

Resolutions From Lou DiBella

Written by Michael Woods
Monday, 07 January 2013 14:11



DiBella, seen here with Andy Lee, gets what I think many fans and citizens in the US get, and those titans in the bubble don't. People are tired of an every man for himself attitude in business, and in DC. Get on the same page, stop squabbling and work together.

Combustible Lou I call him, affectionately. Lou DiBella, the former HBO executive and current promoter to top five pound for pounder Sergio Martinez, can be relied upon to drop more eff bombs per sentence than just about anyone associated with the fight game when he's in a fiery mode, and that passion is something I've come to enjoy over the years. But talking to the New York based dealmaker on the phone Monday, I'm feeling like I might be seeing a little less combustion, and fewer eff bombs, and more mellow from the man.

I called DiBella to ask him what he has in store for Yuri Foreman, the returning junior middleweight who held a title belt, and has been away from the ring since 2011. DiBella talked about how he sees the Park Slope, Brooklyn-based boxer Foreman in the big picture, about the

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health and well being of the sport and his own resolution for the New Year.

"I was Yuri's promoter for years, I have tremendous affection for him and his family," DiBella told me. "The fights he lost to Miguel Cotto and Pawel Wolak, he was damaged goods physically. Against Cotto, he showed tremendous heart. In the 154 pound division, which is aging, and is not in my mind outstanding, we have the ability to do some things. I'm looking forward to working together."

The 32 year old hitter with a 28-2 record is coming back on a Jan. 23 DiBella NYC show against 12-8 Brandon Baue, a loser of his last five straight, so obviously all involved want to see where he's at, what he has left, before decisions about the longer-term future are made. "The guy he's coming back against does not pose a threat if Yuri is OK," DiBella said. He doesn't question how much Foreman wants it, he told me, even considering the boxer couldn't continue in his last outing, against Pawel Wolak, and was affected by the loss of longtime manager-patriarchal figure Murray Wilson, in 2010. "He is one of the more mentally strong people I've known," DiBella said. "We're working on a plan to make some noise, get another big opportunity and I have a pretty good track record, better than most people, of getting those opportunities," the promoter said.

As for himself, DiBella surprised me by delving into more personal territory when I asked if he had a resolution for 2013. "To make sounder decisions in my personal life, strike a better balance in living a healthy, productive life outside the ring, while functioning inside the sport," said the 52 year-old. "I think maybe I've given more to the sport than I've given to my personal life and I have to change that balance while I'm still a relatively young guy."

Well said, and I dare say a challenge to self that many if not most of us could make.

As for the sport as a whole, DiBella sees boxing in a time of transition. He's not sure if the power brokers are doing better, acting judiciously with the long term health of the sport in mind. "A lot of the bouts on premium cable are not so great," he said. "We need to take a look at the fanbase, it needs to get younger. I'm going to work with everybody, how I always functioned and succeeded. It would be nice if we were all able to work together, put our selfish interests aside. Because our fanbase is not getting younger."

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I'm glad DiBella is willing to go there. As the boxing nation goes, so goes the nation, I could argue. Of all new revenue generated in America in 2009 and 2010, 93% of it went to the top 1%. The remaining 7% was shared by the lower 99%. We seem to be in an "every man for himself" period nationally, with the mega-monied not seeming to be willing to embrace much in the way of a "rising tide lifts all ships" mentality. If wages grow, workers have more disposable income, and that means they will buy more, and spur demand, and growth. Seems credible, no? No, say titans intent on keeping a lid on wage growth. The boxing titans often seem to be doing their thing on their own island, looking to grow their pie, without comprehending that if they cooperate, and make matches and money together, instead of sequestering themselves, they can make new fans. If they make new fans, that means the pool of eyeballs is bigger. I've long wondered why HBO and Showtime counter program each other, for example, instead of getting on the same programming page, and giving each other room to thrive. And of course, I'd pony up out of my own pocket if I could get Bob Arum and the Golden Boy crew to sit down, break bread, eat steak, and hash out a detente, so more meaningful matches could get made. (Consider that an offer, Bob, Richard and Oscar--Peter Luger's on me if we can sit and y'all try to hug it out, so the best matches can get made.)

And no, I don't dismiss myself as a dreamer; if the people, the writers, the pundits, and the fans demand this new spirit of cooperation it can and will flourish.

I do see signs, hopeful signs, that some of these ideals are being addressed. Boxing on CBS, and a week later on NBC, are green shoots, are they not?

"It's a start," DiBella agreed.

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Radam G says:

I don't see green for jack. In the loop to make the big matches happen, CBS and NBC lack. Creatures of habit are hard, if not impossible, to change in a generation. Fanfaronades and groupies believe that great fights are PPV and at a minimum cable. They will reject seeing great matches on regular tube -- or is that nanochips now? All the research has been done. And fans come a running to cable television and PPV for boxing.

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They believe that regular TV is for football and baseball only. This is why the MMA/UFC has succeeded on cable and PPV, but fail miserably on regular TV. Holla!

brownsugar says:

Even on Capitol Hill they're trying to do away with the "Crabs in a Bucket" mentality.

But promoters stumble along with a near infantile mentality at times.

I remember having to watch multiple headliners by playing musical stations between rounds and hoping that I didn't miss anything on the other channel... or try to watch multiple monitors at once.... There were a few days that I walked back and forth between my place and my son's apartment around the corner because he had Showtime and I had only HBO then..... it's crazy what a fight fan will do sometimes... now we can just record everything simultaneously,.. but I'd rather not have several fights competing for my attention...

There's something special about being there live,.. and in the moment.

I have to Agree,... the practice of Big-time promoters refusing to match each others fighters has got to be one of the most Backward Business models ever implimented... It's worse than embarrassing. GB has express a willingness to cross-promote.

In Contrast Arum has come out publically numerous times griping about how he'd never enter into any kind of co-promotion with Golden Boy... No wonder so many of his fighters struggle try to break their contracts and end up riding the pine until they have an attitude adjustment.

Gold Boy has it's faults too but their's are mostly of the "business ethics" variety... GB will do anything for a buck!... You would think someone as old as Arum who's been in the sport as long as he's has would be more willing to spread the wealth and help develop the sport..... With Paq no longer the endless stream of revenue he once was... Arum is going to have to rely on compromise and creative thinking to keep those huge paydays coming... and that means eventually playing ball with GB.

Radam G says:

Hypocrisy over compromise is mankind and make-believe kind. Duel

deepwater says:

I will get to sweet lou in a minute. first here is a interesting piece of history about cassius clay, the man ali was named after. enjoy.Henry Clay, of course, was the Great Compromiser, credited for helping to keep the country unified during the first half of the 19th century by brokering both the Missouri Compromise (1820) and the Compromise of 1850. He was the 2nd longest serving Speaker of the House and is widely considered, along with John C. Calhoun and Daniel Webster, as one of the greatest Senators in history. Standing at Clay's old Senate

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desk, Paul dedicated his first Senate speech Wednesday to explain why Henry Clay is not his role model. Rand Paul wants to be a True Believer, not a Great Compromiser. "Henry Clay's life story is, at best, a mixed message," Paul said. "Henry Clay's great compromise was over slavery. One could argue that he rose above sectional strife to carve out compromise after compromise trying to ward off civil war. Or one could argue that his compromises were morally wrong and may have even encouraged war, that his compromises meant the acceptance during his 50 years of public life of not only slavery, but the slave trade itself." Paul said his role model is not the man who was willing to compromise on the issue of slavery; it is the abolitionists who refused to compromise, especially Henry Clay's cousin Cassius Clay. "Cassius Clay was an unapologetic abolitionist who called out the slave traders," Paul said. "One night in Foxtown, he was ambushed by the proslavery family of Squire Turner. They came at him with cudgels and knives, stabbing him from behind. Tom Turner put a pistol to Cassius Clay's head and pulled the trigger three times and it misfired three times. Cassius pulled his Bowie knife and rammed it into the belly of the Turner boy, killing him." "Who are our heroes?" Paul asked rhetorically. "Are we fascinated and enthralled by the Great Compromiser or his cousin Cassius Clay?" So, where will Rand Paul take his No Compromise stand? "Today we have no issues that approach moral equivalency with the issue of slavery," he said. "Yet we do face a fiscal nightmare and potentially a debt crisis." In Senator Paul's view, the role of Henry Clay in this crisis has been played by President Obama's bipartisan Debt Commission, which has proposed cutting the deficit with a mix of spending cuts and tax increases. For Senator, there can be no compromise on the issue of taxes; if there is to be a compromise, it must be on the Tea Party's terms — no tax increases. "Will the Tea Party compromise? Can the Tea Party work with others to find a solution? The answer is of course there must be dialogue and compromise but compromise must occur on where we cut spending and by how much," Paul said. "Any compromise should be about where we cut federal spending, not where we raise taxes," he said. "The compromise must be conservatives acknowledging that we can cut military spending and liberals acknowledging that we can cut domestic spending." At the close of his maiden Senate speech, Senator Paul returned to Henry Clay and his estranged cousin, Cassius. "As long as I sit at Henry Clay's desk, I will remember his lifelong desire to forge agreement, but I will also keep close to my heart the principled stand of his cousin, Cassius Clay, who refused to forsake the life of any human simply to find agreement," he said.

deepwater says:

please stop kissing butt!!!! Statement from Promoter Lou DiBella on the Career of Jermain Taylor

"I have just been informed though numerous press reports that Jermain Taylor has elected to continue his participation in The Super Six: World Boxing Classic tournament, and will face Andre Ward in April. It is with a heavy heart, but strong conviction, that I will recuse myself and DiBella Entertainment as Jermain's promoter. "Jermain's career has been outstanding, and it has been a pleasure and honor to promote him. His victories against Bernard Hopkins remain the highlights of my career as a promoter. Jermain is not only a great fighter, but a good and decent man with a wonderful family. It is out of genuine concern for him and his family that I am compelled to make this decision..

"I informed him, as I do all my contracted fighters, that my goal was to help his secure financial

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stability for his family, maximize his potential, and leave our unforgiving sport with his health intact.

“It is my belief that the continuation of Jermain’s career as an active fighter places him at unnecessary risk. While he is undoubtedly capable of prevailing in future bouts, I cannot, in conscience, remain involved given my assessment of such risk.

“I wish Jermain all the best in his future endeavors. All of us at DiBella Entertainment hold Jermain close to our hearts and consider him and his family part of our family. We wish him Godspeed and continued health.” - Lou DiBella

Article posted on 12.12.2009

deepwater says:

one of Lou DiBella’s matchmakers called Foreman’s trainer and told him, that DiBella’s promotion had a match next week in Baltimore with a nobody, George Armenta, that Yuri Foreman could easily knockout. Armenta had four wins and one loss. Foreman’s trainer had no time to check any information about this opponent. Once Foreman’s team arrived in Baltimore, they learned that opponent had over 200 amateur fights and his only professional loss came to an opponent with a 9-0 record. Michael Kozlowski told Yuri Foreman: “Yuri, the promoter is checking us and putting us in trouble. We have no choice, but to fight. However, I’m confident, that you have better conditioning than any opponent. This is six rounds not four and that will give us a greater chance of winning.”

Now Yuri Foreman were in the ring against the local favorite. After a few seconds in the first round, Yuri Foreman was knocked down. It was only through his footwork, that Yuri Foreman was able to survive the rest of the round. At the end of the third round, Yuri Foreman began to hurt his opponent with various combinations putting Armenta in real trouble on the canvas. The crowd of 3,000 was going wild during this tough fight. Yuri Foreman won a majority decision and was considered the fight of the night. In boxing trainer Michael Kozlowski’s opinion, it was the best fight of Yuri Foreman’s professional career.

Left to right, Michael Kozlowski, Yuri Foreman, and promoter Lou DiBella after the fight against George Armenta.

After this fight, Lou DiBella came to Foreman’s dressing room, smiling. Foreman’s trainer was so furious, that he grabbed DiBella and told him angrily: “If you give one more fight like this for my son, I will not talk to you so lightly!”

When returned to New York, Michael Kozlowski told DiBella, that Foreman would never take another fight unless you provide information about the opponent with a video. After this incident with Lou DiBella, Michael Kozlowski noticed that DiBella’s people began inviting Yuri Foreman to boxing events without his trainer. Michael Kozlowski felt that they started to manipulate Yuri Foreman, but when trainer told Yuri his feelings about this, Yuri Foreman told him: “Michael,

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don't worry. You are like a father to me. I love you!..." yuri left his trainer soon after. the sweet lou effect

Bernie Campbell says:

Hey Lou, Whaddya think can be done about Sam Watson's intrusive behind barnstorming the ring and showing his best profile all the time! Givem the hook!