

BORGES: Cmon Manny, Accept The Testing Protocol, And Fight Floyd

Written by Ron Borges
Thursday, 06 May 2010 15:00

How has it come to pass that so many people look at the drug testing issue that has separated Floyd Mayweather, Jr. from Manny Pacquiao more forcefully than Mills Lane would have as not Pacquiao refusing to do the right thing but rather Mayweather demanding the wrong thing?

Why is taking steps to insure a sporting event is clean (and as we've all sadly learned in recent years very few of them have been in quite some time) somehow the act of a cowardly lion?

The fact of the matter is nothing could be farther from the truth. Now if Mayweather was insisting on his opponent having to do something he's unwilling to do, that would be different but that is not the case. As Shane Mosley admitted during the lead up to his fight with Mayweather, the half dozen random blood tests he was forced to take along with a similar number of urine tests were not a hardship nor did they impact him or his training in any way. In fact, he said he actually learned things by talking to the administrators of the test about natural substitutes he could use while avoiding certain medications he might innocently take for a cold or an infection that would lead to a positive test.

Generally, knowledge sets you free. In boxing, it sets people off. So why is testing no problem for Mosley and Mayweather but like scaling Mt. Everest in shorts and a T-shirt for Pacquiao?

An even larger question is why are so many in boxing trying to paint Mayweather as someone trying to duck Pacquiao by merely wanting both fighters to prove to the world they are clean and running on regular, not high-test?

All Pacquiao had to do to make a Mayweather fight happen was say "No problem" to random blood testing and the fight would have already happened. Somehow the fact that he refused has been turned inside out by many commentators, transforming it into a referendum on Mayweather's willingness to fight rather than on Pacquiao's?

Mayweather was right when he said after all but whitewashing Mosley on May 1 that, "I honestly believe I'm the face of boxing. I believe the right thing to do is to clean things up. There are too many enhancements going on in sports."

For boxing to step up and become a leader, for once, in something positive would be a blessing for a long-maligned and ridiculed sport. Exactly what's the harm in it?

Truth be told there is none, and all these red herrings about whether the commission makes the rules or the fighters do is nonsense. The commissions establish weight classes and then let fighters make a mockery of them either by coming into the ring the night of the fight 15 pounds over the limit or by allowing one powerful fighter to force another to fight at a weight above, or well below the division limit. What about those rules being enforced?

Let Mayweather insist on something being done to insure a fair and level playing field and it

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seems much of boxing opposes it. That wouldn't be because they dislike Mayweather, would it?

According to Pacquiao, he's afraid of having blood taken too close to a fight because it makes him weak so he'll agree to random testing but not up to the final days before the event, even though the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency has said anything less compromises the accuracy of the results.

Pacquiao's concerns about having blood drawn too close to a fight made me wonder about something. What does he do if he starts giving blood IN a fight? Dial 9-1-1?

Bob Arum keeps insisting he and Pacquiao will do what the Nevada State Athletic Commission demands, knowing they won't demand rigorous random blood testing because the last thing it wants is to start seeing major fights fall apart in the final days because someone comes up dirty.

The whole thing, frankly, is ridiculous. Both fighters stand to make as much as \$40 million if they face each other. The fight itself would be the biggest in boxing since Oscar De La Hoya fought Felix Trinidad and nearly as big as when Evander Holyfield and Mike Tyson squared off.

It would be the Leonard-Hearns of its generation, a fight of major importance not only to the fighters but to the sport itself. Yet as long as Pacquiao refuses to agree to random blood testing it is not going to happen. Of that I am sure.

"No!" Leonard Ellerbee, Mayweather's most trusted confidante, said firmly after the Mosley fight when he was asked if Mayweather might change his stance on this. "He (Pacquiao) knows what he has to do. He knows what it will take to make the fight. Either he agrees or we move on. Floyd is not going to fight guys who aren't willing to do this."

De La Hoya stood at a podium after Mayweather had destroyed his company's fighter, Mosley, over 12 rounds and seemed to agree that the idea of fighters acting positively to keep their sport drug free was something that deserved more than the attacks and ridicule Mayweather has had heaped upon him by some journalists, commentators and boxing insiders.

"We now know all fighters can be clean," De La Hoya said. "They showed it on 24/7. If we can't agree to that how can we make fights?"

How indeed? Why is it an unreasonable demand to insist both fighters agree to the only form of testing for performance enhancing drugs that has been proven effective? How did that become a felony or proof that one fighter is ducking another?

"All roads lead to Floyd Mayweather," Mayweather insists. "I pave the way. I've been undefeated since the '90's. I wasn't in no made up weight classes. I didn't win no made up belts. But I'm closer to 40 (33) than to 21. If the fight happens it happens but I'm not out chasing any fighters.

"I'm doing it the old-fashioned way. I don't need to take no enhancement drugs. I don't need to do nothing."

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All Manny Pacquiao has to do is one thing. The right thing. If he does, he'll be standing up to Floyd Mayweather, Jr. and standing up for the sport that has given him so much.