

Arum Says Floyd Didn't Accept Manny Fight, He Will Go With Plan B

Written by Michael Woods
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Manny Pacquiao's promoter Bob Arum announced on a late night conference call that Floyd Mayweather didn't accept the offer to fight the Filipino on Nov. 13, and settle who the top pound for pound fighter is in the sport today.

Arum, the Las Vegas based dealmaker who has tried since last year to get Congressman Pacquiao and Mayweather to square off in what would be the richest boxing match in history, with both men certain to earn over \$40 million apiece, sounded resigned, and not bitter, that Mayweather decided not to accept a Pacquiao fight at this time.

Instead, Arum said during the call that kicked off at 3 AM Eastern, he will next week pursue Plan B for Pacquiao, in the form of a date with Mexican hitter Antonio Margarito (in Mexico or Vegas) or Puerto Rican Miguel Cotto (in Texas or Vegas).

Arum said that he negotiated thru HBO's Ross Greenburg, who brought info to Floyd's advisor, Al Haymon. He didn't deal with Golden Boy's Richard Schaefer, but he presumed Haymon was informing Golden Boy of the progression of negotiations, because Oscar De La Hoya last month said a deal was near. Arum said that the door to fight Mayweather isn't closed, either for November, or for next year. He had promised all concerned that he would negotiate exclusively with Team Mayweather til this cutoff date, but that exclusivity window is closed. To his knowledge, Arum said that he didnt think Mayweather responded to this drop-dead date. However, if Mayweather suddently decides he wants Manny in November, he could still get back in the picture. Arum said hed like to close a deal with either Margarito or Cotto in 10 days or so.

Arum said it seemed to him, in his conversations with Greenburg, that the drug testing issue which loomed so large was squashed, but he wasnt certain, because he only received information second hand.

Arum said a Pacquiao rematch with Cotto has some merit, because Cotto, beaten down badly in their first meeting, now has Manny Steward in his corner. The promoter didnt wish to enter into discussion about Margaritos deservedness, or lack thereof, of a Pacquiao fight, considering his stained rep, and inactivity. Arum refused to tip his hand on whod he like to see Manny fight next, but one presume, since he promotes all three men, that hed be pleased either way.

Arum was asked if he thinks Manny-Money will ever happen. It will be a shame if it doesnt happen. But I dont think you guys should be too hard on Floyd, he said, citing the Uncle Roger uncertainty.

I think the boxing fans are going to be disappointed but they have to cut Floyd some slack. If fans dont understand that Floyd might be hesitant to fight without Uncle Roger in the mix, Arum said, that would be disappointing.

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Weigh in, fans. You bummed? Not surprised? Who should Manny pick for Plan B?