

Felix "Tito" Trinidad and Winky Wright Square-Off Saturday

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Felix Trinidad Says Winky Wright Has Never Faced a Fighter with His Power; Wright Counters That He Has No Plans to Taste It

LAS VEGAS — The world's best 154-pound boxer, Winky Wright, who has never been knocked out, moves up to middleweight on Saturday to battle one of the best knockout artists ever in Puerto Rican superstar Felix "Tito" Trinidad at MGM Grand Garden Arena and on HBO Pay-Per-View.

Both combatants can credibly argue being the hottest boxer in the sport today. Three-time world champion Trinidad emerged from a 29-month retirement to electrify a packed house at New York's Madison Square Garden, and garner the second highest pay-per-view audience of the year, with a slugfest against former unified welterweight champion Ricardo "El Matador" Mayorga on Oct. 2, which Trinidad won with a spectacular eighth round technical knockout.

Wright defeated the gifted "Sugar" Shane Mosley to become the undisputed 154-pound world champion on March 13—and beat him again in an immediate rematch on Nov. 20—which catapulted him into the top five in "pound-for-pound" best boxer in the world lists. Wright has not lost a match in over five years.

"A lot of people have been asking me if I can take Tito's best punch," Wright said. "I can tell you right now, I don't intend to find out. My biggest concern is that after I beat him, he retires again and I miss my big payday in the rematch."

Wright (48-3 25 KOs), from St. Petersburg, Fla., is a southpaw known for his all-around boxing abilities, who has been avoided by big name opponents that fear his pugilistic prowess. The first boxing star to agree to face Wright was a then-undefeated Fernando Vargas in 1999, who had knocked out every opponent he had faced, 17 in all. Wright was the sharper puncher and boxer throughout much of the fight and although many at ringside felt he won, Vargas slipped by with a majority decision win.

Trinidad (42-1 35 KOs) has earned his status in large measure by never having walked away from a good fight, as evidenced by a seemingly endless list of tough opponents since 1999, including Pernell Whitaker, Oscar De La Hoya, David Reid, Fernando Vargas, William Joppy, Bernard Hopkins and Mayorga.

"A lot of people have said this fight is too tough of a challenge for me, that I should have taken an easier fight after Mayorga," Trinidad said. "I have never backed away from a tough fight or challenge. I do respect Winky, but he's never been in the ring with a fighter like me."

Trinidad's promoter, Don King, echoed his fighter's sentiments.

"While many boxers avoid tough fights, Tito Trinidad always wants to fight the best," King said.

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"Tito has proven yet again he has the heart of a lion by agreeing to face the great world champion Winky Wright."

HBO Pay-Per-View is anticipating a great event for its viewers.

"Trinidad vs. Wright is an intriguing matchup between two elite fighters who continually seek out the biggest challenges," said Mark Taffet, HBO Senior Vice President of Sports Operations & Pay-Per-View. "Boxing fans always appreciate it when the best face the best."

Tickets priced at \$1000, \$750, \$400, and \$250 are on sale now and are available at any MGM Grand box office outlet. Tickets also are sold at all Las Vegas TicketMaster locations (Tower Records/WOW!, Smith's Food and Drug Centers, Robinsons-May stores and Ritmo Latino). Ticket sales are limited to eight (8) per person. To charge by phone with a major credit card, call TicketMaster at (702) 474-4000. Tickets also will be available for purchase at www.mgmgrand.com or www.ticketmaster.com

The event is being promoted by Don King Productions in association with MGM Grand and Gary Shaw Productions and will be produced and distributed domestically by HBO Pay-Per-View, available to more than 50 million pay-per-view homes. The telecast will begin at 9 p.m. ET/6 p.m. PT and will be broadcast internationally and on closed circuit by KingVision.