On January 26th in New York, Vernon Forrest would shock the boxing world by upsetting the heavily favored 'Sugar' Shane Mosley. It was quite a comeuppance for Mosley who was thought to the best 'pound-for-pound' performer in the world.

It turns out, at least for that one night, he wasn't even the best 147-pounder in todays game.

This Saturday night in Indianapolis they meet again.

My question is, why? Not that it doesn't hold some intrigue.

Can Mosley finally down Forrest? Or does 'the Viper' simply have his number? How will Shane react mentally after his first professional loss? How does Vernon react as a favorite after being a 7-1 underdog the first time out? There are plenty of questions you ask yourself before these two go at it again.

But you get the sense that this is a fight that unlike most fine wines- remember that old commercial?- was made before it's time.

Yeah, yeah, I know that Sugar Ray Robinson gained revenge on Randy Turpin just months after he lost his middleweight crown and that Ray Leonard did the same thing after his first career loss to Roberto Duran. This is a different time and era, and quite frankly the interest was there in those instances for immediate return bouts.

Forrest-Mosley II? Uh, uh. If you scan the internet and look at the coverage being afforded this event you'd think that the bout between John Ruiz and Kirk Johnson was this Saturday night and not the welterweight championship.(More on that later).

Many industry insiders are shaking their head at why this fight is happening so soon. HBO was more than willing(begging actually) for Mosley to take a tune-up fight or two and then go after Forrest. And they were also willing to let Forrest have a few obligatory token defenses in that time. The thinking being that they would build towards a climatic rematch early next year.

But Mosley demanded the immediate rematch and would hear talk of a tune-up fight. Which is puzzling to me on several accounts. First being that much of boxing is physcological and taking a beating like that, a confidence building fight is exactly what the doctor ordered. By taking the

immediate rematch, the first round on Saturday night could just be round 13 of their first bout.

Secondly, if HBO or anyone for that matter is willing to throw easy fights your way for big money- you jump at it. That's the first thing you learn in Boxing Management 101. But I guess Shane being so used to being misguided throughout his career doesn't know any better. And lastly, this applies to both fighters, whoever wins this bout on Saturday goes onto....what? See, the problem is that there is no other premium, marquee value welterweight to face after these two face each other. The only thing they can hope for is a move up to 154-pounds and taking on the winner of Oscar De La Hoya-Fernando Vargas.

If that doesn't happen, where does the winner go from here? A unification bout with Michelle Piccirillo?

Wouldn't they have both been better off taking a few fights and then doing it all over again. This rematch, you had to let marinate, instead they barely let this thing defrost out of the freezer.

Now, onto the 'marketing' and 'promoting' of this fight. Where do I begin? Ok, lets start with the fact that this bout is in the middle of summer, where it's been proven time and time again that promoters are reluctant to put on big shows in the months of July and August. Why? Because studies have proven that TV viewerships are at their lowest and people aren't generally inclined to stay indoors as much as they during the other seasons. Quick, name the last big pay-per-view show that took place in July or August? (Sorry, but Roy Jones-Julio Gonzalez doesn't count).

Then there's the location, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Nothing wrong with 'the Hoosier State' at all and this fight is one of the centerpiece events of the annual 'Black Expo' this year, but in canvasing a few of my colleagues that cover boxing on a regular basis, there simply aren't that many scribes going out to the Conseco Fieldhouse to cover this event.

But from what I've been told the ticket sales have been strong locally, which is good news, a fight of this caliber shouldn't look like a Montreal Expos game. But what's real puzzling and frustrating as a media member is the lack of access that both fighters are giving to the media. Fighters in the past that have complained bitterly about the lack of attention they are given by the public and media. Uhhh, guys, this is no way to go about it, there was a reason why Muhammad Ali is one of the most popular athletes ever- and it isn't because he shut off the media prior to his events. Not that Ali is a fair comparison of course, but part of the job of a professional prizefighter is to actually help in the promoting and marketing of the event.

One of the main reasons that you haven't seen that many stories focusing on this fight compared to Ruiz-Johnson, a fight that is about one-tenth as appealing and a week later to boot, is that unlike Mosley and Forrest, both camps of Ruiz and Johnson have been very accomodating and they are seeing the results.

That's not to say that Ruiz-Johnson will sell as many tickets as Forrest-Mosley, because it won't, but it does set a foundation for future events where there will be a relationship with the media and more importantly, familiarity with the fans. An example would be Bernard Hopkins and his victory over Felix Trinidad. The performance itself was great, but with his pre-fight antics and rhetoric, coming into the fight he was more of a known commodity and he cashed in on that after he downed Trinidad.

The most ludicrous element in all this is that Mosley, who was upset at his lack of recognition he was garnering after his career-defining victory over Oscar De La Hoya, has enlisted the help of IMG, a marketing company that has the likes of Tiger Woods on their roster. Now this is almost too ridiculous to believe, but Barry Frank, who runs the IMG ship, has sent an edict to Mosley and his people that in the two or three weeks prior to the fight he was not to do any one-on-one interviews. Why? Because of the way they restrict the access to Tiger Woods before his major tournaments. The fact they are comparing a relatively unknown boxer to a guy that is arguably the most recognized athlete in the world, just tells you how out of touch IMG really is. Mark them down as another in a long line of folks who have flourished in other business, who think they can do boxing, but just don't get it.

This is how you 'market' a fighter? The thinking being that Mosley will be useless to them if he loses again to Forrest. True. But, my question is, if Shane couldn't capitilize on a victory over De La Hoya in Los Angeles, how much is a win against Forrest in Indianapolis gonna do for his visability? The bottom line is that the winner of this rematch holds his ground on the boxing food chain. The loser, steps down a few notches. Everything to lose, nothing to gain. Now, ask yourself, is this the time to make that rematch?