

## Barclays Center CEO Yormark Explains How A Non Golden Boy Show Landed in Brooklyn

Written by Michael Woods  
Thursday, 17 April 2014 14:07

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It was strange being at **Barclays Center** in Brooklyn on Wednesday for a boxing press conference, and not seeing most of the usual suspects there.

The **Swanson** people, the **Golden Boy** crew, nowhere to be found. The **Showtime** gang, MIA. Instead, other folks manned the media desk, and reps from **HBO** and other promotional companies,

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**Banner**  
and  
**Star Boxing**  
, held court.

It seemed an unthinkable tableau, sort of, being that Golden Boy has been the sole purveyor of fight fare at Barclays since the building opened, with Showtime being the TV platform for the fights, aside from one Fox entry. But the unthinkable often occurs in this red light district of the sports world, which is one reason it is an interesting beat. There are no shortage of questions for a curious journalist to ask. Such as the one I posed to **Brett Yormark**, the CEO of Barclays Center and the primary backer of boxing at Barclays. The Barclays honcho explained how the forthcoming June 14 card, topped by a

**Ruslan Provodnikov**

title defense against

**Chris Algieri**

of nearby Long Island landed at Barclays, despite the fact that Golden Boy is NOT the promoter. I was under the impression that only

Golden Boy cards could run here, so what gives?

"Golden Boy does have an exclusive deal with us," Yormark (*pictured above in Oct. 2012 shot, between Danny Garcia, left, and Erik Morales, right*)

explained, "but they accomodated this card. It is kind of a one fight exemption. We were contacted by (the Brooklyn Nets) team owner,

**Mikhail Prokhorov**

, who is also a 45% owner of the arena, he was very interested in us hosting this fight, for obvious reasons." Mainly, because the Russian native Prokhorov is keen to see "The Siberian Rocky" defend his WBO 140 pound crown up close and personal.

We'd heard the whole card, a co-promotion with Banner (run by **Art Pelullo**) and Star (run by **Joe DeGuardia**)

) with some input from

**Top Rank**

(who holds a piece of Provodnikov's contract), would land in Long Island, at the Nassau Coliseum, which was bought by the Barclays bunch. Yormark said that to his understanding, Pelullo was negotiating with Nassau, but he switched gears when the interest from Prokhorov popped up. "So we had to go to

**Richard Schaefer**

, and Richard wanted to accomodate us. He's a great partner. So it's a one fight exemption." Yormark said yes, this is a one off, but he made clear he wants what's best overall for boxing in

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Brooklyn, and if Provodnikov can activate a massive potential customer base in Brooklyn, packed with Russian emigres, then the benefit can trickle down to a wider array of people. He said he could maybe be "opportunistic" again in the future. More than 100,000 Russians call Brighton Beach home, Yormark said, and he'd love to have more of them discover Barclays.

One rumor kicking around is that Golden Boy HAS to do a certain number of boxing shows a year at the arena, and since they have not hit that number, they were essentially forced to cooperate. Yormark said that in fact when they hashed a deal three-plus years ago, they targeted 12 fights a year. He soon realized 12 would be a lot, and that six or seven cards annually might be more doable. "The program is working, from the standpoint of the Eddie Gomez', the Peter Quillins, the Luis Collazos' of the world." Yormark said Collazo came up to him recently and thanked him profusely, for resurrecting his career. He choked up Yormark by presenting him with a jewelled boxing glove medallion as he said "thank you."

Golden Boy will bring a card to Barclays in July, the dealmaker told me. **Danny Jacobs**, who has received some decent buzz in the region the last two years, could appear on that card, which is likely to be July 26. I also asked Yormark if any of the recent hubbub, such as the beefing between Bob Arum and MGM, which hosted Pacquiao-Bradley II, and inspired the Top Rank chief's ire when they put up promo material for the May 3 Mayweather-Maidana card while still promoting the Pacman event, could leave him an opening to snag a "Super Bowl" type card.

"We continue to tell everyone we want a big fight here," he said, "and who knows what happens in the next month or two. But Collazo is convinced if he beats Amir Khan (on the May 3 Floyd undercard), I think there will be a big push for that to be here in Brooklyn. To me that would be a storybook chapter to what were doing here."

Fair to say Yormark will be rooting for Luis Collazo against Khan, then?

"Absolutely," he said, with a wide grin. "Absolutely."

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### **Carmine Cas says:**

[QUOTE=deepwater2;49645]Could it be the first shot towards ending the cold war? This day may live in infamy[/QUOTE]

Quite possibly? I hope so, knock down those walls!