WINKY VS. TAYLOR

This matchup, although considered by some a potential stinker, is actually kinda exciting. Because both fighters use the jab as their main weapon of choice, you would think that this would be one of those snooze-fests where both Winky and Taylor look at each other from a distance and feint for twelve rounds. But the BIAS believes this fight is going to be different. Taylor has to know that people are looking for a “Sugar Ray-type” performance from him, and Winky, as safety first as people say he is, is always more than willing to rumble… and he does it better than he has been given credit for. Let’s go IN-DEPTH and discover why some people think Winky vs. Taylor might be a dog of a fight, but in all actuality could be a dogfight! Gulp, FIGHT OF THE YEAR?

WISP (WINKY)
Defining traits: With Wisp style fighters, opponents feel he is beatable due to his lack of power. Yet it is the lack of a BIG PUNCH that has created a master boxer. A loss on points is as rare as Steak Tartar for this symbol of hardy persistence.

VS.

HAWK (TAYLOR)
Defining traits: Hawk is known for his fluid, crisp attack. Make no bones about it, he is a night mare for an ill prepared fighter. Hawk doesn’t have all the attributes of the pound for pounders, but he does exhibit an undeniable will and is a tenacious adversary for any fighter.

RING GENERALSHIP
WINKY 9
TAYLOR 8
(Ability to dictate how the fight will be fought)
Both fighters have shown, throughout their careers the ability to stick with their game plan. But the real question is, and what every fan should want to see is: if the fight goes past ring smarts and gets down to instinct, then who has the advantage? Edge to Winky for his complete domination over more highly rated opponents than Taylor has had (and no, Taylor didn’t dominate Hopkins).

FOCUS
WINKY 9
TAYLOR 10
(Ability to funnel all one’s attentions on the matter at hand)
Again, both Wright and Taylor are highly competitive in this category. They are hardworking fighters that calculate every moment and every move when in the ring. In Taylor’s two biggest fights his focus had to be infallible and it was. Winky’s last fight was a different story… For whatever reason. Sam Soliman was allowed to get brave and actually think he could win. If

Winky's focus slips in this fight, fans will be treated to a brawl!

ENDURANCE
WINKY 10
TAYLOR 9
(Regardless of the pace, can carry the last round like the first)
We have seen Winky in some true rumbles and never has he folded in the heat of battle. All this against top-shelf competition as well. For Taylor, this is a question he hopes he never has to answer. Not because he can't, but because it is a question no fighter wants to answer. For all we know he may have as much as Winky, if possible, but he has never been tested yet… or should I say, he has never allowed himself to be taken off his game plan so he never had to test his endurance… Taylor gets a 9 because the BIAS doesn't think stamina is an issue for this young man. Advantage: Winky

DEXTERITY
WINKY 9
TAYLOR 8
(The ability to throw any type of punch with precision)
Winky can throw pretty much any punch from any angle and if he can consistently put more than two punches together, he is a very dangerous fighter. Taylor, although he has the speed and ability, he is pretty much Jab dominant... and that jab is always the precursor to his attack. Which makes it predictable and at some point defendable. Taylor would do wise not to LEAD with the jab so much against Winky. Advantage: Winky

AGILITY
WINKY 8
TAYLOR 8
(Moving your body to an advantageous position through movement of the feet or body)
Both fighters have a lot of agility, but neither feels the need to use it. Footwork isn't only used to get out of range but it is very effective to have the ability to change your angle while going forward (see Aaron Pryor.) Neither Winky nor Taylor make footwork a major part of their attack (young Ali/Camacho), but maybe the edge goes to Taylor because his legs are younger. Sometimes it takes more courage or effort to move and work for a different opening than to stand there and trade. A tie.

DEFENSE
WINKY 8
TAYLOR 9
(The ability to avoid being hit through either slipping or blocking punches… bonus points if you can counter off the defensive move)
Winky employs a hands-held-high defense…. And it is so effective because he has long arms that can cover both his body and head simultaneously. The BIAS thinks he would be wise to mix that in with a little head movement, for anything predictable can be problematic. Taylor employs the pull-out-of-the-way type defense, which most young fighters opt for, the desire to not get hit pretty strong. Plus they have surplus energy to burn. Analysis: Taylor doesn't get hit for a reason; even Bernard Hopkins couldn't get to him consistently. Edge to Taylor

RESILIENCY
WINKY 9
TAYLOR (TBD) To be determined
(The resistance to cuts and a thick beard as well as taking a good wack to the guts)
Without a doubt Winky has proven that he can stand in there against powerful punchers, absorb what they give and come back with his own weapons… with the exception of Julio Cesar Vasquez… who had him up and down quite a few times in their 1994 title fight. For Taylor, it is still too early in the game to make any claim of exceptional resiliency and that's how you want it for a young fighter. But he isn't going in the ring against Hearns or Mugabi either in this one, so his ability to take a big punch may not be measured.

JAB
WINKY 10
TAYLOR 9
(The most important punch in boxing)
This is the main weapon in both fighters' attacks. Both Winky and Taylor's jabs are straight and to the point. How effective Winky's jab will be on a cat with reflexes like Taylor's is questionable, but if he can keep his right foot on the outside of Taylor's left, he'll find a home for that jab all night. Whether Jermain's jab will be as dominant against a fighter that doesn't really get hit by jabs is left to be seen. Winky keeps his hands up high and tight. It will be hard to split the guard with straight shots and would probably be more effective with circular punches that travel around the guard before he tries the jab. Edge to Winky

POWER
WINKY 6
TAYLOR 8
(The ability to knock your opponent out with one punch)
No one is lining up to get hit by Winky, but he still only gets roughly 50% of his opponents out before the final bell. Taylor, although a strong puncher with a respectable KO record, has still yet to confirm he is a dangerous puncher against top caliber opponents, but he is, nonetheless, the harder puncher of the two. Edge: Taylor

BODY PUNCHING
WINKY 8
TAYLOR 7
(The ability to dominate your opponent fighting at close range with shots to the torso)
Winky has no qualms about going toe-to-toe with a hard-punching opponent in order to land his own shots and go to the body. Taylor, on the other hand, prefers to keep the fight on the outside where he can see everything and use his superior speed and reflexes. Advantage: Winky

TOTAL
WINKY 8.5
TAYLOR 8.4

INTANGIBLES
The personal life of a boxer is so tightly intertwined with his performance that the BIAS strongly

advocates the simplicity of training camp for two months before a fight. This should be done as much for the mind as the body. A fighter really needs to disconnect from everything else in their life. We will never know what is going on in the minds of either fighter, but just know that any deviation from the norm can cause a fighter's ability to unexpectedly erode… What we do know is this… Taylor is fighting a southpaw, a southpaw the quality of which Taylor has never experienced. How much of a factor this will play is unknown. It may be Winky's style, rather than the fact that he is a southpaw, that causes Taylor to forget his game plan.

SIZE

In Taylor, Winky is fighting a very strong middleweight. This isn't Tito coming up from welterweight. Taylor is big, has no problem pulling the trigger on his punches and gets good steam behind his shots. His walking around weight is probably in the high-180s. Winky has also been in some, not exactly wars, but hard fights and they take their toll. (Umm, not only the fights but the training too.) Could he just be mentally drained, does he still love it as he once did?

FINAL ANALYSIS

The mark of a safety-first fighter is a JAB that is used habitually. Safety-first fighters generally don't provide exciting fights so that's probably why this match isn't on the tip of everyone's tongue… This fight is being made through the process of elimination. Taylor beat Hopkins, who beat De La Hoya. Winky beat Mosely and also shut out Trinidad. This is now the best big name fight in the middleweight division. You may feel like you are being force-fed something you didn't choose, but hold on, don't put away the wallet yet.

The first thing that goes into making a fight of the year is COMPETETIVENESS. This fight on paper does not look like a walkover, as their attributes are comparable. Secondly, both competing fighters need to have exciting offenses, and although neither Winky nor Taylor has set the world on fire with Ray Robinson-like combinations, they do have potent attacks. A leaky defense helps matters as well; unfortunately, for the casual fan, neither one of them takes more than they have to, BUT there is desperation involved and that is always a desperate ingredient. By desperation the BIAS means, if they have their fingers on the pulse of HBO and their fan base, both Winky and Taylor have to perform to the utmost of their ability. Their names have to translate into ACTION.

The only glaring differences in their attributes are the advantage for Winky in the BODY PUNCHING/INFIGHTING department and for Taylor in the POWER category. But Taylor's advantage in the POWER department doesn't seem to play as much a role in this fight (maybe because he hasn't to this point seemed comfortable enough to settle down and really let go with power shots) as much as Winky's advantages making the fight a war on the inside. We know nothing of Taylor's RESILIENCE and the BIAS is sure, like most fighters, he'd rather that question go unanswered throughout his career. Winky'll have more success later in the bout when Taylor settles down but he better not let the fresh Taylor jump out the blocks early, because Winky doesn't have a big closer (knockout punch).

POTENTIAL

Winky, Taylor, WIN THE ROUND! The outcome of fight will take care of itself. Winky HAS TO bring the heat in order to win this fight. He cannot afford to stay on the outside and get into a

jabbing contest. From round 1, Winky has to drag Taylor into deep water and attempt to drown him. Taylor, the middleweight version of Larry Holmes… The BIAS thinks it is crucial that he starts his attack with right leads and left hooks if he wants to keep Winky respectful and leery of his punches. Whichever employs their strategy best will win.

If both fighters put their heart on the line and really let go, this could be a hotly contested, GREAT fight. Winky wins and he will finally get the appreciation he deserves. Taylor wins… Crown him king and let him move up to Super Middleweight and take on Jeff Lacy (whom he beat as an amateur) or Joe Calzaghe. Boxing's "Crash" Winky vs. Taylor is a sleeper you don't want to miss.

BIAS rating. 8 out of 10 knuckles.