building with a Big Mac sized stack of cash, and relishing the scrum as the less fortunate battled for a bill.

"You suck," anti Floyd fans chanted, and changed up to "You still suck" when he went to a valise and pulled out cash to toss to the mob.

McMahon is fairly confident that this promotion, which has built a buzz in some neighborhoods and demos that the company hasn't mastered, will surpass the buy numbers they hit last year, when Donald Trump was the marquee extra special guest star at the company's showcase showdown. 1.2 million homes purchased last year's Wrestlemania, which took place on April 1st and featured Vince McMahon getting his head shaved by Trump.

Show came out after Floyd, to cheers, and threatened to launch the first "Mayweather satellite" on Sunday's card.

McMahon then sat down with the press, and came off as a sharp operator, exhibiting a humbler, softer side than his father has on occasion. He admitted that he felt trepidation, and has had to smooth over some hurt egos in his company, who have voiced some opposition to the presence of Mayweather on the card. As McMahon explained to TSS, WWE athletes get payouts if they appear on the show, and Mayweather's inclusion means at least one wrestler, probably a few, will not be earning on that evening.

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"But our guys know that a lot of eyeballs will be on the show (because of Mayweather's presence)," he said. Vets get it, while some younger guns felt irked, he said.

The McMahon heir to the company also swore to TSS that Mayweather flipped the script when he hauled off and punched Show in the snout at a Feb. 17 PPV event in Las Vegas, and that while some pushing and shoving was expected, Money went the whole nine unexpectedly.

McMahon had also talked to Oscar De La Hoya about doing some cross promotion, he told us, but ODLH chose to keep out of sight somewhat as his StripperGate drama played out.

Mayweather too sat down and chatted with writers. He told us that he wasn't very concerned that he could get hurt at WM, that "things happen when you walk out the door, you can get hit by a stray bullet."

He did admit he's got some butterflies, because the wrestling world is unfamiliar to him. He lauded the McMahon's A plus treatment of him during the buildup to Sunday, as well. He promised, and McMahon echoed this, that his relationship with the WWE would continue beyond Sunday.

Floyd didn't commit to fighting firmly in a boxing ring this year, but it's a safe bet that a second fight with Oscar will take place in September. Floyd dissed Goldie, stating that Richard Schaefer actually runs Golden Boy, and dismissed De La Hoya as someone who has failed in his biggest tests. He also slammed Oscar for buying Ring, and questioned whether the magazine will be fair and balanced in their coverage. Money also proclaimed himself "king of the throne," and repeated a slam at Muhammad Ali, questioning the brilliance of a fighter who lost to a boxer with just seven pro fights (as Ali did when he lost a decision to 6-0-1 Leon Spinks in Feb. 1978). "I'm semi retired," he said. "But if the price is right, I will come back. But if I don't come back, it don't matter to me." He is relishing, it is clear, how many fighters are jostling each other to take him on, and make a career-best payday.

Question to TSS Universe: how many of you guys are going to tune in to Wrestlemania Sunday, to see how the Money/Big Show faceoff plays out?

***photo courtesy WWE