**Dear ARC Member:**

Several days ago, I posted a question from a fight promoter:

Is it better to do the weigh-in for a fighter the day before the fight or the morning of the fight?

My answer to the promoter was the day before. Here was my reasoning....

1. If a fighter does not make weight at the weigh in the night before, we usually permit them to try to make weight...as long as it is not more that 3% of body weight. If you have the weigh in the day of the fight...there are additional dangers since allowing them to try to lose any weight, may result in dehydration which can be potentially life threatening. Thus, you risk losing fights, increase the risk for the fighters and may place the entire card in jeopardy.
2. Weighing in fighters the day of the fight also forces and encourages fighters to continue to work towards making weight until the very last moment...which may be within a few hours of the fight. Thus, they are more likely to be dehydrated when they enter the ring.
3. Having the weigh-in the night before at least enables a fighter to re-hydrate despite the fact that studies suggest that it takes 48-72 hours for all the electrolytes to equilibrate.
4. Morning weigh-ins requires the fighters to arrive at the venue a few hours before they fight and risk failing their medicals due to an abnormal exam. Thus, this does not give the ringside doctor the ability to better evaluate a condition by contacting their private doctors to better evaluate and abnormal exam....given time....ringside physician can better explore an abnormality thereby perhaps saving the fight.

**Here are some of your responses:**

* No question in my mind that there should be 24 hours between weigh ins and event. Most athletes are cutting significant weight and we should allow time for rehydration.
* I would agree with your reasoning and recommend weigh ins be done the night before. Some fighters are going to cut weight regardless of when the weigh in occurs. Most of those that are honest, admit to cutting 15-20 lbs or more during the last week.

The amount of the weight cut does concern me about night before weigh ins, but the concern is for the opponent. I have had a few instances where there has been a 20-30 lb pre weight cut weight difference, which, if regained, could be detrimental to the lighter weight opponent. Only solution, that I can think of, is the possibility of challenging the weight prior to the fight or have documentation of weight 1-2 weeks prior to the fight and hold them to a percentage weight loss. (I suppose, we could recommend urine testing for specific gravity in relation to hydration at the time of weigh in.)

Otherwise, the only thing I have noticed, is a slight increase in the number of borderline or positive neuro exams post fight with weigh ins done same day. (Even in cases of minimal to no head trauma (MMA with submission within 30 seconds of start).

* Reasons promoters have given me for having same day weigh ins are usually associated with cost (paying for a venue and extra night and paying for officials for an extra day).
* I agree with your logic. At first glance it might seem like an unfair advantage to certain heavier fighters to weigh in the day before, but if we are going to take the exclusive perspective of physicians looking out for the safety of the fighters, then your logic is most sound.
* For the officials and the fighters to be available at night and again the next am might present a problem. Also, so to speak, your dry weight is what you weigh in the am. After not eating all night. Laying down all night which provides a mild diuresis, and relieving yourself in the am, that is as light as you are going to get. Last minute attempts to meet weight requirements is always a problem especially for college wrestlers.

So I think keep it simple, keep it stupid, and we all can more easily live with it. Weigh the day of the fight.

* I completely agree with your opinion. Having the weigh in the day before the fight is much safer than having it just some hours before the event. However, sometime, especially in non title fights (and in some countries) it could be difficult to have all the boxers for the weigh in the day before, due to logistical problems (as you know the promoters always try to cut the costs down). Usually, in these fights, the boxers don’t compete in their weight category (in the one in which he can be involved for a title) and the risks of dehydration can be lower.

In conclusion, in my opinion the weigh in should be done the day before the fight in title contests. In special cases, this rule can be relaxed as health risks linked to dehydration are lower, even if this can reduce time for the ring-side doctor to contact the boxer’s private doctor in case of any abnormal exam.

Thanks for your work and for founding the ARC.

* I am not a ringside expert but have a few thoughts from my somewhat limited perspective. Take it for what it's worth.

Based on (limited data) on hydration and concussion, I would suggest having the fighter as hydrated as possible at the time of the fight. First off all, dehydration may lead to symptoms that may be confused with concussion (headache- migraine type). Dehydration is well known to result in an irritation of the lining around the brain, so it stands to reason that if an Individual enters a fight dehydrated, he/she may be at greater Risk for symptoms. This could also potentially lead to poorer post injury response to concussion. This is why drinking a lot of water when imbibing alcohol mitigates the effects of concussion (or so people tell me).

* Great topic to bring up. I and my state Ringside colleagues have discussed this on several occasions and still seem split over what is best. Doc's that were involved in amateur wrestling favor "same day" weigh-in's citing fighters will less likely sustain severe water loss when they know they will have to perform in a few hours. I do not share their viewpoint and quite agree with your well described reasons. I find that by performing a pre-fight physical at night weigh-in day before a bout oftentimes alerts me who has come in very "dry" and may need to be watched closely during the bout. I particularly ask how much weight has been cut in last 24-36 hrs.

Look forward to getting results of your survey.

* I am often asked that question as well. You can make a strong debate on either side. There is no perfect solution, but we have to be more concerned with the danger of dehydration than one man having a weight advantage over the other.

I want to thank all of you for taking the time to respond and/or review the Question. More to come!

Mike