

Showtime's Espinoza Responds To Arum Presser Swipes

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Thursday, 10 April 2014 22:26



Stephen Espinoza, Showtime's Executive Vice President and General Manager, told TSS on Thursday he's "happy" for the free publicity Bob Arum has given Showtime's May 3 pay-per-view bout between Floyd Mayweather and Marcos Maidana during Pacquiao-Bradley fight week.

Arum, CEO and founder of the Las Vegas-based promotional company Top Rank, went on a widely publicized rant on Wednesday at the press conference for this weekend's HBO PPV bout between Top Rank-promoted fighters Pacquiao and Bradley. Arum slammed the fight's venue, MGM Grand, for having Mayweather-Maidana posters up instead of ones for his Pacquiao-Bradley promotion.

He also seemed to take some swipes at rival promoter, Golden Boy, as well as their television partner, Showtime, and Floyd Mayweather.

"Honestly, I don't really understand why he'd spend so much time during his fight week talking about Showtime and Floyd Mayweather," Espinoza said. "It doesn't make any sense, but if he wants to continue to do it we're happy to receive the benefit of the publicity."

Espinoza said he read about the remarks and did not appreciate the rhetoric used. "I think it was irresponsible and personally offensive."

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Arum's remarks were fairly brutal, especially when he said "...none of the fighters on the card had to pay anybody off to get on the card, unlike how some other people operate on some other networks. Right? That was an old tactic that Frankie Carbo used. It doesn't go with HBO or with Top Rank."

Carbo was a gangster in the Mafia who was heavily involved in boxing during the era of heavyweight champion Sonny Liston. He spent much of his life in jail for being a mobster.

Perhaps sensing he went a bit too far, Arum finished up with an apology of sorts. "So thank you all for coming, we're gonna pose the fighters now, and if whatever I said was incendiary, I'm an old guy, and I apologize."

For his part, Espinoza said the apology is not accepted. "Arum often says stuff and then tries to hide behind loopholes and fake apologies, but I don't think there's any question that what he said was irresponsible, unprofessional and offensive. His insincere apology at the end is worthless."

Regardless, Espinoza said afterward he'd welcome fight pitches from Top Rank, though the promotional entity has not sought a Showtime date since 2012. "Absolutely," said Espinoza when asked if Top Rank was welcome on Showtime. "Top Rank is welcome, as are other promoters."

Espinoza said the last time he had any sort of talks with Top Rank was during the latter part of 2012 when the network worked with Top Rank and Golden Boy to negotiate a bout between Nonito Donaire and Abner Mares. The fight never took place, though, and is often presented as one of the top casualties of boxing's so-called cold war between Top Rank and Golden Boy.

"We pursued that for a period of time, and then I know [Golden Boy CEO Richard] Schaefer and Arum pursued it more directly," Espinoza said. "I'm not sure why exactly it fell apart, because there seems to have been enough money on the table for everyone."

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Radam G says:

Top Ring and HBO are kicking Shyttime and GBP's arse, and they cannot handle it.

Da Manny-Delusional Bradley Fight is making noise around the globe and on Mars and Venus. And is going to do mad worldwide PPVs. In the States, expect over a mil.

With the lies, grandstanding and bullsyet, TSAH's flunkies and fruit loots oughta CHILL!

The Maidana-Money May Fight ain't gonna do Jack. And the world can see TSAH ain't such a Mack. Dude is wack. And he has a stable of fighters that couldn't even beat a marshmallow pack. Pulling in the crowds that like to spend money, they lack. And Swizz Cheese Bank talk a lot of jive-turkey smack. Holla!

The Shadow says:

Take it from the Steele: 800,000 PPV buys, \$9m gate. Solid business, they'll do.

Anyone willing to take that bet?

And RG, I know you don't believe what you're saying about that dude's stable. Best managerial stable today, maybe ever.

Speaking of Swizzy, he's been quiet lately.

I like Stephen Espinoza, personally. I like that he interacts and sets people straight. I love how he exposes idiots too, makes me laugh.

Speaking of Arum, I checked those stocks he spoke of. As usual, he's twisting the truth a bit. But you gotta love his feisty nature!

Bradley as an A-side if he beats Manny? Maybe A-side meth. That's about it.

If Victor Ortiz can get his ish together, Bradley and FaceLube could actually have a pretty decent PPV showdown in two years or so.

If PPV even exists by then. Word is one of the biggest PPV partners is phasing out PPV.

Oops, did I say that? Might be time for another edition of SRM.....

brownsugar says:

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I have been subscribing to showtime for a bout 14 months now,... previously Showtime wasn't even on my radar,... I would wait 2 weeks and catch the Showtime fights on Youtube, but Now I can't live with out it. Doesn't take away from HBO,... it's just that there's a new Cable Channel in my life. No need to squabble HBO,.. I still love you too.

deepwater2 says:

Espinoza ,if he honestly doesn't understand why arum is mad and went on a rant then he is not a serious businessman . Logic dictates he is a serious business man therefore he is not being honest. Playing dumb at the highest level is not a good look. I don't know about the stock portfolio of those outfits but I do know the Wynn is the best out of the 3 to stay at. The art collection Steve Wynn puts together,as well as the manolo blahnik store has my wife hooked. Ppv numbers and purses are for the accountants . Give the fans the most competitive fights and I don't care what channel it is on. The best fights are usually the golden gloves anyway.

Radam G says:

Actually I do believe that about TSAH stable. For every legit fighter that he has, he three or four that are softy _____. He is an awesome business man. He know how play optical illusions to da max. No doubt that he has the best managed, but not the best skilled and talented fighters. Holla!

Skibbz says:

[QUOTE=deepwater2;48861]Espinoza ,if he honestly doesn't understand why arum is mad and went on a rant then he is not a serious businessman . Logic dictates he is a serious business man therefore he is not being honest. Playing dumb at the highest level is not a good look. I don't know about the stock portfolio of those outfits but I do know the Wynn is the best out of the 3 to stay at. The art collection Steve Wynn puts together,as well as the manolo blahnik store has my wife hooked. Ppv numbers and purses are for the accountants . Give the fans the most competitive fights and I don't care what channel it is on. The best fights are usually the golden gloves anyway.[/QUOTE]

Well said D2. I am just like you in the way that all I want to see is the best fighting the best so we can truly have the most compelling match ups. You can show it on whatever you like and chances are i'll pay for the ability to watch it should you charge me. People are misled when they think because someone earns the most they are the best. This is simply not true. When guys come along and make a song n dance about PPV numbers it's usually a distraction from how poor the show was. "We still got 2 million buyers therefore the show must have been great". Unfortunately for some the spectacle is never judged by how many people watched it, but simply by what happened during the event. The number of viewers is simply a token figure to show or play up the enormity of the event.

Give us the best fights, and you won't fail to hit record 'figures'. You give the consumer the best and more and they won't hold back their wallet..

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The Shadow says:

[QUOTE=Skibbz;48877]Well said D2. I am just like you in the way that all I want to see is the best fighting the best so we can truly have the most compelling match ups. You can show it on whatever you like and chances are i'll pay for the ability to watch it should you charge me. People are misled when they think because someone earns the most they are the best. This is simply not true. When guys come along and make a song n dance about PPV numbers it's usually a distraction from how poor the show was. "We still got 2 million buyers therefore the show must have been great". Unfortunately for some the spectacle is never judged by how many people watched it, but simply by what happened during the event. The number of viewers is simply a token figure to show or play up the enormity of the event.

Give us the best fights, and you won't fail to hit record 'figures'. You give the consumer the best and more and they won't hold back their wallet..[/QUOTE]

And there it is.

Absolutely true. Box office success doesn't = greatness.

However boxing, and a few other attraction based sports, is one area where the best doesn't necessarily get paid the best.

It's the case with Floyd, yes. But if it was like the NFL, NBA and so forth, Rigo would be making max money and so would Andre Ward.

You had guys like Gatti generating g's while smooth operators like Anselmo Moreno play for peanuts.

This is why boxing is no longer sports. It's sports entertainment.

Carmine Cas says:

Just like politics, it's all posturing and bs

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