

SPORTS

Golota, Norris battle generating little enthusiasm

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Sentinel-Voice

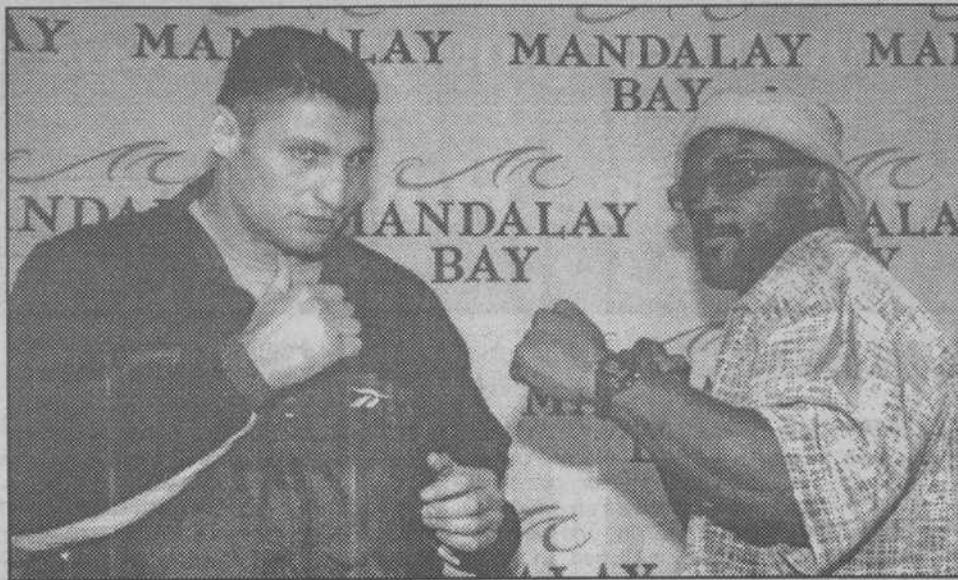
As this month rolled around, there was a sound and fury concerning the clashes of the world's leading heavyweights in Las Vegas and other venues around the world.

However, in the past few weeks, the sound has diminished somewhat between the two combatants, Andrew Golota, the Polish hurricane, and Orlin Norris, a former cruiserweight champion from Texas.

The two will meet Friday in a 10-round bout at the Mandalay Bay Resort.

Perhaps the hype generally accompanying Las Vegas heavyweight bouts is missing because no alphabetical title belts are on the line.

Boxing historians might just call this match the Foul



Andrew Golota, left, and Orlin Norris face off with each other as they prepare for their heavyweight bout on Friday at the Mandalay Bay Resort. Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

against the Foullee. A few years ago, Golota, in his introduction to the boxing fans on this side of the Atlantic Ocean, gained notoriety for a sixth-round dis-

qualification in a bout with former heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe.

Though the referee had warned him, Golota continued to deliver low blows to

Bowe, forcing his disqualification in the Madison Square Garden fight.

In the rematch, apparently ignoring the original outcome, Golota again was dis-

qualified for hitting below the belt.

In subsequent bouts, the Polish warrior has come back with a vengeance, battering Michael Grant to the canvas in the first round of their bout before running out of gas in the 10th round and losing by a technical knockout.

Norris, who comes from a family of fighters, held the WBA cruiserweight title for several years, before entering the heavier weight.

His younger brother, Terry, gained notoriety as the fighter who forced Sugar Ray Leonard into retirement with a thorough beating of the decorated but aged former champion.

The older Norris earned infamy as a Mike Tyson opponent earlier this year. Tyson struck him shortly after the bell ending the first

round. Referee Richard Steele had warned Tyson about hitting on the break. Tyson ignored the overture and clearly struck Norris after the bell. Norris fell awkwardly, injured his knee and couldn't continue fighting.

Tyson was furious at the post-fight press conference, calling Norris a coward and accusing him of quitting. It was learned later that a doctor advised Norris not to continue.

Tyson's purse was initially held by the Nevada Athletic Commission, which immediately gave Norris his share of the purse.

Norris, who has more than 36 wins, has been working hard at Big Bear Mountain. He thinks a win over Golota, 35-4, could vault him into a championship fight for one of those alphabet titles.

UNLV responds to NCAA about Odom violations

LAS VEGAS (AP) — UNLV has acknowledged violations involving Lamar Odom, but contends they took place after the basketball star was released from his national letter of intent in 1997.

The claim was made in a response to the NCAA, which began an inquiry March 10 into Odom, who now plays for the Los Angeles Clippers.

The NCAA said UNLV boosters gave Odom extra benefits, including \$5,600. UNLV said any improprieties between Odom and Las Vegas dentist David Chapman

came after Odom was released from his national letter of intent.

"The evidence is clear that the university released the prospect when he refused to sign a release permitting the NCAA to review his high school academic records and as a result we never gained a competitive advantage," UNLV athletic director Charles Cavagnaro said Monday.

The school sent a 122-page response to the NCAA on Friday. UNLV will present its case to the infractions com-

mittee on Aug. 11-13 in Beaver Creek, Colo.

UNLV contends that because any benefits Odom might have received from Chapman came long after he was released from his scholarship, the university is not responsible.

Therefore, the university claims there are no major violations, which means UNLV is not a repeat violator, as the NCAA contended in its March 10 report.

The university was still on probation from 1993 infractions when some of the

alleged violations involving Odom took place.

UNLV admitted to secondary violations regarding Odom before his graduation from high school in New

York. They included providing Odom with a gym bag, a summer job at a public relations company and giving him several rides to work.

In addition, the school

admitted to two other violations: calling recruits on the telephone more than the NCAA limit of once a week, and an assistant helping a player obtain and move a bed.

Cunningham 'rejoicing' with Cowboys

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Wearing his familiar No. 7 and an unfamiliar star on his helmet, new Dallas Cowboys backup quarterback Randall Cunningham spent Monday getting comfortable in what used to be enemy territory. "It's not strange," said Cunningham, a former UNLV football star whose 14 seasons in Philadelphia and Minnesota have included many memorable games against Dallas. "It's more of a rejoicing feeling."

The top-rushing quarterback in NFL history, Cunningham was released June 2 by the Vikings, making way for Daunte Culpepper to be their starter.

That same day, Cowboys owner Jerry Jones happened to be in Las Vegas, where Cunningham lives, and was riding in a limousine driven by one of the quarterback's friends. Jones mentioned that he'd been trying to reach Cunningham, so the driver called the quarterback and arranged a meeting for later that night.

There was never any doubt that Jones wanted Cunningham to back up Troy Aikman, not challenge him for the No. 1 job.

Had starting been the most important thing to Cunningham, he could've gone to Detroit to replace the injured Charlie Batch or Tampa Bay to push second-year quarterback Shaun

King. "I just like to know where I'm at," he said. "I went in as a backup in Minnesota, but I knew my role. So I was able to accept it. It's the same thing here."

Late last week, the 37-year-old Cunningham signed a three-year deal with Dallas that includes a \$500,000 signing bonus and \$500,000 salary for this season.

Cunningham was at team headquarters Monday to start three days of two-a-day practices. This full-squad minicamp is the last get-together until training camp opens July 17.

While the entire offense is still learning a new timing-based system, Cunningham is behind the curve. Quarterback coach Wade Wilson tried giving him a head start by sending him the playbook last week.

"My head is spinning a little bit," said Cunningham, who spent the lunch hour sitting at his locker with his playbook on his lap, highlighting play names and passing routes.

"There's so much to learn in this offense. Now I know why I signed a three-year deal."

Despite an on-field rivalry, Cunningham and Aikman have been friends since the offseason following Aikman's rookie year, 1989. The pair were among the 11 charter members of the Quarterback Club.

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