

If Pacquiao-Mayweather Fizzles, Pacquiao-Foreman Might Flourish

Written by Michael Woods

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Team Pacquiao couldn't be faulted if they just said to heck with it, money is nice, but this negotiation session to set up Mayweather vs. Pacquiao has been a monstrous pain in the butt. Could you blame them if they said let's come back to the concept when everyone has simmered down, maybe in a couple of months, and in the meantime, set up a bout to keep Manny busy, while Floyd decides how many hurdles he wants to set up to make Manny-Money a go.

If Team Pacquiao decides to table the Mayweather deal for the moment, and hash out blood-urine-hair testing parameters outside of the gaze of the keyboard tappers, then what or who is Plan B? It's looking like 28-0 (8 KOs) WBA junior middleweight champion Yuri Foreman as of right now.

The Brighton Bad Boy Mike Marley thinks Pacquiao-Foreman is this close to being a done deal for March 20 in Vegas. Team Foreman PR director Dovid Efune counsels us not to book our flights and rooms just yet.

"Team Pacquiao and Team Foreman are talking," Efune told TSS. "But nothing is confirmed. We're all still unsure whether Pacquiao and Mayweather might still be on. We're unsure whether anything is concrete.

"We were told very, very early on by Top Rank that we were likely next in line as an opponent. As opposed to Pacquiao fighting Malignaggi or Tim Bradley, Pacquiao-Foreman would be more exciting. No, it's not a fight like against Cotto, Yuri moves around the ring like a dreidel! And it's one more weight class, another belt for Manny, in the eighth weight class. What would Pacquiao want from Malignaggi? He'd have to drop down in weight for that. Fighting Maliganggi isn't making history, versus Yuri, Manny could be making history."

Team Foreman has eyes wide open on this thing. They realize they could be used as a bargaining chip, to bring Team Mayweather closer to a deal, as the Mayweather crew realizes Manny has leverage to do other things, and make noise, and make money.

"What's wrong with being used as a bargaining chip?" said the affable Efune with a chuckle. "From a professional perspective, compared to where we were a year or two years ago, it's an honor and a privilege to be discussed in terms of fighting Pacquiao."

And if talks with Mayweather crater completely, or there is an agreement to revisit the event after a cool-down period, would the 29-year-old New Yorker Foreman insist that Pacquiao jump through umpteen testing hoops to insure his cleanliness from PEDs?

"That's a good question," Efune said. "I'm not aware that's something being discussed. But the fact that both Pacquiao and Foreman are promoted by Top Rank, I think that would mean making this fight would be easier. I think the Nevada commission's testing regulation have worked until now, have been strong enough. When we were to get down to the nitty gritty, it'll be

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easier to make Pacquiao-Foreman than Pacquiao-Mayweather because of the closer circle of people involved.'