

Attorney Keith Sullivan Battles For Boxers

Written by The Sweet Science
Tuesday, 08 March 2011 11:43

NEW YORK (March 8, 2011) – Professional boxers need a real fighter in their corner such as attorneys Keith Sullivan and James Galleshaw, whose passions for the sweet science finds them leading a crusade to aid active and past participants, as well as organizations and groups associated with the sport.

The New York based attorneys and childhood friends five years ago formed their practice – Sullivan & Galleshaw, LLP – concentrating on personal injury, criminal defense and commercial litigation with locations in Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn. They have 24 years of legal experience between them.

Sullivan & Galleshaw LLP also seriously takes its commitment to pro bono and civic work, taking on less fortunate individuals and causes who otherwise would be left without legal representation and likely taken advantage of.

For Attorney Sullivan, 38, boxers and boxing have been special clients for him dating back to his work on a landmark victory representing two-time world champion Joey Gamache against the New York State Athletic Commission. A case that took many twists and turns, as well as 10 years to reach a verdict. Attorney Sullivan charged the NYSAC with negligence for failing to properly carry-out its duties and responsibilities, by conducting an improper weigh-in of Arturo Gatti that allowed him to exceed the 141-pound weight limit for his February 26, 2000 fight against Sullivan's client, Gamache.

The judge admitted in rulings before the trial that this was a very difficult case for the plaintiff and that Gamache's legal team would have an up-hill battle proving the NYAC's negligent. Attorneys Sullivan and Galleshaw were not intimidated or scared off; it strengthened their resolve to fight to expose the pure incompetence of the Commission.

During the trial, the NYSAC Executive Director who conducted the weigh-ins was exposed in that when Gatti was weighing-in the Commission member touched the scale, pushing the counter-weight to a heavier position past the pre-set weight of 141 pounds. Gatti was then told to raise his arms but when the needle failed to balance, his weight was quickly and erroneously called by the same NYSAC Executive Director as 141 pounds. Gatti got off of the scale and immediately guzzled liquid to hydrate as Team Gamache immediately protested, albeit, in vain.

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The following evening, only a few hours before the fight, an unofficial weigh-in was conducted and Gatti tipped the scales at 160 pounds. Now effectively a middleweight, fighting an opponent three weight divisions below him, Gatti floored the lighter welterweight Gamache twice in the opening round, and brutally knocked him out in the second. It took several minutes for Gamache to regain consciousness and he was hospitalized for two days. Gamache, who suffered migraine headaches and neurological damage, never fought again.

Nearly 10 years after the fight, Judge Melvin Schweitzer ruled in Gamache's favor, finding that Gatti had been given an unfair advantage due to the negligent NYSAC. "We were extremely pleased that by making that decision," Attorney Sullivan commented, "the court said that the commission can and will be held accountable when they conduct themselves in a negligent manner that results in injuries to the fighters. They had a duty that day that, when Joey weighed in at 141 pounds, that his opponent also weigh in at the same weight. It was disgraceful. The decision sent a very strong message to all commissions everywhere in the United States that fighters are more than pawns for profit and cannot be used and abused."

Today, Attorney Sullivan is still deeply involved in boxing as legal counsel for former Irish Olympian and world middleweight contender, Andy Lee (24-1, 18 KOs), who fights Craig McEwen this Saturday night (March 12) live on HBO Championship Boxing at MGM Grand Arena at Foxwoods; the North American Boxing Federation (NABF), a not-for-profit regional sanctioning body within the World Boxing Council; and the Boxing Writers Association of America.

"I've always loved boxing since I first watched Mike Tyson fight on HBO," native-New Yorker Sullivan explained. "I was in grammar school and was fascinated by boxers. My grandfather was a big fan of boxing. Boxing was a sport I gravitated towards because of its one-on-one pure human challenge.

"I first got involved representing boxers after meeting legendary trainer Bob Jackson, who was also a state corrections official, when I was working out at the famed Gleason's Gym. We hit it off right away and he's been like an uncle figure to me ever since. Boxing is a great outlet for troubled youths – a safe haven – and it's very rewarding helping some of them become successful young men. A lot of boxers get taken advantage of and I couldn't stand it. They need people on their side, so I got involved, and it's been a labor of love for me. More often than not, I end up agreeing to take on cases or causes for boxers on a pro-bono basis. Together with my partner, James Galleshaw, and our good friend and fellow lawyer, David

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Berlin, we make a great team representing many fighters, organizations and people in the sport.”

Sullivan and Gallleshaw LLP also are strong supporters of The Dr Theodore A. Atlas Foundation, named in memory of ESPN boxing analyst and world-renown trainer Teddy Atlas' father. Attorney Sullivan is a Board of Director with the foundation. Additionally, he is a board member with RING-8, a 57-year-old organization that is Veteran Boxers Association for New York State.

The Dr. Atlas Foundation provides financial, medial, and emotional support to individuals and organizations in need, particularly for the needs of children. Two non-profit youth boxing gyms were recently opened-up, one in Sullivan's childhood neighborhood – Flatbush, Brooklyn – by the Dr. Atlas Foundation. “It is amazing for me to be able to give back to the youth in this much need community,” Attorney Sullivan noted, “where I was born and raised, and where my family's story really began.”

RING 8 is dedicated to its motto of *Boxers Helping Boxers*: lending a helping hand to those in the boxing community who are less fortunate and may require assistance in terms of paying their rent, medical expenses, or whatever justifiable need may arise.

Outside of the boxing world, Sullivan and Galleshaw LLP has raised \$30,000 for U.S. War Veterans through the Wounded Warrior Project, founded a promotional and event company – Cocktails 4 Charities – that donates 100-percent of its proceeds to charity, and currently the firm represents Merit Matters, an FDNY (Fire Department of New York) civic organization, on a purely pro bono basis. Merit Matters is comprised of current and retired members of the FDNY and concerned citizens of New York City. The firm is working with Merit Matters to raise awareness and will file an appeal of a recent Federal Court ruling, which has abolished merit-based hiring and uses race as the basis for hiring and to promote within the FDNY.

Attorney Sullivan is an adjunct law professor, lecturer for the National portion of the Bar Exam, and a legal commentator for Fox News, CNN and MSNBC.

For more information about Sullivan & Galleshaw LLP go on line at www.sullivangalleshaw.com

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Radam G says:

KS is aight! As a lawyer, he is TIGHT! [Hip Hop for got he sh** together.] The cat is God SENT!
Holla!