

Boxed In

By Reg P. Wydeven
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Last week I wrote about the interesting legalities surrounding the sale of tickets to the weigh-in for the Floyd Mayweather, Jr. and Manny Pacquiao fight. Officials ultimately decided it was legal to sell tickets to the event, which was the first time it happened in Las Vegas boxing history.

The fight was the biggest boxing spectacle ever, having over 3 million viewers shell out the \$100 to watch the fight. The boxers agreed to split their share of the take 60/40 in favor of Mayweather, and between ticket sales and pay-per-view, experts estimate the fight took in almost \$500 million. Many believe Mayweather may get \$200 million and Pacquiao about \$135 million.

Although there was no knockout, fans got to see the fight go the distance and Mayweather unify the welter weight titles by winning with a unanimous decision. The fight went 12 rounds and lasted about an hour, but this time pales in comparison to the impending number of rounds and amount of time the fighters will be spending in court.

After the match it was revealed that Manny Pacquiao asked pre-fight that he be allowed to get a shot in his shoulder that was injured in training earlier in the week. Nevada boxing officials denied this because on a medical questionnaire someone from Pacquiao's camp checked "No" when asked if he had a shoulder injury that required evaluation.

Accordingly, Pacquiao could be facing consequences with the Nevada Athletic Commission for lying on the form. In addition, eighteen lawsuits and counting have been filed so far because of the omission.

Stephane Vanel and Kami Rahbaran, both of Las Vegas, filed a class-action suit against Pacquiao and his promoter, Top Rank Boxing, for at least \$5 million. The plaintiffs allege that by failing to disclose the injury, Pacquiao and Top Rank's actions amounted to fraudulent concealment, consumer fraud and conspiracy to commit fraud.

The second class-action suit was brought in California by Heather McDonald and Payman Shanin, who purchased the pay-per-view. This suit is also seeking \$5 million in damages because, "Having had knowledge of defendant Pacquiao's injury and its severity prior to the bout, plaintiffs would not have purchased the bout pay-per-view or would have paid less for it." The other suits filed all across the country make similar allegations and seek comparable damages.

Mayweather was also sued after the fight by his ex-girlfriend, Josie Harris, who is also the mother of three of his children. Harris is seeking \$20 million for defamation, intentional infliction of emotional distress and negligent infliction of emotional distress. The suit stems from a Mayweather interview with Katie Couric prior to the match. When discussing the incident that led to his arrest and subsequent two-month incarceration for domestic violence, Mayweather told Couric he was simply trying to restrain Harris during an altercation while she was on drugs.

The suit denies that Harris is a drug abuser or drug addict and asserts, "It was not Mayweather's 'restraint' of Harris that caused her serious injuries, rather it was his beating of her." According to the court filings, Harris went to the hospital after the incident and was treated for head, facial and bodily injuries after suffering cuts and deep bruises.

Obviously, after a \$500 million fight, lawsuits are coming out of the woodwork. The most interesting one, however, involves boxers and pirates – be sure to tune in next week!

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