After two consecutive much anticipated big-money fight cards were cancelled when one of the main event boxers tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs, the willingness of other fighters, not to mention their managers and promoters, to face the same scrutiny and risk the same consequences will be sorely challenged.

So, too, will the depth of the sincerity among all prize fighters for policing themselves against

the scourge upon their sport of PEDs. With random drug testing for PEDs before a fight not required by most boxing jurisdictions, the onus to clean up the sport has fallen squarely on the fighters themselves. Though ridiculous, like most of boxing's absurdities it is a sad fact.

To his credit, Floyd Mayweather, Jr. has been a leader in this regard, using his powerful position in the business of boxing to insist upon his opponents agreeing to random testing. Because Mayweather quite often provides opponents their biggest paydays, only Manny Pacquiao has refused since the dawning of this one-man clean-up campaign and the pressure of Mayweather's public position has led others in high-profile fights to demand the same testing.

Pacquiao has since relented and said he will agree to random blood and urine testing for a Mayweather fight but is not insisting his opponents do the same even though he maintains a similarly powerful position in the sport and could easily do so.

It is ridiculous even by boxing's low standards that it is the fighters who are being made responsible for regulating their own industry because regardless of the cost of such testing random testing for PEDs should be mandatory. The reason why is simple: if you are using steroids or other PEDs in baseball you simply hit the ball farther or throw it harder. In football, you are running faster, hitting harder or recovering faster from injury. In basketball, you become a rebounding beast.

But in boxing, a fighter on PEDs can both inflict more potentially damaging and possibly life-threatening injuries upon your opponent. In addition you may well be able to withstand more punishment, possibly leading to your own life-altering injuries in the ring. As Mike Tyson once put it so eloquently, "You play basketball. You play baseball. You don't play boxing.''

Promoters howl at the potential costs of random testing and both television executives and state regulators fear just what happened in the Amir Khan-Lamont Peterson and Andre Berto-Victor Ortiz fights, which was the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars because you can't buy insurance for a failed drug test.

Yet the testing costs could be absorbed if it were spread not among individual fighters or promoters but rather paid out of a pool created by taking a small percentage of each big fight card off the gross in each state, the number obviously growing the bigger matches.

The collection and distribution of that money could then be administered by the Association of Boxing Commissions, led by its president Tim Lueckenhoff, with individual states passing legislation if needed to mandate that cost onto individual fight promotions as a cost of doing business in the state.

The latest examples of why this is necessary came first when the Peterson came up positive for excessive artificial testosterone after having called for such voluntary testing himself because, he said, he felt Khan might be using. Peterson later admitted taking PEDs before the first fight between them as well. In both cases, Peterson will argue this was under a doctor's supervision for a medical condition but there are no real provisions for that.

If a fighter tests positive for performance enhancers there is little gray area for a commission to allow the fight to go on unless a tainted result can be established. That does not appear to be the case in this fight nor in the case of Berto, who suffered the same fate after testing positive and then claiming tainted supplements not given to him by his supplements advisor, Victor Conte, had skewered the test.

The interesting twist there is that is Conte is the disgraced former head of Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative (BALCO), which was the source of PEDs for fallen Olympic gold medalists Tim Montgomery and Marion Jones, allegedly for Barry Bonds and a host of other major league baseball and pro football players as well as boxer Sugar Shane Mosley, who admitted to using PEDs in grand jury testimony.

Conte has since testified for the government in high profile cases against some of his former clients, served a short jail term and now claims to be an advocate for the exclusion of PEDs in sports while continuing to provide assorted other supplements to help athletes legally reach peak performance.

Peterson's positive test results became public so close to the fight that the card could not be saved, a blow to Khan and HBO. This greatly angered promoter Richard Schaefer of Golden Boy Promotions, who claimed his company was not made aware of the initial positive test until the second sample also was tested a month later.

The lag time left him little opportunity to find a new opponent for Khan in time to save the May date. Khan, who like Peterson trained for months for a fight he will now not be paid for, will face Danny Garcia in July but that will require another round of intense training and does not carry with it any of the cachet of a Khan-Peterson rematch.

Berto's positive test led to a rapid testing of his B sample after which the results were made public and he was replaced by Josesito Lopez in time to save the June 23 card. But, again, Lopez brings none of the cachet or interest that a rematch with Berto would have in light of the raucous nature of their first fight.

This is what television networks, casino owners and state commissions fear most about regularly randomly testing fighters before major matches for PEDs. Unlike other sports, there is no natural substitute when a man event performer of the quality of Berto or Peterson is lost. Both were in rematches because of the story line around their first fight and now that is lost and so is the revenue those fights would have generated as well as the promotional costs already expended.

All four fighters had agreed to voluntary testing by Voluntary Anti-Doping Association (VADA), a Nevada-based concern run by Nevada's former chief of ringside physicians, Dr. Margaret Goodman. Since all such testing is voluntary and the belief is VADA is using a more stringent testing protocol than other testing organizations including the World Anti-Doping Association (WADA), which regularly tests but seldom catches Olympic athletes using PEDs (Jones, for example, had never tested positive in an international competition), the fear is fighters will now refuse to participate, as Julio Cesar Chavez, Jr. already has.

Pacquiao could ramp up the heat by insisting he and his opponents all be tested as Mayweather has done but as yet he has been silent on the issue. With two major fight cards having been cancelled within two weeks of each other caution and probably a retreat from testing seems likely.

If so, it would be another sad day for boxing and for the men and women most at risk in the sport – the prize-fighters themselves.

Comment on this article

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Radam G says:

OMFG! The game has so much optical illusion. Danggit! Now here comes a lot of mirages about PEDs. Money May ain't leading syet. He too is on da juice and da shots, especially for his frail-arse mitts. C'mon! If Money May didn't take that Vegas's legal steroid of xynocaine [word may be misspelled], his a$$ would not be able to fight. Dude has some really fragile hand bones. And da Nevada powers that be know what time it is. For 'em it's MONEY TIME! And Money May makes a lot of it for the Las Vegas's weak-a$$ economy.

What he ought to do is use his son's peepee on those bad hands like Doc Vitali K does. Urine is legal as a muthadrug. Juan Manuel Marquez use to drink it. They were smelling pi$$ all up on his lips. Hehehe! OOPS! I musta' fo'got! What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. So does using steroids by a certain boxer.

The moral of the story is that you cannot hide steroids by turning 'em into pellet and shooting 'em up your arsehole. Lesson learned for both Peterson and Berto. Don't believe that you can hide steroids in your sh*t, and since sh*t is not tested, so you won't be caught.

Oh, YUP! You will be caught 99.9 percent of the time, unless you have a hook-up like Money May has in Sin City. Today his double goes to jail. Where in da double fudge will the real Money May be hiding. I'm down with O-P-P, yall know me!

C'mon, pugilistic scribes, get on your hardcore investigative reporting and don't take any of the Sin City, HBO and Money May payoffs. We want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Holla!

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brownsugar says:

Not everybody can survive in the brutal sport of boxing by relying on their natural talent and preparation like Floyd. The news of two young up and coming prospects like Berto and Peterson being involved with PED's is crushing news.

In Hollywood they depend on face lifts and medical procedures to extend youth and Those who have enough money can even escape the ravaging effects of HIV (like Magic Johnson). There's always a way to artificially improve on nature... at least temporarily.

But the use of super-soldier-serums and hardened handwraps in boxing in order to improve performance in the ring can only be considered as a criminal act when the user literally holds the life of his opponent in his hands.

We still don't know the full story behind Peterson and Berto,.. but I don't know if it will get any better for either of them.

It's a good thing that more and more boxers are stepping forward to champion the cause of blood testing.

Radam G says:

C'mon, B-Sug! As a person in the loop, I can tell you that they got caught trying to hide steroids in their poop. Why is that so hard to believe? Wow!

See in this cyberspace world, you have a lot of fakes. So people don't believe anyone, who is not down with the flakes. I'm not the only reader of the legit boxing world who comes here. I'm just the most steady and outspoken one.

Ninety-five percent of the other boxers or gamers who have the hookup in da game, quit this TSS Universe in frustration because you have readers here who don't believe syet, because they don't know syet and feel empowered with a place that give 'em a voice of any kind -- righteous spittin' or straight-up bullsh*tology and pure make believe. But I understand those readers and like to fudge with them. Hehehe! [You know me! I'm down with O-P-P!] They have apparently never been a part of elitism of anything, so of course they think and believe that everybody is at their level or fronting and faking and straight-up fibbing in-da-know syet.

In this game, if they are not old school, a lot of boxers and New Jack, straight whack and toilet stool trainers are naive and will try any jive. Peterson and Berto got caught taking steroids, plain and simply. Even Pops Joy May said that they took the steroids because: "They just did what they believe their opponents were doing."

It is no SECRET that steroids are taken by tons of pugilists in the amateurs and pros. This jive has been going all for at least 60 years plus that I hear about. And every old-school trained boxer and trainer know the curprits. I could -- but I won't -- name a whole lot of boxers who took that syet and then stop taking it when they discovered that it was not working like a Hulk or gorilla, and that just plain eating right and working out were the only keys to whup-a$$ success. The sorry junk is just that -- JUNK!
So we in da know KNOW nine-tenth of "the full story behind Peterson and Berto."

Maybe it is good that you did not get into the top of the level of this seedy, always-going-ape-syet, crooked-a$$ sport, because you are too much of a passive, apologist and sympathizer. In other words, you are a nice guy 24/7. Don't believe that sh*t that GOAT Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard and now Da Manny is full of that nice-guy way. They AIN"T! Maybe they are nice guys 12/3 1/2. Cohabitation of good and bad is essential for success in this hurt bitnezz. Holla!

Radam G says:

BTW, B-Sug! Some of you TSS readers really need to keep it real with your pugilistic lingo.

Nobody who has been in the da game for seven or eight years, and is nearly 30-years old is a "young, up and coming prospect." This game is a young man's sport. And anybody in it as long as Berto and Peterson are seasoned pros, unless they were inactive -- fighting once or twice a year. For the record, a prospect is less than four years. Not eight years like Berto and near-eight year like Peterson. Holla!

ali says:

Pac just take the damn test. We now have proof that fighters are using PEDs (Berto, Perterson ect) so clear your name and take the random blood testing from here on out. It would be stupid for Pac to retire with this speculation in the air especially if he's really a clean fighter. Im trying to pick on Pac but i think it starts at the top Mayweather is doing his part now its time for him to do the same. Mayweather and Pac don't agree on much but when it comes to PEDs they should be on the same page.

brownsugar says:

RG,.....sometimes I wonder if you earn a disability check where you get paid by the word . If you keep tossing in red-herrings composed of misdirection, you run the risk of believing your own fiction. And for a smart guy like you, that would be unfortunate. Keep it relevant. And keep it moving.

Radam G says:

Like I said, B-Sug, it is hard to believe the actuality and reality of da no-shame game. In it, the truth always sounds straight-up crazy to those who are not in da double fudge know. And the truth is always stronger than fiction. It must be some type of reversed-world jive. Ya' heard!

So many people love their little, ole isolated, closed-to-da-light mudholes. Even gophers pop their heads outta of the hole every now and then. Humans who isolate themselves from __ ___ ____ ___ can learn a lot from a gophers.

One thing is that an ostrich hides it head in sand, is scare as heck and couldn't give anybody his girl a "disability check." I must admit, B-Sug, that I've put a lot of people on disability. And they got PHAT checks. Hehehehe!

I'm like those gophers under the sand peeping and laughing at the dang ostrichs. Above ground everybodeee and dey momma can see those ostrichs' a$$es sticking up unhidden. Below ground, the groundhogs and gophers be gettin' their laugh on at the naive ostrichs.

Moral of the story, there ain't really any shields keeping the truth out. It is above and below. One just have to break through the optical illusion. Holla!

Radam G says:

Wow! SCLA Ali, when Da Manny KNOCKS OUT Money May's arse like that shot of Irish GOAT Ali kayoing Sonny "Night Train" Liston that you are using, I will be sure to post it under my psuedonym just to fudge with you. Hehehe! Holla!