

Jermain Taylor and Winky Wright at B.B. King's

For those who have problems sleeping, call it insomnia, sleep apnea, sleep deprived, sleep whatever, where you toss and turn all night, you missed the chance of a lifetime Tuesday afternoon at **B.B. King's** on 42nd Street in New York City. They werenâ€™t passing out reds at the club named after the legendary blues singer, guitarist, and proud son of Memphis, Tennessee, at least not while I and the boxing press was there, but then again, nor was there any need. The **Jermain Taylor-Winky Wright** press conference was just what the doctor ordered.

Unusual for boxing press conferences in this day and age, which resemble a feeding frenzy in the shallow waters off Shark Island, at the B.B. King press conference tin midtown here were three live musicians playing live music, a slow guitar, soft trumpet and standup bass turning forgotten jazz standards inside out and upside down. Taylor and Wright, accompanied by their promoters and handlers, came to Manhattan to announce their big June 17 fight at the FedExForum in Memphis, Tennessee for the undisputed middleweight championship of the world, a fight to be broadcast on HBO.

Boxing press conferences are de rigueur for all the big fights. It's a video/photo op, a soundbite goldmine, and all the bad food you can eat all at once. On this fine spring day in the basement of B.B. Kingâ€™s ribs were served alongside with some dubious genus of red sauce. Those of my brethren in the boxing press with a taste for swine must have been in culinary hog heaven, as happy as a pig in you-know-what, but for the granola-chomping boxing writers with squeals of Woodstock still ringing in their ears, there was no salad, no vegetable, nothing green, nothing healthy, no bread, no fries, no dessert; just the finger-licking greasy remains of an animal raised for slaughter.

While weâ€™re on the subject of boxing, with Taylor-Hopkins we have two A-list fighters at the top of their game. For Jermain Taylor, whoâ€™s on the rise, fighting in Memphis is like a homecoming. â€œHaving held my last training camp there, and it just being two hours from Little Rock, Memphis is like a second home to me. I canâ€™t wait to perform in front of my fans from Arkansas and my adopted hometown fans in Memphis. Itâ€™s going to be a great fight. I have never seen anything like Winkyâ€™s defense. He can defend all day, but we are going to have to eventually fight.â€

Winky Wright, it could be his calling card, will do it his way. â€œTwo great fighters will be coming to Memphis to show whoâ€™s best. I am here for one reason,â€ Winkster said, â€œto beat Jermain Taylor on June 17. He beat Hopkins, I beat Tito, now we will find out who the best middleweight is.â€

Taylorâ€™s loquacious promoter, **Lou DiBella** of DiBella Entertainment, was more even loquacious than usual at B.B. King's Tuesday afternoon. This was his fight, his promotion, his

Iâ€™™Ve Got A Right To Sing The Blues

Written by Robert Ecksel
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day, and he beamed like a giddy king during a giddy coronation. After naming and thanking his staff, and describing their duties, after naming and thanking his lawyer, and not describing his duties, DiBella said, "Memphis has clearly illustrated that it is a boxing town and FedExForum is one of the finest arenas in the country. We look forward to the southern hospitality in June. Jermain is the best fighter I have ever promoted. I am proud to be his promoter. Though I think it is his toughest fight, Jermain will prove himself again to be the best middleweight in the world."

Winky Wrightâ€™™s promoter, the sometimes tightlipped **Gary Shaw**, said "This will be a tremendous battle in a tremendous city, and the most important fight in the 160-pound division. In order to be recognized as the true undisputed middleweight champion of the world, Jermain has to win because Winky is the gatekeeper of the 160-pound division."

Jermain Taylor vs. Winky Wright is promoted by DiBella Entertainment and Gary Shaw Productions in association with Prize Fight Promotions. Tickets can be purchased at all Ticketmaster locations or by calling Ticketmaster at 901.525.1515.

Taylor-Wright will be on HBOâ€™™s "World Championship Boxing" on Saturday, June 17, 2006, live at 9:30 PM ET/8:30 PM CT/6:30 PM PT.

See you there. [Read more at the BLOG](#)