

Steve Forbes ready for Santos

Written by Rick Folstad
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These are tough times for former junior-lightweight champ Steve Forbes. He's a junior-middleweight fast on his way to becoming a light-heavyweight, a growing man trying to fit into a small, unforgiving division.

Apparently, he looks at food and gets fat.

He put on a little weight for his recent fight with David Santos, and the next thing he knew, they took away his title, snapped it out of his chubby little hand like it was an ice cream cone and he was an 8-year-old with a slippery grip.

But it's not like Forbes didn't see it coming. He had three months to get ready to defend his IBF junior-lightweight title against Santos. Three months to sweat off some soft pounds and maybe stand on a scale once in awhile just to see how he was doing, how close he was to the target weight of 130.

On Saturday at the Pechanga Resort and Casino in California, Forbes stood on the scale and - surprise - discovered he was a lightweight, just two pounds shy of becoming a junior-welterweight.

He weighed 134 pounds, or four pounds over the limit.

He disappeared for a couple hours, came back and found out he still weighed just a little under 133 pounds.

What did he do for those two hours, go in the next room and take a nap?

So much for the IBF title defense. Now it's just another fight.

By fight time on Sunday, Forbes had porked up to a ripe 152 pounds, though he said you had to be fair and subtract a few pounds because he was wearing his clothes and boots when he weighed in again Sunday. OK. So he weighted 147 pounds. What did he do between Saturday and Sunday, camp out at Baskin Robbins? How do you put 14 pounds on in 24 hours?

Forbes must know a secret.

Santos, meanwhile, came back Sunday ready to fight at 131 pounds.

Forbes went on to beat Santos on a split decision, though there should be an asterisk next to the win on Forbes' fight record telling the world

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that it wasn't fair, that he was fighting as a junior-middleweight when he beat a junior-lightweight.

Where are the cops when you need them?

The IBF, meanwhile, looked over all the paperwork and didn't like what it saw. Some of the numbers were too high, too lop-sided. One of its champions hadn't acted like one. Forbes didn't bother to live up to his contract or his title.

But instead of closing its eyes and shrugging its shoulders, the IBF told Santos he was still the No. 1 contender and would get the next title shot against a legitimate 130-pounder.

It also scolded Forbes, saying there is "absolutely no excuse for a champion with a three month training window to come to a weigh-in four pounds overweight."

A little applause, please, for the IBF.

The real problem here is the crazy idea that it's safer for fighters trying to make weight, to weigh-in the day before the fight instead of the day of the fight. It gives them more time to get their strength back. It's less dangerous that way.

Give me a break.

What's safe about a 130-pounder climbing into the ring with a 152-pounder? Isn't that why we have divisions, so that doesn't happen?

It wasn't that long ago that fighters weighed-in the day of the fight, usually around noon. If they had to lose weight, that still gave them enough time to regain their strength before the fight. That way, no one could take a 14 or 15 pound advantage into the ring with them.

It kept junior-middleweights from pretending they were junior-lightweights.