

SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF BOXING IN THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

UDC: 796.83:316
(Professional paper)

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Abstract

In order to write this paper, we learned about the history of origin of boxing, from pugilism, and the first competitions to the development of boxing as a modern sport. We are particularly talking about the period of boxing expansion in Serbia within the second half of the twentieth century, with the events epicenter in Novi Pazar. Special attention we dedicated to boxing development sociological aspects at the time, such as: problems with club financing, boxing fans enthusiasm, boxers education, their behavior in the ring and on the streets, curbing the fighting in the street, boxing skills nobilities, the importance of the rules of the sport for the society, the impact of boxing practicing on friendship and companionship, social behavior and promotion of boxing at the boxing audience as a sport through the results which the fighters have achieved within Novi Pazar and Serbia. We surveyed a number of former boxers and boxing workers.

Keywords: *boxing competitions, box funding, sport education, box clubs, box training, box audience, interview method*

INTRODUCTION

Pugilism as a competition is one of the oldest forms of competition and maintained for centuries. Battle was fought, first, bare fists, and later wrapped belts, which had metal buckles. England is the land from where the boxing, as a sport in all its current shape, became a modern sport and from where it spreads all over the world. Boxing, as a sport, in Serbia has its first appearance in 1904 (Bratić, 2000), a real expansion box experiences into the second half of the twentieth century. This is the case in Novi Pazar, the working environment, where the boxing experiences highest levels in seventies, when our city was the epicenter of boxing events (Jovanović, 2002). As boxing is a phenomenon in the family of martial sports, the city of Novi Pazar was boxing phenomenon too. With pleasure we can say that the city of Novi Pazar has given not only a great boxing names, but also very important members of our society, among who are lawyers, doctors, professors, artists, and many successful business people. More or less, all of them have succeeded in their

lives and there are no social endangered cases among them.

Funding and enthusiasm

As a sport branch, the box is most popular among the working youth population. This is an opinion of many boxing experts, who also claim that box is an iron sport. During the golden time for the boxing, the boxing centers were also points of Metal industry and related heavy industries as Niš, Kragujevac, Kruševac, Trstenik, Jagodina, Smederevo, Smederevska Palanka, Zaječar and other centers, where clubs are named by the company. In those times boxing clubs haven't had any existential or organizational problems. The declension of several major metallurgy companies, at the same time leads to disappearance of funding sources, which led to boxing clubs extinguishing and hard to survive. Some of them succeeded to survive by coping with the problematic financial situation by having support, help and hard work of enthusiasts and boxing skill fans. Boxing club in Novi Pazar was for years under the patronage

of the trade company "Freedom", company which in this part of Serbia had a monopoly position, and the boxers are employing, often only fictitious, within the factory, which was taking care about them further. All who wanted to study had received scholarships while the others had to complete at least high school and pass the driving test. Competitors, who have competed at the state championships or national teams, were particularly financial rewarded by the company.

Education of boxers

Well known fact is that sport training enriches individual's body, and especially boxing training! Boxing is a specific sport, because of its own regulations, written and other rules. Box club where one of the authors has use to work as a coach for years, were giving great importance to education of boxers, taught them on good manners and how to become good athletes, and especially, a good people. They've teach boxers also how not to demonstrate their boxing knowledge and skills on the street, but reserve the skills particular for the competition in the ring. Many street "heroes" and a "tough guys" have tried themselves in the ring, but without any success, because it's difficult for them to accept a fair fight. In the same conditions, they felt that on the "vicious quadrilateral" do not have much chance, as they acknowledged themselves.

Box as a noble art

Through training, friendship and competition, boxing as a sport develops generosity, a positive human characteristic, which on the ring, unfortunately, totally is neglected because of the desire for faster success and material comforts. In a large extent of these considerations are contributes of people who run boxing, and have never put gloves on its own hands. They did not feel the joy of the victories and the sadness of the defeated. Through the success of the club boxers some people are chasing for a personal promotion. Unfortunately, such people often mislead this erstwhile trophy sport and brought it to the brink of disaster. A real athlete and sportsmen, a boxer does not demonstrate his knowledge and skills on the street or they are not abusing its own superiority which they have in the ring. One of such "knights" in the ring was Svetomir Belić. During the matches with certainly weaker opponents he boxed so that he was keeping scoring advantage and he was

winning on points despite the fact that he could knockout an opponent at any time. Another sportsman is Živorad Šišković and his example is even more evident. In order to protect one helpless pair of Chinese in the Danube quay, he lost his life in a fight with a couple of wild hooligans. Šišković as a sportsman was a good man, fair fighter and well known coach and trainer. There were many examples like his at those times.

Important rules for society

The boxing rules could be considered as a reflection of the rules whether governing in the civilized world. Boxing as a sport which is develops a grit, determination, work ethics, and desire to prove oneself, success, and popularity in the local and wider environment. In Novi Pazar boxing, there was a player who "hung out with a glass" and he quickly ended his career. Not because he abuse the alcohol, but because he could not bear the burden of fame, plaudit on the shoulder and that he could not refuse someone's drink offer. It was the beginning of the end of his boxing career, despite the fact that he had a remarkable predisposition to deal with the box and very bright boxing future. Boxing rules do not allow the use of alcohol and other substances that affect the mental and physical abilities of a sportsman.

Friendships and companionships

Rivals on the sports field and „bitter opponents“, in their private lives could be a great friends. This and such friendships could be kept for years and decades and could never end. Such examples are many, and they are particularly well known in boxing sport. The boxing society of veterans existed for decades in Pazar and its members are boxers of different generations. They meet once a year, to chat, exchange experiences and to refresh memories from and around the ring. A lot of former boxers, who live abroad, are planning their summer vacations and they are gathering during the club meetings of boxing veterans.

Affiliation in the group

With the sport organization membership, a sportsman accepts certain sport rules while each group has its own specific patterns of behavior, different inter relationships and processes that characterize the group. Each sport group has its own history which was built by generations of boxers and sports officials. Each team has its

club symbols, its own style which is a kind of reflection of the social relations within club past and the present (Koković, 2000). Each individual is experiencing the need for belonging to a group which fights for the boxing club and represents it at the most beautiful way. The vast majority of boxers come from poor working class families, from the periphery of the city, within families which were on the edge of their existence. They were thought from their early age that a life can not offer anything on an easy way and that they must fight very hard for all the things in the life.

Interviews with people in boxing

During the boxing career, one of the authors had the privilege often to be in the company of the now legendary Thom Cold, boxing team coach from his most glorious days. His monologues from the competing and coaching days related to the people from and around the ring were remembered as words from a very good boxer and box teacher. As a competitor, he was in the category of Paul Šovljanski, a big name of the Yugoslav ring, who, at the time being, was a captain of the European boxing team. He won the matches over Paul Šovljanski at the league matches, tournaments and individual championships. Ironically, Šovljanski has not left much trace as a coach, while Thom Cold as coach reached the stellar heights.

One of the best boxers in Novi Pazar Safet Koča one said: "Sport helped me a lot in life. He ennobled me, enriched me with work habits and taught me to respect the people, my enemies and to fight for my place under the sun. I'm coming from humble working families, with many brothers and sisters. I lost my father early and the burden of the oldest male in the family felled on me. I grown matured before the time. According these circumstances, I could not dedicate myself on boxing enough time needed to go on longtime preparations."

Double world professional champion Edip Šećović – Šecko, who lived and worked in Vienna, also originated from a poor peasant family, once said: "I can be only thankful to the boxing for all the things that I had accomplished in life. My coach from those times saw in me a great desire for success in my career, a fanatical devotion and a courage. During that period of my life he succeeded to draw me out from the way of juvenile delinquency. I liked to fight; I had my "gang" and my marked territory. Since I was a "stranger" in Pazar, I did not get a real

chance, so I tried myself on a professional ring, where my coach was a big name at the Hungarian and world boxing, Laslo Pap. Pap noticed my distinguished skills and a fanatical desire for a success. So, I became a world champion"!

One of the very promising boxers, for a relatively short time left his deep trace in boxing in Pazar, was Tarik Hodžić, a professor of physical education and academic artist. He spoke about himself in the following way: "I am coming from modest urban family, with many brothers and sisters and I am proud to say that we all succeed in life, finished high schools and became academics. Boxing has helped me in forming of my personality, but I didn't remain a prisoner of the ring. Boxing was a beautiful episode"

Audience

Expansion of box sport in seventies of the last century returns the public to the sport and boxing arenas. Novi Pazar became a town of boxing where the public were rushing to the stadiums and sport halls with a highly need for an extra ticket. The boxing matches' public very often numbered ten thousands and more. Among boxing male and female fans, the boxers were becoming very popular. Although fanatical boxing fans in Novi Pazar were organizing caravans with ten or more buses to support their favorite boxers during matches held in another towns. It was very impressive!

CONCLUSION

Last century's nineteen years happenings within the Balkan region, negatively affected the sport boxing in the region. The management of the boxing Union and the national teams placed more attention on a personal promotion, traveling around the world, than planning activities for the benefit of boxing as a sport. Boxing clubs, because of the bad financial situation and lack of commercial support, were forced to diminish their activities, even to disappear from the sport scene. Unlike the "golden" seventies of the twentieth century for boxing in Pazar, when boxing has been enjoyed all kind of support of the local community, state institutions and companies, today, unfortunately, we have the reverse situation. There is no private support. Municipal leaders, for personal promotion, give all the support for football and other sports. Officially there are two boxing teams, competing in the Regional Šumadija league in pioneer, cadet and junior competition.

There are talents, as always, but...

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СОЦИОЛОШКИ АСПЕКТИ ЗА РАЗВОЈОТ НА БОКСОТ ВО РАБОТНИЧКАТА СРЕДИНА

УДК: 796.83:316
(Сѝручен ѝруд)

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Апстракт

За потребите на овој труд, користен е приод на запознавање со историјата и појавата на боксот, од тупаничењето до првите боксерски натпревари како современ спорт. Особено беа третирани периодите на експанзијата на боксот во Србија, во втората половина на дваесетиот век, со Нови Пазар како епицентар на збиднувањата. Посебно внимание е посветено на социолошките аспекти на развојот на боксот во тоа време, како што се: проблемите при финансирањето на клубовите, ентузијазмот на љубителите на боксот, воспитувањето на боксерите, нивното однесување на рингот и на улица, воздржувањето од борбите на улица, племенитоста на боксот како вештина, значењето на правилата во боксот во општествени рамки, влијанието на занимавањето со бокс врз пријателството и дружењето, однесувањето на боксерската публика и афирмацијата на боксот како спорт низ резултатите кои ги постигнале боксерите на Нови Пазар и Србија. Интервјуирани се повеќе некогашни боксери и боксерски работници.

Клучни зборови: *боксерски натпревари, финансирање на боксоѝ, сѝорѝско восѝѝување, боксерски клубови, боксерски ѝтренинѝ, боксерска ѝпублика, мейода на инѝервју*

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