

Manny-Mayweather Fight In Jeopardy Over Drug Testing?

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MAYWEATHER VS PACQUIAO IN JEOPARDY AS PACQUIAO REFUSES TO COMPLY WITH UNITED STATES ANTI DOPING DRUG TESTING PROCEDURES

LOS ANGELES, CA (December 22, 2009). . . The mega-fight between Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao is now in jeopardy after Golden Boy Promotions, on behalf of Mayweather Promotions, learned today that Manny Pacquiao is refusing to comply with Olympic style drug testing as outlined and mandated by the United States Anti Doping Agency (USADA) and as requested by Mayweather's management to ensure fair play and sportsmanship by both fighters.

Early today Richard Schaefer, CEO of Golden Boy Promotions, was contacted by Top Rank President Todd duBoef, who informed Schaefer that Pacquiao would not agree to have his blood taken within 30-days of the bout based on the fighter's superstition of testing so close to a fight.

Schaefer commented, "Todd told me that Pacquiao has difficulty with taking blood and doesn't want to do it so close to the fight. He, Pacquiao, would only agree to have blood drawn before the kick-off press conference and after the fight."

Olympic style drug testing involves random sampling of the athlete's blood and urine prior to and after the fight. The USADA procedure includes both blood and urine sampling so that all banned substances, some of which do not show up in urine alone, are tested for thoroughly.

"It is unfortunate to hear this from Manny Pacquiao's representatives, particularly since, as of today, both parties had worked out all other issues related to this fight," said Schaefer. "Team Mayweather is certainly surprised that an elite athlete like Manny Pacquiao would refuse drug testing procedures which Floyd has already agreed to and have been agreed to by many other top athletes such as Lance Armstrong, and Olympians Michael Phelps, LeBron James and Kobe Bryant."

Mayweather, who was informed of Pacquiao's reluctance shortly after Schaefer received word of the impasse, feels Pacquiao has to explain himself immediately or be faced with accusations from the media and the public regarding his own status as a clean and drug free athlete.

"I understand Pacquiao not liking having his blood taken, because frankly I don't know anyone who really does," said Mayweather. "But in a fight of this magnitude, I think it is our responsibility to subject ourselves to sportsmanship at the highest level. I have already agreed to the testing and it is a shame that he is not willing to do the same. It leaves me with great doubt as to the level of fairness I would be facing in the ring that night. I hope that this is either some miscommunication or that Manny will change his mind and step up and allow these tests, which were good enough for all these other great athletes, to be performed by USADA."

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Leonard Ellerbe, CEO of Mayweather Promotions said, "We hope that Manny will do the right thing and agree to the testing as it is an egregious act to deny the testing and hence, deny the millions of fans the right to see this amazing fight. We just want to make sure there is a level playing field in a sport that is a man-to-man contest that relies on strength and ability. I still hope this decision is coming from someone in Pacquiao's camp and not Manny himself as it would be a shame that an athlete of his stature and who represents his whole country would not be able to show the public or his fellow athletes that he agrees to the highest standards in sports competition."