

## Pacquiao vs. Cotto: Arum Wins, Arum Wins

Written by Frank Lotierzo

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It's not even first grade logic and is even more rudimentary than boxing promotion 101. The fact is Shane Mosley exposed the truth last week when he said, "He (Arum) gets all the money in a fight between Manny Pacquiao and Miguel Cotto." And Mosley couldn't be more right. Why would Arum want to risk making a fight with Mosley who is promoted by Golden Boy Promotions and get a lesser portion of the money while at the same time risk his star fighter being defeated?

Says Mosley: "He gets a little bit of Cotto's money, he can make money on Pacquiao's end and he can make money on the whole promotional end....Bob Arum, at this point, it's all about money for him."

Although Mosley's words ring true, they don't constitute Bob Arum being a bad guy, it only suggest he's a businessman looking out for his best interest, not boxing's. Nothing new there. In a Pacquiao-Cotto clash Arum is doing the same thing Don King mastered during the 1980's with the heavyweight contenders who challenged WBC champ Larry Holmes. That is put on a fight where he comes out on top regardless of who wins because he had both fighters tied up contractually. This scenario shouldn't be the case legally in boxing but often is at the championship level.

Arum knows that he has potential future Pacquiao opponents Shane Mosley and Floyd Mayweather over a barrel. Anyone denying or trying to refute that doesn't live in reality. He controls the fighter who is the lottery fight for his opponents. The longer a fight with Mosley or Mayweather takes to make, the more Shane's skills erode and Floyd's body starts shows signs of breaking down.

With only one fight left on Arum's deal with Miguel Cotto, the promoter wants to squeeze as much out of him from a financial vantage point as he possibly can. That's the business side of boxing pure and simple. Arum has witnessed Miguel absorb some taxing physical punishment over the last 11 months in two of his last three fights. I'm sure he surmises Cotto is on the decline and there may not be many more big fights for him down the road. So why not insert him as a participant in a major fight and make as much money as possible for both?

Luckily for Cotto he's in a pretty good position with Arum at this time for the following reason. It's his last fight contractually under him. Therefore Arum has to take care of Cotto. Because if he dismisses Cotto and assumes that Pacquiao will beat him in November and Cotto doesn't, he'll lose his hold on one of the fighters who will be half of an upcoming superfight. Can you imagine the ulcer Arum would develop seeing Cotto interviewed at center ring after beating Pacquiao saying that he wants Mayweather, and Arum not having the rights to Cotto?

Bob Arum is too smart to take a chance like that. He may feel confident inside that Manny can handle Miguel, but he's cognizant to the fact that it's definitely not a given. That's why he'll have to take care of Cotto if/before he fights Pacquiao. He'll try and make the fight with Pacquiao so

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Cotto gets taken care of financially, and since he can't risk Cotto winning it, he'll sign him to another multi fight contract. So he can't lose.

Boxing has become so much more of a business lately that it makes the days of when it was controlled by the mob look like the good old days. It's not about what's the best fight or who really are the best fighters. And that makes it just like the other major sports -- that being it's all about money. For instance, how bad did ABC and the NBA want to see the finals be contested between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Cleveland Cavaliers? Think of the wasted tape comparing a potential Kobe Bryant versus LeBron James showdown to the the Magic Johnson versus Larry Bird clashes in 1984, 1985 and 1987 that was never aired due to the Magic eliminating the Cavaliers. Like boxing, a Lakers-Cavaliers NBA final would've been about how much money the network and league could have made.

The same thing applies to professional boxing at the championship level, the difference being that the television networks and promoters in boxing have much more pull and control than the league and networks do the NFL, NBA, NHL and MLB. The NBA and ABC couldn't just match the Lakers and Cavaliers. Sure, via the officials they could have some influence as we saw the Cavaliers get the benefit of almost every call against the Orlando Magic, however they couldn't do anything about the Magic being better and winning the series. Had that been boxing the Cavaliers might not have played the Magic.

If boxing were about doing the right thing and seeking to find out who is the best fighter in one of the biggest fights that could be made, then Manny Pacquiao would challenge WBA welterweight champ Shane Mosley without Mosley having to weigh an ounce under 147. No doubt Pacquiao vs. Mayweather is the biggest money fight, but Mayweather hasn't fought in 17 months, doesn't hold any title and still wants a majority of the money. As for Cotto, his win over Mosley was close and a draw would've been a fair call. He was taken apart by Margarito and lost the title. Mosley took Margarito apart and the addition of Naazim Richardson looks to have given him that few percent that a top trainer can bring to a world championship caliber fighter. On top of that Mosley is the top welterweight in boxing. Pacquiao beating Mosley who weighs 147 would be huge historically. Even if Manny lost a close fight his stature as a great fighter would go up.

Pacquiao and Mosley have shown they fear no fighter and always seek the biggest challenge. Is there a morsel of a doubt that Mosley would fight Paul Williams above welterweight if he could make the same money fighting him as he would Pacquiao? Of course not. Just like Pacquiao wouldn't have a qualm about fighting Mosley at 147.

If Mosley and Pacquiao called the shots, they'd be facing each other for the WBA welterweight title in November. However, Freddie Roach knows the money involved and he wants to get his fighter every advantage he can. That's why he's insistent upon them meeting at a catch-weight of 143, something I'd be doing too if I were him. It's his job to get his fighter every advantage he can because there's so much money in it for them if they win. Just as I wouldn't, they don't care what writers and fans think or say. They could care less if it's written that Pacquiao's victory over Mosley is hollow if Shane has to weigh in at 143. All they know is they're fighting Cotto or Mayweather in six months for even more money than they got for fighting Mosley.

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That said we're talking about boxing and it's hard not to believe that Arum and Roach aren't really playing Mayweather, putting pressure on him to deal or face Manny fighting Cotto. So unless Floyd Mayweather has an epiphany and settles for a smaller percentage of the money, Arum will do everything under the sun and the moon to make Pacquiao vs. Cotto because it's always about business first.

Arum wins, Arum wins!