

Broner Cements Image With "Explanation" That He Outgrew the Weight Class

Written by Michael Woods
Saturday, 21 July 2012 21:22



Adrien Broner went from a super-hot prospect, loved by some, hated by some, for his flashy ways and trash-talking, to an object of scorn in many circles for weighing 133 1/2 pounds on Friday, over the 130 pound limit for his Saturday fight with Vicente Escobedo, which was to headline an HBO telecast. The scorn cemented in the minds of many pundits, and even

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increased to harsher levels of vitriol when the Cincinnati kid weighed 143 pounds on Saturday morning, three pounds over the agreed-upon max that Team Escobedo allowed him, they maintain, when they agreed to go forward with the fight. It looked like the fight, and indeed, the whole broadcast would be scuttled, as the Escobedo camp put out word that they wouldn't be bought off, wouldn't take a chunk of Broner's purse as payment for his lack of professionalism, and the advantage he would enjoy by not having to torture his body, by not eating or drinking, to make 130 pounds. But it appears that the Escobedo crew put word out that they were willing to walk away in order to sweeten their leverage, or else perhaps someone or someones convinced them that the old showbiz maxim "The show must go on" had to come into play. Because we learned Saturday afternoon that the Broner-Escobedo scrap would go forward, as planned.

HBO got right into the whole fiasco, showing the broadcast crew, including Jim Lampley and Max Kellerman, asking Broner two hours before the weigh in Friday why he wasn't yet on weight. He said that he didn't want this fight at 130, that he tried to get Escobedo to fight at 135, and he felt that his career trajectory wouldn't be thrown off kilter if he didn't make 130. He said he was 22, still growing, and had an "Oh whatever" air to him as he spoke to the HBO boys.

Lampley said that Esco went from 135 to 130 to get this opportunity, and he said that Broner "had no apparent intention" of making 130. He drank water right after hopping off the scale Friday, Lampley said, but apparently--there's that word again--agreed to not go over 140 pounds by Saturday morning, at another weigh in. Broner was 143 1/2 for the Saturday weigh in, and Lampley relayed that an argument broke out. Broner's crew apparently thought he had to not gain more than 10 pounds from that 133 1/2 mark, while the Esco crew felt they conveyed Broner couldn't gain 10 pounds from Escobedo's mark, 130. It wasn't til about 5 PM, Lampley said, that all knew that the fight was a go.

We saw Kellerman talking to Broner, a few hours before the fight. The boxer said he grew out of the weight class. He said that he didn't regret Tweeting a pic of Twinkies and bragging about eating ice cream. He said he didn't think eating ice cream makes one grow out of a weight class, incredibly. "I grew out of the weight class, and that's that," he said. He said the critics will always have their say, but getting the W is all that matters.

Esco was supposed to get \$30,000 from a \$60,000 penalty applied to Broner, but he then balked. He said he "renegotiated" the terms when Kellerman asked him about the fiasco and said he got a "much, much better deal." Was it more than twice the \$30,000? He laughed, and didn't take the bait, and admitted it sort of was about the money. He said he was "totally calm" and ready to fight.

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Readers, what do you make of Broner's response to the fiasco? Did he handle it correctly? I had hoped for humility, but what we got was not that. He, to me, was flippant, and didn't seem to harbor an ounce of recognition that he stains the sport, and all the poor souls who work so hard physically, and show such amazing willpower in turning down food and water, so they can make weight, when he doesn't even try to make weight, to fulfill the terms of his contract.