

Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 15 November 2013 22:04



UPDATED ON SATUDAY AT 6 PM:

Edwin Rodriguez stepped on a scale Saturday morning, and was 179.8, under the maximum of 180 pounds which was the mandate of Team Ward, and agreed to by Team Rodriguez on Friday, after the Mass. boxer was two pounds over the super middle limit of 168. The fight was a go at that point, though another potential hurdle popped up, when a story soon after appeared on BoxingScene.com. The story said Team Ward, represented by Ward attorney Josh Dubin, was demanding that the WBA champ Ward be compensated for being at a weight disadvantage as is stipulated in the WBA rulebook.

"The Association may may penalize any boxer who fails to make weight by imposing a monetary fine, and demoting or suspending the boxer," it is stated in portion A in Section 9, Failure to Make Weight, of the WBA rules book. The stipulations further read that the boxer who doesn't make weight "shall forfeit 35% of his purse." That percent is upped to 45% of his purse

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if the fighter who doesn't make weight refuses to try and make weight.

Some thoughts on this matter: We don't know if Rodriguez tried to make weight, after failing on the scale Friday, so we don't know if that 45% figure could or would be put into effect. Also, the WBA rules also make clear that specific contractual language set up by the principals can supersede their regulations about missing weight and the penalty for the same. I am not privy to any language in the contract which speaks to this situation, so we can't assume the WBA rules should or shouldn't be imposed here.

And, as I read it, when the WBA puts forth that "the Association MAY penalize any boxer who fails to make weight..." that also means that they may choose NOT to impose a penalty. So, if indeed Dubin and Team Ward tried to hold to what Dubin said to Boxing Scene, that "Andre Ward is not going to step in the ring tonight if the WBA isn't going to apply their rules," well, I'm no lawyer, but it seems to me the WBA has inserted into their rules book wording to give them wiggle room in a situation like this, and I don't see how Dubin and Ward could hold to that threat and be on firm ground. But as I said, I'm no lawyer, so it's probably best for the F. Lees to delve into that side of the contretemps...

A person close to Team Rodriguez told me late this morning that there would be no further trimming of Rodriguez' purse, beyond the 20% cut that was chiseled off, and half dispensed to Ward, and half to the California commission. I actually think that 45% cut sort of make sense, in this sort of deal, as I think there should be a severe penalty for guys who don't make weight. The penalty should be painful, and act as a dissuader, and it is arguable whether a \$200,000 penalty on a \$1 million purse acts as enough of a deterrent to the action which diminishes the sport as a whole.

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Reason-defying scorecards, boxers behaving badly, getting snagged for domestic beefs, scale fail shenanigans---this boxing, this theater of the unexpected, keeps on keeping us keyboard tappers busy with unplanned detours into un-needed drama. The latest chapter unfolded on Friday in the late afternoon, when Massachusetts super middleweight Edwin Rodriguez weighed in two pounds over at the weigh-in ahead of his Saturday clash in CA against Andre Ward. He was given time to get to 168, but couldn't and wouldn't attempt the late-innings cut. Thus, Rodriguez' purse was docked 20%, \$200,000, and even if he beats Ward, he cannot lay

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claim to Ward's WBA title belt. Additionally, the fight itself will be cancelled if Rodriguez weighs more than 180 pounds during an AM weigh in. His promoter, Lou DiBella, was left none too pleased. Ward (26-0 with 14 KOs) made weight, coming in at 167.8. He said after that he was surprised Edwin was over, as he [talked so much trash coming in](#) , and you'd expect him to be on message across the board in that case. Ward at the Thursday presser busted on the Dominican-born Rodriguez for starting out camp too heavy. You can imagine [the look Rodriguez gave weigh-in emcee Rob Schneider](#) (ex SNL) when the comedian says, "There's some tension already building, you can feel it" right before E-Rod hopped on the scale.

Truth be told, Rodriguez looked shell-shocked after the debacle.

The scrap will screen on HBO.

"La Bomba" had made 168 for his March contest in Monaco against Ezequiel Maderna (UD10 win), and was 171 3/4 for his last bout, in July against Denis Grachev (TKO1 win). The 28-year-old had been telling people "this is my time" leading up to the scrap, and his attitude had made believers in a handful of fans, judging by a scan of social media. The 24-0 hitter, who boasts 16 KOs, doesn't have a single best win that leaps at at you when you inspect his resume, but DiBella and ex manager Larry Armev had done a solid job getting him to this point. A person close to the promotion told me that Rodriguez did the sauna in the morning, and wasn't able to shed a drop of sweat. And, I asked, can we assume he won't go over 180 Saturday morning? "That's the plan," the insider said, with grim humor. I'm guessing trainer Ronnie Shields will be tasked with keeping room service away from E-Rod's room this evening.

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SouthPaul says:

I was at the weigh in and from my view didn't look like Rodriguez had much more to give but neither did he look gaunt or unhealthy. For \$200,000 I would've gave up my toes. Fighting my arse off on my heels for as long as it lasts...

amayseng says:

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[QUOTE=SouthPaul;40054]I was at the weigh in and from my view didn't look like Rodriguez had much more to give but neither did he look gaunt or unhealthy. For \$200,000 I would've gave up my toes. Fighting my arse off on my heels for as long as it lasts...[/QUOTE]

thats funny....

debella even said rod was dry, couldnt even spit or ****, damn it is a shame. i am hoping for rod to have a good account of himself as i want to see the best in ward, not an easy sparing session.

The Shadow says:

Looks like Andrain won at the scales again.

The Shadow says:

*Andre

And dude will lose so much money. It's a shame. Ward is probably ecstatic. Another 100 grand is always sweet.

stormcentre says:

Not looking good for Rodriguez.

This is just more motivation for Ward, and the thoughts and strains Rodriguez will be going through wont assist his performance and plans.

stormcentre says:

Oh man.

If Andre Ward doesn't stop this guy I will be surprised.

I have a feeling that Rodriguez is going to get schooled

The Shadow says:

I think so, too. He's too depleted.

stormcentre says:

His (Rodriguez) last KO win in R1 was good - I thought the fight would at least get to the late rounds.

But I just can't see a notable win on Rodriguez's record that tells me he can hang with a vicious

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and temporal operator like Ward.

Also, I saw Rodriguez V Pryor, and I thought Rodriguez looked a little sloppy there, a little to wide and open.

Particularly for a guy like Ward.

I won't be surprised to see Andre knock Rodriguez down or out with a counter left hook. Rodriguez looks susceptible to them.

stormcentre says:

Who is Rodriguez promoted by?

I have forgotten.

That will tell us how/why he got fast tracked into this fight/position; with Ward.

I bet it is Goosen or DiBella.

brownsugar says:

Rodriguez will be pumped by the added weight... I'm looking for a tough fight. I'm hoping Ward can do something dramatic. But I suspect a Ward UD....however Rodriguez is a live dog.