

Heavyweight John Ruiz calls out Chris Byrd

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World Boxing Association heavyweight champion John "The Quietman" Ruiz (41-5-1, 28 KOs) has responded to derogatory remarks recently made about him by International Boxing Federation heavyweight title-holder Chris Byrd (38-2-1, 20 KOs).

"I'll fight Byrd any time, any place, and he can bring the ref," Ruiz offered. "Let him bring two referees if he wants. This fight can easily be made because we have the same promoter (Don King). All it takes is a phone call by Byrd. I'll sign a contract tomorrow. I just don't want it to be a cat fight because I don't slap like him."

Team Ruiz learned that Byrd said, according to an Internet boxing writer, everyone in the heavyweight division is afraid to fight Ruiz because he cheats, fights illegally, and uses different rules.

"This must be Chris' way of telling Don that he won't fight Johnny," Ruiz' manager/head trainer Norman 'Stoney' Stone said. "Our last three fights we've asked to fight Byrd. Two weeks ago we told Don to get us any of the other champions, including Byrd, in or out of a tournament. Johnny wants to settle things in the ring, his belt against any of the other world champions. We've never said anything bad about Chris; he's never said anything bad about John up until now. Why is he trash talking now? He's just afraid to fight Johnny, not because Johnny cheats, but because Byrd knows he can't beat him

"We're tired of cleaning up the messes Byrd's left behind. He can bring all of the refs he wants, but not the judges because his last three fights all have been questionable decisions. If heavyweights should be afraid of fighting anybody, it should be Byrd because of those bad decisions. In his last three fights Chris has struggled: (Fres) Oquendo gave him hell for 12 rounds, Johnny knocked out Oquendo in 11; he fought (Andrew) Golota to a draw, Johnny got up off the mat against Golota to win 9 of 12 rounds on two cards, 8 of 12 on the other; Byrd was lucky in his last fight to get out of there with a split decision against (Jameel) McCline. Fighting isn't about style points, it's all about winning and losing, and Johnny Ruiz keeps winning."