Despite winning one of the greatest fights of his life last January against Antonio Margarito, 2009 turned out to be a year of missed opportunities for Sugar Shane Mosley. Sadly, the Southern California native has waited over a year to get back into the ring. But good things come to those that wait. If Mosley defeats Andre Berto on January 30th, then all roads lead to a Mayweather fight on May 1st, in Las Vegas.

Last May, a seldom talked about incident occurred that raised the anxiety of Shane Mosley. During the post fight press conference for Manny Pacquiao's victory over Ricky Hatton, Mosley sat quietly while Pacquiao stood in front of the media answering questions about his future in the sport. Mosley was coming off of his greatest performance since beating Oscar De la Hoya in 2000, a one sided knockout over Antonio Margarito. Quite frankly it was Mosley's turn to fight one of the big names in boxing. He naturally expected to get in the ring with either Pacquiao or Mayweather.

Earlier that day, Floyd Mayweather announced his comeback from retirement, and eventually fought Juan Manuel Marquez in September. This left Pacquiao as the only other opponent Mosley had his eyes on to fight. In retrospect, if Shane wanted a fight with Manny Pacquiao badly, then that press conference was an ideal time to express his wishes.

Believe it or not, boxers do not run into each other very often. Boxing is unlike most other sports, basketball, baseball, football, where the athletes travel to specific cities multiple times a year. Besides that night in Las Vegas, Shane Mosley would have probably never had a chance to challenge Manny Pacquiao to fight in person, in front of the entire media hoard.

Mosley sat patiently but anxiously at the far end of the platform during the press conference while Bob Arum, Freddie Roach, and Pacquiao each took turns speaking on the microphone. Keep in mind that Mosley was the only person on stage that was not involved in the Pacquiao camp.

Yet besides Bob Arum's vague acknowledgement of Mosley's presence in the room, there was little to be said about a Pacquiao vs. Mosley fight. And that was one opportunity lost.

If Mosley learned anything from that Pacquiao press conference it is this-- nice guys finish last.

After Mayweather defeated Marquez in September, Mosley did not make the same mistake twice. He took the initiative and verbally confronted Mayweather on live television, in a now famous tussle in front of the entire boxing world, shocking the undefeated pound for pound king and forcing his name into the discussions as Mayweather's next opponent.

(Watch Mayweather hold his breath 15 seconds into the video)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fjx_fMCVKg4

However, Mosley grew impatient with waiting and announced his intention to fight Andre Berto on November 14th, the same day Pacquiao fought Miguel Cotto. Immediately after Pacquiao beat Cotto, the infamous Pacquiao vs. Mayweather fight negotiation began between Top Rank and Golden Boy.

Now that the Mayweather vs. Pacquiao fight has seemingly gone down the tube for the mean time, names such as Paulie Malignaggi, Nate Campbell, and Timothy Bradley have been presented as potential opponents for Floyd Mayweather.

It is no secret that the best fighter out there for Mayweather to face is Shane Mosley. Therefore it only makes sense for Mayweather to fight Mosley on the first weekend of May, which has been a calendar date that boxing has used for marquee fights for some time, if Mosley beats Berto.

This past weekend, Pacquiao confirmed his next opponent to be Joshua Clottey on March 13th in Dallas, Texas. Recent reports have stated that Mayweather plans to keep the March 13th date as well and that is why the names that were mentioned above have been thrown around as potential opponents.

But don’t believe the hype. Why would two of the most well known fighters in the sport, who both have their fights regularly televised by HBO, have separate PPV events on the same night? It does not make sense. As a matter of fact, it is complete nonsense.

To take it further, last week, after Bob Arum told ESPN’s Dan Rafael that the Pacquiao vs. Mayweather “fight is dead,” Richard Schaefer spoke with the Los Angeles Times and said that "At 147 pounds, the man to beat is, Sugar Shane Mosley. Floyd will take that fight, and will shut up all those who are saying he's a coward."

Schaefer, the Golden Boy Promotions executive, represents both Mosley and Mayweather. Since Bob Arum has been keeping Manny Pacquiao fights in house, by having him take on the fighters who are represented by Top Rank, (first Cotto, then Clottey) it only makes sense for Schaefer to do the same for Mayweather and Mosley, and keep the Golden Boy dollar in the family.

For the first time in more than two months the Mayweather vs. Pacquiao on and off again fight has lost its steam which makes the Mosley vs. Berto fight all the more important. Because of a possible Mayweather fight waiting in the balance, Andre Berto has turned into one of the most noteworthy opponents Shane Mosley has faced in over a decade.

You know Floyd Mayweather will be watching on January 30th. And after what Mosley has gone through over the last year that is all he could ask for.