

## Olympian Berto added to Taylor-Joppy Undercard

Written by News Article

Wednesday, 24 November 2004 18:00

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(New York, November 24) - Andre Berto, one of the most hotly recruited 2004 Olympic boxers and considered an outstanding welterweight prospect, will make his pro boxing debut on DiBella Entertainment's Season's Beatings on December 4 at Barton Coliseum in Little Rock, Arkansas, on the undercard of Jermain Taylor vs. William Joppy, it was announced today by DBE president Lou DiBella.

Berto, 21, is a native of Winter Haven, Florida, and will get the opportunity to display his pro style and punching power in Little Rock.

"I have spent more time scouting Andre Berto than any other amateur and believe that he will be a great professional," said DiBella. "It is a treat for me to promote his pro debut and to introduce a great young prospect to Arkansas boxing fans."

"I am really excited about fighting on December 4th," said Berto. "I have waited a long time and worked very hard for this day, my professional debut. I have been patient and have paid all my dues. Now is the time to have fun and step up for the professional game. I am looking forward to fighting on DiBella Entertainment's card and honored to fight on the undercard of Jermain Taylor."

"We're excited for the world to finally see what we already know," said Berto's attorney Ray Rafool.

During a standout amateur career, Berto won a bronze medal at the 2003 World Amateur Boxing Championships in Bangkok, Thailand; was a two-time National Golden Gloves champion, a two-time national PAL champion and three-time US amateur championship medalist.

The youngster was the center of a controversy at the Olympic trials in Tunica, when he was disqualified by referee Dennis O'Connell for illegally tossing Juan McPherson to the canvas late in the 4th round of their opening round bout. After filing a grievance with the USA Boxing Grievance Committee, the committee determined that the infraction did not warrant disqualification. Berto was reinstated into the trials. Then in a bizarre reversal, a second committee overturned the decision upon further review, and Berto, who has a dual citizenship, became Haiti's one man boxing team.