

Ward-Dawson Promotion Heating Up More Than Naysayers Thought Possible

Written by Michael Woods
Tuesday, 10 July 2012 09:47



A lot of the Twitter know-it-alls, the pundits on steroids, the writers disguised as wannabee matchmakers, have come down hard on the Andre Ward-Chad Dawson fight. Now, that is their right, for sure. This is America, and one good thing about our nation-in-flux is we do still have a decent level of freedom of speech. I can say this politician is a dingaling, or that athlete is a knucklehead, without fear of repercussion, like a trip to Siberia, or being labeled a dangerous dissident. But in this age, where ones opinion can travel all over the globe in the blink of an eye, it seems to me, some people get overly enthused with their ability to offer an opinion, to weigh in, and stoke controversy. The information age is to me, overall, a good thing, but one of the

Ward-Dawson Promotion Heating Up More Than Naysayers Thought Possible

Written by Michael Woods
Tuesday, 10 July 2012 09:47

downside byproducts is that it encourages people with limited information to be ultra-certain that their opinion is fact, because they mistake the breadth of the delivery zone of their opinion as proof of its veracity.

Frequently, there is no relationship between how many people see a Tweet, or hear a talking head on a sports talk show opine with infuriating certitude, and the structural wellness of the opinion. Not naming names, because this is more a matter of me not caring for the game, rather than the individual players, but all of us would be well served, I think, to occasionally step back, remember that we often take a stance without knowing large elements of the equation, and dial back our certitude.

Too many fightwriters are wearing matchmaker hats, and over-estimating their popularity, or influence. No, I don't think we should back off when we see a stupid fight being made, or an egregious mismatch. But to be so down on two top ten pound for pounders fighting each other, because you don't think their styles will mesh, and to bray repeatedly that you think the money would best be spent elsewhere, on other fights that are more to your liking...c'mon. Take a deep breathe, let's see how this plays out, let's hope for the best, let's hope that Andre Ward and Chad Dawson will both rise to the occasion, and show the best sides of their fighting personas, and not indulge in tactics or strategies that are on the less fan-friendly side. If the bout is a disappointment, feel free to Tweet endless self-satisfied "I told ya sos.." but can we make an effort to lessen the knee-jerk Twitter takedowns, and operating outside of your lane? I will tune in to the Sept. 8 Ward-Dawson fight, so will you, I am happy it is not on pay-per-view, end of sermon...

Some of the Mega Opiners have noted that neither Ward nor Dawson has a scintillating personality, that the runup to the Sept. 8 fight will be a comedown. Fair enough. "Bad" Chad Dawson strikes me as the sort of kid who made it through high school without ever raising his hand in class and sharing. Ward is still finding his public persona, and I think trying to find that correct balance between being a good Christian soldier and offering the sort of trash talk which helps to sell a fight. But already, the promotion has offered more drama, more trash talking, than some would have guessed. At the press conference Monday in Oakland at the Oracle Arena, site of the showdown, which will run on HBO, Dawson's promoter Gary Shaw did one of the things he does best, act as a surrogate trashtalker for one of his fighters not skilled in that sphere.

"Number one, Chad Dawson is not your opponent," the burly dealmaker said, as he stared at Ward, who had taken to the dais before. "He's equal if not better. He didn't come here for the money, he came here because he's a great fighter. And you should respect that." Ward, sipping

Ward-Dawson Promotion Heating Up More Than Naysayers Thought Possible

Written by Michael Woods
Tuesday, 10 July 2012 09:47

water, not looking at Shaw, seemed slightly uncomfortable. Then, he spoke up. "This is the fighters' press conference, not for the promoters, for the fighters," he said, in a failed effort to get Shaw to shut up.

"Another thing is," Shaw continued, "so you understand, your promoter asked for 168, not a catchweight." Ward rose from his seat, maybe irked, maybe flustered. His trainer then stepped up, filling the breach. "Can you talk Chad?" Virgil Hunter asked. "You don't talk much. Quit lettin' that man talk for you, man. It go deeper than fighting, man....Speak for yourself, Chad."

Hmm, now we just went into another realm, I do believe. Hunter, knowingly or not, was looking to inject a seed of doubt into Dawson's head, sow discontent possibly, maybe drive a wedge between him and Shaw.

"You a man," Hunter said, while Dawson, now standing, stood face to face with Ward, as lead promoter Dan Goossen loomed next to the fighters, there to be peacemaker if a pre-fight fight broke out.

"He speaks in the ring," said Shaw, still sitting, arms crossed, quite comfortable in this milieu. "You ain't no robot, Chad. You ain't no Mandingo slave."

Oh yes, we did go into another realm. Hunter indeed did throw, and land, a booming overhand right, words intended to disrupt, to hurt, to seep into Dawson's core. He was accusing of acting like property, and portraying Shaw as the property owner. He went There.

"I speak at the press conference, he speaks in the ring," said Shaw, as Hunter kept up his attack.

Shaw, to his credit, didn't take the bait, the race bait. "Hopkins tried that, it didn't work," he said, grinning.

Ward-Dawson Promotion Heating Up More Than Naysayers Thought Possible

Written by Michael Woods
Tuesday, 10 July 2012 09:47

"Hopkins is fifty years old," Hunter pointed out. (He is 47, 48 in January, but you get the point.)

So yes, the promotion has already furnished more drama than many of the nattering nabobs thought possible. It just came from unexpected sources. Yes, this thing might get more heated as we move forward, and emotions might enter into the ring in Oakland more than the opiners might suspect, and this fight might just surprise you, to the upside. We shall see; many folks out there have crystal balls that are of a higher caliber than the one I own. Maybe they'll be right, maybe I won't be. We shall see.

Check the video here

{youtube}bkDLY75Z55A{/youtube}