

## Spinks vs. Judah on Showtime Boxing Feb. 5

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Pulling no punches, SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING will come out with both fists blazing on Feb. 5 when its first telecast of 2005 features a grudge rematch between World Boxing Association/World Boxing Council/International Boxing Federation (WBA/WBC/IBF) Welterweight Champion Cory "The Next Generation" Spinks and former two-time world champion Zab "Super" Judah. In a sensational co-feature, two boxers ranked in the top 10 in each of boxing's four major governing bodies will square off when Monte "Two Gunz" Barrett faces undefeated Owen "What The Heck" Beck in a 12-round heavyweight elimination bout. SHOWTIME will televise the doubleheader at 9 p.m. ET/PT.\* Don King Productions will present the event from the Savvis Center in St. Louis.

Spinks (34-2, 11 KOs), of St. Louis, won the initial battle of world-class southpaws and successfully defended the undisputed welterweight title by registering a 12-round unanimous decision on April 10, 2004, in Las Vegas. In one of 2004's most dramatic fights, which included numerous momentum changes, the son of Leon and nephew of Michael Spinks scored a knockdown with a short left hand in the 11th, survived a late knockdown in the 12th and won by the scores 116-111 and 114-112 twice. Spinks captured the undisputed crown in a shocking 12-round majority decision over then-WBA/WBC champion Ricardo Mayorga on Dec. 13, 2003.

"I give Judah credit," said Spinks, who came out aggressively and controlled the action during the initial rounds. "He is a great fighter. I was just a little better the first time. I boxed beautifully. Some people did not think I could get mean but I did. As for me going down, I got a little relaxed. In the last round, I should have played it cool, boxed and stayed away, but I got a little careless and he threw a good shot."

"I learned a lot from that fight and will not make the same mistake in the rematch. I had a big lead and almost let it get away. I am the best 147-pound boxer in the world and look forward to proving it again against Judah. Zab likes to talk and will always win a war of words, but the ring is my forum and where I speak loudest. After I beat him again, maybe I will get the credit I deserve."

In his last start, Spinks successfully defended his belts with a lopsided 12-round unanimous decision over former WBC champion and No. 1 contender Miguel Angel Gonzalez Sept. 4, 2004, on SHOWTIME from Las Vegas. Utilizing his speed, movement and boxing ability to dictate the pace throughout, Spinks earned the easy victory by the scores 118-109 on all three judges' scorecards.

Spinks, who upset Mayorga by the scores 117-110, 114-112 and 114-114, won the IBF welterweight title in his second attempt against Michele Piccirillo by garnering a 12-round unanimous decision on March 22, 2003, in Campione D'Italia, Italy. Most felt Spinks got robbed in their first bout, which ended in a disputed draw.

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Judah (32-2, 1 NC, 23 KOs), of Brooklyn, N.Y., began to out-quick Spinks and closed the gap in the middle rounds of their initial bout. He landed a punishing right hand and dropped the welterweight champion with less than 30 seconds remaining in the 12th round. Spinks was hurt and took a mandatory eight-count. Judah, who made his 147-pound debut, hurt Spinks again, but the champion managed to survive the rest of the round.

“I did not fight my fight and know I could have done more, especially in the early rounds,” said Judah, who entered the ring as a slight favorite. “But I still thought I did enough. Spinks did not surprise me at all. I went down, but it was a ‘B.S.’ knockdown.”

“When I dropped Spinks with a beautiful shot, I let him off the hook. I had him hurt and there was still time to finish him, but instead of going forward I stayed back and stopped. But I have no complaints. I give credit to Spinks for giving me another chance. Most fighters would not. He is a good fighter, but I will show him who the real champ is.”

Judah has won two straight since the setback to Spinks. In his last outing, he retained his WBO Intercontinental welterweight crown with a first-round TKO over Wayne Martell on Oct. 2, 2004, in New York. The two-time world champion matted Martell five times before the one-sided affair was halted at 2:08. On May 15, 2004, just 35 days after losing to Spinks, Judah won the WBO Intercontinental belt by scoring a 12-round split decision over Rafael Pineda. He floored Pineda in the seventh en route to winning by the scores 115-112, 114-113 and 112-115.

Judah, who won the WBO junior welterweight crown with a 12-round split decision over DeMarcus “Chop Chop” Corley on July 12, 2003, captured the vacant IBF crown with a fourth-round knockout over Jan Bergman on Feb. 12, 2000. After five successful defenses, he suffered his first defeat and lost his IBF title when Kostya Tszyu captured the undisputed 140-pound crown with a second-round TKO on Nov. 3, 2001, on SHOWTIME.

Barrett (30-3, 16 KOs), of Hackensack, N.J., by way of Queens, N.Y., and Greenville, N.C., is ranked No. 3 in the WBC, No. 4 in the WBO, No. 6 in the WBA and No. 7 in the IBF. Nicknamed “Two Gunz,” Barrett has won six of his past seven fights. The loss came on a disputed 10-round split decision to unbeaten Joe Mesi on Dec. 6, 2003. In his last outing, Beck recorded a 10-round split decision over previously undefeated Dominick Guinn on March 27, 2004.

“Beck is a good fighter, but has not fought anyone like me,” Barrett said. “He has not fought any strong fighters like me. I have the speed and more experience. I have been here many times and am going into this fight not just hungry, but starving. Barrett will receive a lot of pain. I promise you that Beck will hit the deck.”

Beck (24-0, 18 KOs), of Nashville, Tenn., has knocked out his past four opponents within three rounds and has only been past the fifth round three times in his career. Only one of his past 17 starts dating back to May 2000 has gone the distance. In the sole contest to go all the way, Beck won a lopsided 12-round decision over George Arias on Sept. 20, 2003, to capture the FEDALATIN heavyweight title. In his last outing, Beck recorded a first-round TKO over

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Troy Weida on Sept. 4, 2004.

"I am ready for big fights, but all I can do is take on the guys they put in front of me," Beck said. "Barrett has more experience and he is the best fighter I have faced, but I do not think he is any big threat to my career. I have no doubt that I can pass the test. I have waited all my life to get an opportunity like this. I know I will make the best of it. People will be happy with what they see."

SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING's Steve Albert and Al Bernstein will call the action from ringside with Steve Farhood serving as roving reporter. The executive producer of the SHOWTIME telecast will be Jay Larkin, with David Dinkins Jr. producing and Bob Dunphy directing.

In 2005, SHOWTIME will continue its fan-friendly scheduling strategy of providing viewers and boxing fans with the best boxing has to offer on the first Saturday of every month. For information on SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING and "ShoBox: The New Generation" telecasts, including complete fighter bios and records, related stories and more, please go the SHOWTIME website at <http://www.sho.com/boxing>.

\*Tape delayed on the West Coast