

A HEAVYWEIGHT IMPLOSION

Written by Charles Jay
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The next big bout for heavyweight Thomas Williams will be, we assume, in a United States federal courthouse when he goes on trial for federal sports bribery on August 20 in Las Vegas.

When he does, he may wind up carrying a little more baggage than he originally intended.

As you obviously know if you've read the last several chapters of "Operation Cleanup", Williams fought in Wisconsin on July 5, in a ten-round fight with Michael Grant that was declared an exhibition when it was discovered that he was indeed under indictment for allegedly fixing a fight with Richie Melito in Las Vegas two years ago.

The claim made by Williams' agent, Robert Mittleman, had been that Williams was NOT under indictment, simply under investigation - something Mittleman later admitted was a lie.

TOTAL ACTION has obtained documentation indicating that both Williams and Mittleman presented false information on their applications for state licensure in Wisconsin, an offense that could conceivably have an effect on Williams' trial.

On the second page of the boxer's application put forth by the State of Wisconsin Department of Regulation & Licensing, a series of questions about the disciplinary background of an individual are asked.

The first question is - "Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, or driving while intoxicated (DWI), in this or any other state, OR are criminal charges or DWI charges currently pending against you?"

To this question, Williams checked the "NO" box on the application, clearly an answer that was not truthful.

Of course, this was no surprise, since this had been the false contention of Williams and Mittleman all the way up to the day of the fight.

The following language is used at the bottom of the application:

"I swear under penalty of perjury, that the information provided on this application is true to the best of knowledge and belief."

The application is signed: "Thomas Top Dog Williams".

Quite obviously, Williams has perjured himself here. And if Mittleman - whose word Cedric Kushner, Eric Bottjer, and everyone else associated with the troubled July 5 promotion relied upon to a considerable degree - in any way encouraged, directed, or advised

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Williams to answer the question in the application in a false manner, then he could very well be guilty of SUBORNING perjury.

The lie on Williams' form was in no way a secret. Members of the management team of Michael Grant became aware of Williams' answers when inspecting his application in the presence of Roxanne Peterson, administrator for the Wisconsin commission, earlier in the day (July 5), and in fact, later on that evening, when it was suggested to Grant that he might be arrested if he failed to fulfill his contractual obligation to fight Williams, attorney Jim Thomas, one of Grant's managers, was fully prepared to bring the application up as evidence that Williams had misrepresented himself in the process of getting the fight.

They had a good point; had Mittleman been open and honest about the status of Williams when asked by Cedric Kushner about the indictment some weeks before, it's likely Williams would have been removed as the opponent. So in a way, he got the fight under false pretenses.

Ironically, there was really no need for Williams to lie on his Wisconsin application, since the commission would have most likely allowed him to fight, considering he was not under an active suspension at the time.

Besides the falsehoods he told to promoters, Mittleman lied to the Wisconsin commission on his license form as well.

Mittleman answered "NO" to all the disciplinary questions on the application, including this one - "Has any licensing or other credentialing agency ever taken any disciplinary action against you, including but not limited to, any warning, reprimand, SUSPENSION, probation, limitation or revocation?"

Mittleman is still under an indefinite suspension handed down by the Mexico City Boxing Commission on June 11, 1999. Reportedly, the genesis of the suspension involves his attempts to take Mexican welterweight Miguel Rodriguez, who was under a valid contract to a licensed promoter (Raul Cruz), and transport him across the border to the U.S. for the purposes of stealing him from Cruz.

The suspension has never been lifted by the commission in Mexico.

While it is true that the Mexico City commission is not a member of the Association of Boxing Commissions, and that regulatory bodies in the United States are not compelled to honor such a suspension, it is also a fact that Mittleman is listed on "The Association of Boxing Commissions Suspension/Disciplinary List", which is accessible through the ABC's website (

<http://www.abcboxing.com>

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This suspension apparently became a problem for Mittleman when he brought a client, junior middleweight Wilfredo Rivera, to fight Shane Mosley in California in September of 1999. The commission reportedly would not let Mittleman work the corner, but finally agreed to after Rivera threatened not to come out.

Williams may run into difficulties as a result of his lies, especially if he expects to take the stand in his own defense during the course of his trial. Evidence that he has perjured himself since the indictment, and in a boxing-related circumstance, no less, could be damning indeed.

And according to Ms. Peterson of the Wisconsin commission, the state may launch its own investigation, as is its option when presented with false information on a state document.

While they're at it, maybe the state should also investigate something else.

We'll talk about THAT next.

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