

Floyd on Showtime Deal: "It's Like A New Marriage"

Written by The Sweet Science
Friday, 22 February 2013 09:57



DETROIT (Feb. 21, 2013) - Undefeated Eight-Time World Champion **Floyd "Money" Mayweather** joined **Cornelius Bundrage**

,
Ishe Smith

,
J'Leon Love
and
Derrick Findley

on Thursday at the final press conference for Saturday's SHOWTIME event from the **Masonic Temple Theatre** in Detroit, Mich., which his company, Mayweather Promotions, will co-promote with Golden Boy Promotions.

In the main event, IBF Junior Middleweight World Champion **Cornelius "K9" Bundrage** will defend his title against challenger **Ishe "Sugar Shay" Smith**

, live on
SHOWTIME
®

(9:00 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast). In the SHOWTIME co-feature, undefeated middleweight contender

J'Leon Love
(14-0, 8 KO's) of Detroit will risk his perfect record against veteran **Derrick "Superman" Findley** (20-8, 13 KO's) of Gary, Ind. in a 10-round fight.

Mayweather, already the highest paid athlete in the world (*Forbes*, 2012), also discussed the groundbreaking contract he recently inked with Showtime Networks Inc. and its parent

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company, CBS Corporation. The deal, a unique revenue-sharing arrangement between SHOWTIME PPV and Mayweather, will enable him to fight up to six times over a period of 30 months, with the first mega-event taking place on

May 4, 2013

when Mayweather will fight

Robert "The Ghost" Guerrero

Here's what the participants had to say on Thursday:

CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE:

"This cat right here [Smith], the last time he came to Detroit, he was scared to death. I could see a fear in him. He went home and started Tweeting. He's a Facebook gangster and now he comes back to my city with The Money Team and all of a sudden he's hard. I bark outside the ring, but I bite inside the ring. They can't fight for him. I'll give him the business and hopefully his boss [Floyd Mayweather] will step up.

"K9 is in the house. The dog is coming. I'm just excited. I'm fighting Ishe Smith, so I'm not worried about The Money Team. I'm not worried about Floyd. We have to do battle. Ishe, you're not leaving here with that belt. The only think you're going to have is that Twitter belt.

"He's a pillow puncher. He's going down. The only person I fear is God. Him [Smith], I'll put him down. The thing is, 39-years-old for me is like 21 because I didn't have an amateur career. I'm coming with everything. It's going down. May the best man win."

ISHE SMITH:

"I want to thank SHOWTIME. It's been over 10 years now since my first fight on SHOWTIME and to think that my first world title shot is coming on SHOWTIME is unbelievable. It's an unbelievable feeling to be on network TV so many times, even when some of the times I knew I was going to be on the 'B' side, they always had my back. It's 10-plus years of a great

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relationship and it's only fitting that this first world title shot to try to become the first-ever Vegas born champion is on this network.

"What can I say about Eddie Mustafa. I hadn't fought in 18 months and I didn't know if I even wanted to fight anymore. He told me to come to the gym. He would call me and make sure I was OK. I grew up fatherless so he was like a father-figure.

"This crowd here is full of K9 supporters and that's great. If you guys came to Vegas, it would be full of Ishe Smith supporters. This isn't football, this isn't basketball. You can't yell at a quarterback and have him hear you. It's just me and him in the ring. He has to fight and I have to fight too. The one thing about it is he's going to get touched. I've had almost 30 pro fights and I've never been down, never stopped. Bottom line is, it's one-on-one. We're going to strictly box hard. I'm coming to fight and I'm taking that title back to Vegas. That's the way it's going to be.

"It's like my boy Chico (Diego Corrales) used to always tell me, it's a war of attrition. You have to go out on your back. I'd rather go out on my back than leave without that title. He can question everything about me, but come Saturday night we're going to see who's the real champion."

"I need to thank Floyd for everything he's done for me. I've had a lot of different promoters in my 13 years as a professional and no one has treated me the way he does. I did communicate with him when he was incarcerated and I carry this letter that he wrote me whenever I fight. He said, *'You are a champion. Thank you for helping me get ready for the most important fights of my career - Miguel Cotto and Shane Mosley. Have that same attitude when you spar and that same determination and no one can stop you. I'm proud of you. Always continue to think about your family when you're training and push yourself to the limit.'*

That's just half of what he wrote me. At the end he said,

'I promise I'm going to get you a world championship fight when I get out of jail.'

So we went 18 months without a fight and in less than a year we are fighting for a world championship. I don't see how anybody can say anything bad about Floyd Mayweather or Mayweather Promotions. I'm not going to do any of that damn barking. I don't need to do that. This Saturday it's going to be a good show, it's going to be a good fight."

J'LEON LOVE:

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"I'm a Detroit native. I love Detroit. This is where I'm from. This is where I caused trouble, did good, did bad. Detroit runs in my blood. I'm going to come out Saturday and do what we do best and that's fight and put on a good show. We want to put on more shows out here in Detroit, so this is the time to show that we're ready for whatever. We're ready for Derrick Findley, whatever he comes with. He's going to rush, do whatever he has to do, so we'll be ready for it.

"I come from the dog house. This is where we put all our hard work in. We're in Vegas putting in the work, running, doing everything we have to do. We have the best trainers and there's nothing we're not ready for. We train hard. It's another day and we're going to put on a good performance."

DERRICK FINDLEY:

"I just want to thank J'Leon and Floyd Mayweather for giving me this opportunity. I'm used to going into the lion's den; I'm used to fighting guys in their backyards, but that stuff doesn't matter to me. I just got to give it everything I got in the ring. Take advantage of the opportunity and get the win in his hometown. I'll definitely be ready and I can't wait until Saturday."

FLOYD MAYWEATHER:

"I've got love for the whole Midwest, and Detroit has embraced me with so much love. Detroit is a great city and the Midwest has produced nothing but a lot of legendary champions. It is great to be here in Detroit and Mayweather Promotions is happy to be here putting on this fight.

"It is going to be a great fight this Saturday night on SHOWTIME. I am telling everyone right now, if they don't have SHOWTIME already, they have to go out and get it. You can't miss Floyd Mayweather or Mayweather Promotions fighters who are fortunate to be fighting on this network. For the next 30 months I will give you excitement. You can believe that.

"I promised Ishe a title fight and I lived up to my side of the bargain. Now he has to go out there, perform and get the job done. It's great to showcase J'Leon Love too, a local Detroit fighter who now trains out of the Mayweather Boxing Club in Las Vegas. He is a very exciting fighter and I

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am looking forward to seeing him fight too.

"Ishe Smith is not a walk in the park for K9 Bundrage. Ishe Smith is not Cory Spinks and he [Bundrage] needs to understand that. K9 is world champion and I give him credit for being in this fight, but he is going in against a great fighter in Ishe Smith and I think Ishe and Mayweather Promotions will prevail Saturday night.

"Saturday night is going to be a great night for Mayweather Promotions, so tune in this Saturday. It's SHOWTIME coming to you live from the Motor City.

"Emanuel Steward was an icon in the sport of boxing and a legendary trainer. He is truly missed. I actually work with J'Leon Love on a daily basis, so I feel like I am getting my experience as a trainer too.

"I am happy to be the face of boxing and give the fans the excitement they are looking for. It is all about hard work and dedication. I do that every time I prepare for a fight and Mayweather Promotions' goal is to do that too.

"My career is not over yet. I have done it my whole life and I have always worked hard to be the best. That was my goal from the very beginning. To have my name mentioned with the likes of Muhammad Ali, Sugar Ray Robinson and Tommy Hearn, so many legendary champions that paved the way for me, I am appreciative.

"I get motivated just by watching the young fighters, going to the boxing matches and watching these young guys come up. Even though it is hard for me to go out to a boxing match, as it does get a little crazy when I show up, I have been doing it lately and being around the sport. Watching the fights is exciting and helps me stay motivated.

"SHOWTIME and CBS, I've got to take my hat off to them. They did a tremendous job and I am happy to be a part of this family. It's not just SHOWTIME. It's CBS too. I have to give everyone their just due and credit. They are partners, came together and gave me a great deal and one I couldn't refuse. I couldn't ask for a better deal.

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"I am comfortable in this new relationship and my team is happy too. It's like a new marriage and I feel good about it. I will be ready to go May 4, Cinco de Mayo. It's going to MayDay and May-Per-View.

"Robert Guerrero is a champion. For this guy to be mentioned with some of the top fighters in today's time, he must have done something right or correct in his career. This is a guy who I know I can't overlook; I have to push myself to the limit. I have to dedicate myself and I have to do what it takes to stay at the top.

"Guerrero is a very aggressive fighter. I am starting to train. As a matter of fact, this week I was out on the basketball court with some young kids working on my cardio. I have to build my cardio up to fight Guerrero. I will not overlook him. I don't overlook anyone. I know that everyone who fights me is gunning for me, so I have to be ready for what they are ready to give me.

"I am absolutely excited about fighting more. It's about staying active and that means a lot more of me. Before my career ends, that's what I am going to give the fans-a whole lot more of me. It's SHOWTIME baby!

"I am a veteran in the sport. I have been in the sport of boxing for 17 years and I am still doing record-breaking numbers. Boxing isn't going anywhere as long as Floyd Mayweather is here. The sport is here to stay.

"People don't understand that I just didn't wake up overnight and become pound-for-pound champion. My legacy is not based on any one fight and if that was the case, I didn't need to fight 43 fights. I'll continue to strive for the best no matter who it is that I'm fighting.

"I don't think people give me the credit that I'm due for dealing with the drug issues in our sport. I'm the pioneer when it comes to making sure fighters have an equal playing field when we fight. We need to take random blood and urine tests to make our sport fair and safe.

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"I am really happy right now. SHOWTIME let's do it."

STEPHEN ESPINOZA:

"We at SHOWTIME are extremely happy to be back here in Detroit - it's our first time back since 2010 when we featured Andre Dirrell and Arthur Abraham. Detroit is a city rich in boxing history, for my money probably the deepest in boxing tradition of any city in the U.S. I'd also like to acknowledge Thomas Hearns, one of the legends of the sport, and also a dear friend who you can't really talk boxing or say anything about Detroit boxing without mentioning, Emmanuel Steward.

"At SHOWTIME we like to do big things, we like to make history. We're proud to be the first championship boxing event at the Masonic Temple Theatre. Those of you who watch our shows know that last year we had the first boxing event ever at Barclays Center in Brooklyn.

"As you all know this event is being co-promoted by Mayweather Promotions and Floyd Mayweather. As you also know, Mr. Mayweather has been in the news this week as the result of a little announcement he made about a deal with SHOWTIME and CBS, which we are very, very proud of. We look forward to a very long relationship.

"Today we're here because of a different deal, a deal that didn't quite get as much attention, a deal that was done several months ago when we scheduled this event. It was Floyd's wish to come to Detroit and bring a high-quality fight card here. So I'd like to acknowledge Floyd and Leonard for doing just that.

"In our main event we have two of the most successful fighters ever to come out of 'The Contender.' Two action fighters who have fan-friendly styles. K9 Bundrage is a really dangerous fighter with proven knockout power and he'll be fighting Ishe Smith, a veteran who has faced and beaten some of the best fighters in the world. I think this will be an action fight, something you will not want to miss whether you're in the arena or at home.

"In our opener we'll be seeing, once again, J'Leon Love. J'Leon is fast becoming one of our

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SHOWTIME guys. We featured him earlier this year, he's a very entertaining fighter with an outstanding amateur background, and I think he's one of the future stars of the sport. At SHOWTIME we match our fighters tough, we like challenges, we like entertaining fights, and that's why we asked Derrick Findley to be the opponent here. I guarantee that will be an entertaining fight."

ABOUT "BUNDRAGE VS. SMITH":

Bundrage vs. Smith, a 12-round fight for Bundrage's IBF Junior Middleweight World Championship, will take place Saturday, February 23 at the Masonic Temple Theatre in Detroit, Michigan. The event is promoted by Golden Boy Promotions and Mayweather Promotions, sponsored by Corona and MGM Grand Detroit and will be televised live on SHOWTIME beginning at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT (delayed on the West Coast). The co-main event will be a 10-round middleweight bout between Detroit's undefeated rising star J'Leon Love and Derrick Findley of Gary, Indiana.

Tickets priced at \$200, \$125, \$100, \$75, \$50 and \$25, plus applicable taxes, fees and services charges are on sale now and are available for purchase at the Masonic Temple box office, online at www.ticketmaster.com , all Ticketmaster locations or by calling [800-745-3000](tel:800-745-3000) .

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