

Mikey Garcia & The Art Of Breaking The Cycle



WBO SUPER FEATHERWEIGHT CHAMPION MIKEY GARCIA(L)

The rules in the sport of boxing are quite basic and simple. They’ve been etched into the minds of boxers, fans, and media alike for ages and it’s almost like clockwork by now..

(Enter referee’s voice) addressing both fighters:

“You heard me give you the instructions(rules) in the dressing room..

(Signaling and pointing)This here is good(allowed to hit, belt-line and above), here is not(below and not allowed)..

Obey my command at all times..

And most importantly, protect yourself at all times..

Good luck..”

The most basic set of instructions issued before two combatants, regardless of skillset or style – those are the last words before they are to go into battle and lay it all on the line, including their very own livelihood. The sports’ enthusiast would tirelessly try to explain the sweet science of it all; but most see it for what it ultimately is for the majority of fighters: two guys punching each other in the face. And unfortunately, that is the ugly truth.

So you have the most basic of rules and instructions. A set of rules and instructions that seems to make sense even outside of the ring. Almost appearing to be rules given to you before you make any huge commitment(like putting your life on the line in the sport).

But the story is all too common of a boxer(understanding those very rules and elements) going from rags to riches, only to fall from his stratospheric status and somehow end up back to where he started – with little or nothing to show for, financially, and sometimes even fighting years past their prime, risking their long-term health even further. The rise and fall of many a boxers in the modern era is very similar to that of many celebrities and stars whom were dealt the same fate, but the main difference is that a boxer is one of the few athletes or entertainers whose health is put on the line like no other and one punch can literally end not only his or her career, but their life altogether, at once.

Given the brutally sad realities of the sport, we have seen superstars like Mike Tyson, Roy Jones, Jr., Evander Holyfield, et cetera, accumulate huge fame, success and wealth – only to end up broke. And to this day, years removed from their prime, Jones, Jr. and Holyfield fight on occasion – and not for anything that adds to their legacy. James Toney and Jose Luis Castillo may not have captured the fame and fortune that their previously noted fighter alumni received, but they are two fighters that still also fight on in their professional careers. Careers in which they have nothing, absolutely nothing, to prove, yet continue fighting on for what ever little monetary gain their fights may bring them.

So what’s in the water? What’s the poison? Why are some of these fighters still actively fighting?

Those could be seen as the million dollar questions, but it’s easier to see when one gathers all of the facts and puts into question the factors surrounding these scenarios. And more-so, when one begins to question the status quo altogether. Well, let’s examine those million dollar questions, facts, and scenarios.

Enter undefeated WBO Super Featherweight champion Miguel Angel “Mikey” Garcia, who is attempting to sue his promoter, Top Rank, Inc., and venture out on his own. At least according to the lawsuit which was filed on his behalf on April 8th, in Riverside, CA, by his attorneys.

WarBoxing.com reached out to one of the two attorney’s whom filed the suit against Garcia’s promoter, Mr. Bryan Freedman, Esq., in hopes of gathering more information. This is what Mr. Freedman had to offer, verbatim:

“Some information I cannot answer due to the attorney client privilege – I will try and answer what I can.

Mikey’s contract was evaluated to determine its validity and whether it’s term had expired or was otherwise illegal.

The contract was found to be invalid as it violates California law regarding the length of the term, the issues with TR acting as a manager under legal definitions and the violation of the manager restrictions set to protect boxers. It was also determined to violate the Muhammed Ali boxing reform act, which was created to make sure that boxers are not taken advantage of.

TR’s reaction is to vigorously fight to enforce an illegal contract. That type of response is exactly why they are being sued. Someone looking out for your benefit as they should be tries to remedy illegalities and unfairness and does not simply try and bind you to an illegal agreement without regard to your legal rights.

TR’s strategy seems more like a scorned lover than a strategic business partner. Their strategy gets them nothing. If they win everything they want, (which they will not) their total upside is to manage Mikey for 24 more months then they lose him for sure and their reputation as selfish bullies is known by all. If they lose, all of their contracts with California fighters are deemed illegal and their fighters start running for the door. Either way win or lose, they lose. Good business partners who want a chance to sign Mikey recognize their downside risk, apologize and ask for a fair chance to negotiate a new deal that is a legal one. The problem they have is the best they can do is lose after 12 rounds because fighting Mikey assures them of one thing, that they lose him for sure. It is just a matter of time. Make no mistake here, TR’s arrogance and disregard for boxers rights will not only cause them to lose Mikey but to destroy a business by showing the world how poorly they treat their own boxers.”

At this point, I cannot speculate much on the proceedings that will ensue, because only the court and the parties involved know of the exact stipulations and therefore will have to wait for what is decided through courts.

With that being said, let us quickly go over what some initial reactions may(and have been) to these reports: “he should have known what he was signing,” “he’s not a big boxing star anyway,” etc. That is playing *into* the cycle.

In other words, people see it okay either way, so long as he signed the contract; and even if he were a big star – it’d be deemed “okay” to try to get out of the contract because of the fact? Neither statement(or if said, argument) make much sense. Unless you work for the promoter or are completely blind to the cycle that preexists and has been in place for years.

The moral being that regardless of the exact stipulations of Mikey’s contract, he should have the RIGHT(s) to explore his options, and at the very least – be entitled to exercise his civil rights, not only as a boxer, but as a person. Why would you try to question any fighter pursuing at the very least – their options? At the end of the day, it is Garcia, not Top Rank or any promoter who has put and will be putting their life on the line as soon as he sets foot in the ring. So who are we as a fan and media to question his moves? What if he is trying to make sure he doesn’t fall victim to the traps that did Tyson, Holyfield and so many others in?

Who are you, who am I, to question that? Are we a part of the problem, or a part of the solution? As much as we complain about a Judge’s absurd scorecard, and how a fight was stopped too soon or too late, there are questions far bigger we should be asking. And at the very least, breaking the cycle of what we know to be and have almost been instituted into knowing as true is a start.

Whether Mikey Garcia knew that or cared for that at the beginning of this is unknown, however, what we can at least accept and learn to understand is this:

The breaking of the cycle.

And of course to: *protect yourself at all times.*

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