

THE NABF RULE

Written by Charles Jay
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If one suspects that a sanctioning organization is engaging in corrupt activities, what is the model by which it should be dealt with?

Well, I've got a few suggestions along those lines (did you think I wouldn't?):

1)

That somebody have the fortitude to enforce the Ali Act in one way or another here. As we've mentioned, in Section 11 of the Act, and under certain conditions, sanctioning organizations are required to put forward ratings criteria that meets with the standards established by the ABC. Well, first it would be a good idea for the ABC to get off its ass and establish this criteria. Surely it didn't do so under the "leadership" of Greg Sirb. I would hope that in the end the ABC would have enough perspective to be able to employ such criteria, and I wouldn't mind them following through with my request for investigation of the NABF, as I've pretty much laid everything out for them. And if those guys can't do that, who really needs them?

2)

That somehow, some way, an arbitration panel - with some knowledge of the boxing industry - is established sometime in the near future, for the purposes of reviewing boxer grievances about instances of manipulated ratings, rigged decisions, stripped titles, etc., that may have some connection to corruption or prejudice in favor of, or against, a particular manager or promoter. When meeting before this board, the boxer and his management would have the opportunity to present evidence - circumstantial or otherwise - not unlike the kind of evidence contained within

Chapter 22 of "Operation Cleanup"

. The sanctioning body would then have the opportunity to explain - thoroughly - it's criteria, philosophy of its rules, and its rationale behind whatever decision it made that brought forth the dispute in the first place. No one has yet had the foresight to put together such an arbitration panel.

3)

Very strict standards should be applied to organizations when they are under a formal review. For the NABF to simply explain, for example, that Golden Johnson did not agree to fight the highest available contender might, if you weren't looking too deeply, seem plausible. But in the Johnson case, there were extenuating circumstances, to say the least, and I would want to be supplied with a satisfactory explanation about every link in the chain of events that led the NABF to make the decisions they did. Judgment on sanctioning

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bodies should completely discount any mitigating actions after the fact - things like "grace periods" or "interim championships" - that provide organizations with convenient opportunities to have their cake (sanctioning fees) and eat it too (justify stripping titles at will).

4)

This is what I would call

"THE NABF RULE"

. After all, I figure we should name SOMETHING in their honor (or dishonor, as it were).

Should an organization be found to be corrupt, or to be circumventing either their own rules or reasonable standards which would be set forth by a national commission, for the sake of favoring a particular promoter, where it works to the unjust detriment of a fighter, that organization shall be suspended from sanctioning title bouts or operating in any official capacity for whatever period of time would be deemed appropriate under the circumstances, or preferably, indefinitely, subject to certain requirements being met to facilitate reinstatement.

Naturally, I realize you can't legislate the sanctioning bodies out of business.

But you can go through the back door.

To illustrate this, and using the NABF as an example, part of this rule would prescribe that, in the event of a violation, no licensed promoter be permitted to advertise or publicize any bout as being for an NABF title or use the NABF in such advertising; no licensed ring announcer would be permitted to mention the NABF during his (or her) ring introductions; no network (in the event they were eventually licensed or regulated in some way) would be permitted to bill any bout to be an NABF-sanctioned contest; all licensees, whether they be promoters, managers, matchmakers, fighters, or agents, would be prohibited from remitting any fees to the NABF, whether they be in the form of sanctioning fees, membership fees, advertising fees, or fees to attend an official NABF meeting or convention, or else risk suspension and/or other disciplinary action.

At the same time, if the NABF wished to be reinstated after a specific period of time as set forth by the commission, it would be required to continue to rate fighters on a monthly basis during the suspension period, using criteria that meets acceptable standards, subject to continuing review, and do so while maintaining a constant web presence. Only when the national board is satisfied that the NABF has given good cause that it should be reinstated will that, in fact, happen.

The idea, of course, is to force an organization to spend time, money, and effort to maintain itself during a suspension period, with little or no money coming in during that time.

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If that wouldn't serve as enough of a deterrent, what would?

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