

Boxing News: James Toney and Sam Peter Meet the Press

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On Saturday, Sept. 2, James "Lights Out" Toney faces Samuel "The Nigerian Nightmare" Peter in a 12-round WBC heavy weight elimination bout on SHOWTIME (9 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the west coast) at STAPLES Center in L.A. The two bruisers met the press via telephone conference call on Tuesday, August 8, and if insults were punches, both Toney and Peter gave as good as they got...

Sam Peter: I am in Las Vegas training, waiting for James Toney. I thank everybody that put this fight together. I am so excited because it is going to be an exciting fight. I know nobody can tell what God's glory is, so I am ready to roll.

James Toney: I am looking forward to Sept. 2. I am fighting a very credible challenger in Sam Peters, second in the world to date. I am looking forward to the opportunity to show everybody that I am the best heavyweight out there. It is going to be a great show. This is the kind of fight that the fans want to see. They want to see James fighting Sammy Peter. It should be a vacation match.

Question: James, what has training been like? Are you doing anything differently? Do you feel you're more focused? Are you doing anything differently? Do you feel this is a must win fight for you?

Toney: Every fight I am in is a must win fight. I went back to basics. Same as with Holyfield, that is what I went back to. It is going very well. I have no complaints.

Question: Sam, this is a crossroads fight. Do you feel it is a must win fight for you?

Peter: Yes. I am really sure this is a big fight and a big win for me because I am fighting a two-time heavyweight champion, two times challenging. So I am ready to prove I am going to be the next heavyweight champion of the world. I thank Toney for giving me this opportunity to beat him.

Question: James, some feel you could have defeated Hasim Rahman easily if you had come in at 225 instead of 237. Have you thought about that? Do you agree with that?

Toney: I have gone back towards it. I thought I won the fight, but I should have come in better shape because I had a little cold before the fight. No excuse. But now we are here. I will jump right back into the frying pan. You don't know too many fighters today that will jump right back into the frying pan with a difficult fight. I don't think anybody in boxing, but James Toney, is taking a tough fight after a tough fight. So I will be in great shape. I wish the fight was today, but it isn't. Three and a half more weeks, and I will be ready.

Question: Do you have a target as far as what you want to come in for this fight?

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Toney: I am going to come in wherever I am comfortable at. I am just excited.

Question: Do you feel like it is time, especially from this fight, or maybe your next two, for James Toney to really go out there and prove it?

Toney: Definitely. I am going to start with this fight. I was unhappy with the last fight, and we should be. It is like being on a football team. Even if your team had a draw, you are never happy with the results. You always want to strive for the perfection. And that is what I plan on doing. Like I said, I am just happy to get the opportunity to show that I am the best fighter in the world.

Question: James, what kind of threat does Sam Peter pose to you?

Toney: He poses a threat to everybody else, but not to me. Don't get me wrong, he's a good fighter. But he has never been in the ring with anybody like me before in his life. It doesn't matter if I fought middleweight or lightweight, or cruiserweight, James Toney can flat out just fight. I am a natural born fighter. Everybody else was taught to fight. That is the difference between me and everybody else.

Question: James, Sam Peter is probably the biggest, strongest and fastest guy you fought at heavyweight. Do you agree with that? If so, are you approaching this fight any differently?

Toney: I don't approach any fight different. If you know me, you haven't ever seen me change my style for anybody. I am not that type of fighter. I do what James does best, and that is just fight. Ruiz is bigger than Sam Peter, and Rahman. Both are stronger than me. You see where that went. So it doesn't matter. I just know how to fight, period. And that is what this is all about. James Toney flat out knows how to fight. The best fighter in the boxing world, period, ever born.

Question: Sam, James is very different than anyone you have fought, as well. He is a very skilled fighter. How do you approach a guy who is going to give you all kinds of angles and really knows every trick in the book?

Peter: Well, Toney hasn't fought anybody like me before. Even though he has been two or three times champion of the world, I have my own training. Nobody has seen Sammy Peter yet, but I think this fight will prove that people have things wrong about me. I am a fighter, I am a boxer. I can do anything. Any kind of situation. This is a great fight for me because I love the way Toney boxes. I think this is going to put me in a good position.

Question: Sam, why do you think James is such a good fight for you and why do you feel you are going to win?

Peter: Because the ring man is going to be standing there with me. I know I am going to catch him later on.

Question: James, you're from Michigan, but you consider yourself a Los Angeles fighter,

right?

Toney: I consider myself a trained fighter living here in L.A.

Question: You are going to fight the winner of Saturday's fight. What do you think about that fight? Obviously, this fight appears to be much more attractive than that one.

Toney: Nobody wanted to see that fight. Oleg Maskaev hasn't done anything since he beat Rahman seven years ago. If he had beaten me like they said he would, he should have knocked me out, as bad shape as I was in when he fought me.

Question: So you were not in the best shape for Rahman?

Toney: Yes. He should have knocked me out. He did all this whooping before the fight, but when that bell rang, you saw how tentative he was.

Question: Since he didn't do that, what did you learn from that experience?

Toney: What I learned is give 100 percent when I am ready. That is what I learned. But percent of James Toney beat the best Rahman ever can be in. Forty percent James Toney versus 110 percent when he tried his best. He was scared to death.

Question: James, you said you were only 40 percent for Rockman. What about the other 60 percent? What was the problem there?

Toney: You saw him around my waist. I had a little flu. Like I said, I am going to do my thing.

Question: So you had the flu?

Toney: I had the flu. My whole crew knew about it, but I do what I do.

Question: How are you now at this point? Are you all recovered from that?

Toney: Good. I am 100 percent. I am ready to go. Whatever. He did what he had to do. We had an incompetent referee, Eddie Cotton. But I am pretty sure we have a professional referee this time. And I am ready to go. I am excited. Even though fighting in L.A., my adopted hometown, the fans will be there. And it is on SHOWTIME boxing. I am ready to go.

Question: Was it because of just the weight and the flu that you had before the fight? Because a lot of people felt, going into that fight, that you were going to win in a very, very clear-cut fashion. Of course, officially it ended up being a draw.

Toney: I still want to fight. I have a credible opponent. His people feel they can beat me, so put it up. Put up or shut up.

Question: And at what point is Father Time going to be a factor? You are approaching

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the age of 38, an age which, especially a lot of heavy weights, start to think about hanging it up.

Toney: Father Time? I don't even know what that is.

Question: Sam, Toney is a tremendous fighter in terms of defense, counter punching, fighting from angles. A lot of things that are really old school. You are a younger fighter and known more as a power puncher. Have you adjusted your style, or are you going to adjust your style, to face Toney?

Peter: I am going to walk through him.

Toney: Oh, I like that. Keep your promise.

Question: Did you say you are going to walk through him?

Toney: That is what he said.

Question: Then what is your game plan going to be? Is it going to be similar to the fighting you did against Klitchko, or is it going to be different?

Peter: That is why I said I am going to walk through. He is a very good fighter, but I know I am going to walk through him. He is not going to stop me, he is not going to crack me. I am going to walk through him.

Question: What did you see in James' fight with Rahman that leads you to believe that you can walk through him?

Peter: I see a lot of things. It was an interesting fight. But I saw a lot of things that Rahman was not able to do as a heavyweight. But for me, I will rail on his body.

Question: Have you adjusted any of your style since the Klitchko fight?

Peter: It depends on who you fight. Toney is the best fighter for me to prove that I am a real fighter, I am a real boxer.

Question: What kind of sparring partners have you been bringing in to prepare for James.

Peter: I have been doing what I was supposed to do, what I do for a championship. The championship is different from any fight that you fight. You have to do something different. Because the people being around you, my sparring partners and everyone that is with me, we do something different. Everybody will see on Sept. 2.

Question: Do either of you guys want to make a prediction?

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Toney: I am knocking him out. I am knocking him out. Sammy, you are getting knocked out.

Peter: You are still dreaming.

Toney: Speak English.

Peter: I am speaking English. You are an American and you can't even understand me.

Toney: You have a little Russian behind you.

Peter: I am from Africa.

Toney: Yes, you are from Africa.

Peter: You don't even know where you are from. Do you know where you are from? You don't even know where you are from.

Toney: I am from my mama, where are you from? I am going to send you back on a banana boat, punk.

Peter: You don't know where you are from. You can't even speak English.

Question: James, what do you think is your big advantage is when you step in the ring?

Toney: Look, Samuel is a strong guy for the guys he has fought. But all the guys he fought were paid to lie down. You know that. I am for the best fight in the world. You know what I am saying? There isn't a strategy. It is just me being me.

Peter: That was history. We are talking present. You always talk history.

Toney: I am going to beat you, I will tell you that.

Peter: Stop talking history. You are talking history. That was done. You were done. That is history. Talk present. You know what it means?

Toney: I am going to back it up. Who cares?

Peter: Talk English. Speak English. You don't even know where you are from.

Toney: Shut up. Shut up.

Peter: You tell me to shut up. You cannot even speak.

Toney: Shut up. Get off the telephone. You telephone talk, that's all you are.

Peter: Don't worry. You are in L.A.

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Question: □ **Sam, what do you think your big advantage is against James.**

Peter: Well, I am going to knock Toney out, no matter what.

Toney: Like I said ...

Peter: Shut up when I am talking.

Toney: Shut up. You are not anyone.

Peter: Shut up when I am talking.

Toney: Make me shut up. Make me shut up, punk.

Peter: Be quiet when I am talking. Sammy is talking. Be quiet when the ...

Toney: Climb a tree.

Peter: Did you hear what I said? Shut up when Sammy is talking.

Toney: Whatever, man, whatever. Say it.

Toney: No more questions. I am gone. I have business to take care of. He made me mad.

Peter: Sit down and talk. Sit down. Right now.

Toney: Shut up.

Peter: Don't move.

Toney: You are going to see me in a couple of weeks anyway. Don't worry about it.

Peter: I said keep quiet. Sit down where you are right now.

Toney: You are a telephone talker, that's all you are. You aren't scaring anybody.

Peter: Sit down, do you hear what I am saying?

Toney: You're scared. I own you. I am your master.

Question: □ **James, has the draw against Rahman served as a motivation for this fight?**

Toney: I don't need motivation. I am the best heavyweight in the world, best fighter in the world. We put the challenge out to everybody. They stepped up and took it. They are going to regret it. Bottom line. I will fight anybody, anywhere, any time. I am big and bad as they come. I blow houses down.

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Question: Sam, when you first heard you were going to get this fight, what was your reaction?

Peter: I was thinking glory be to God. Thank God. Because this is what I was looking for, to be the heavyweight champion of the world. This is the opportunity. I was so excited that Toney gave me the opportunity to beat him, to become heavyweight champion of the world.

Question: Were you surprised when this came?

Peter: Well, I wasn't sure. I wasn't sure. I wasn't sure until I met him in person, and then I saw how it is and everything was going through. Then I was glory be to God.

Question: James, do you think you are going to be able to lie on the ropes and allow the fighter to come to you. Do you think that is an effective strategy against a guy like Peter?

Toney: I fight everybody the same way. If you watch my career, I knock them out. It is like a Hollywood horror film when I get done with them. Look at Rahman. I swelled him up. Even though I got a draw, I swelled him up. Look at Ruiz. All these supposedly big guys, tougher guys than me. I have seen it all, I have been there, done that. It doesn't matter.

Question: This is a question for both fighters. After the exchange that went on today, has this fight become more personal?

Toney: It has been personal. He signed a contract. Anybody that signs a contract to fight me, it is personal.

Question: How about you, Sam?

Peter: Does that mean anybody that signs a contract? It is a personal issue right now. He signed a contract, I signed a contract. We are ready to roll.

Question: James, could you tell us what you think is going to happen in Saturday's fight?

Toney: It is going to be a stinking fight. I have a feeling Rahman might get knocked out. He got knocked out once. It is in the back of his mind. It could happen again. I tested him a couple of times. If I had been like I should have, I would have knocked him out. Rahman hasn't got the best ticker.

Peter: Well, I thank everybody. I thank all of my fans, being there for me. I thank the good promoters for putting this fight together. I thank my manager. I thank James Toney, being a man and stepping over for this fight. Everybody that is watching this fight, it is going to be a great show. It is going to be a great fight. So thank you, everybody.

Toney: First and foremost, I want to thank the Man upstairs for giving me the opportunity. I

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want to thank my promotional group, my whole management team, my pop, my wife. Everybody around me. Showtime -- you know, the greatest network for boxing. They only show the greatest fights and this is going to be one of them. Thanks to STAPLES Center. And the whole city of L.A. for hosting this. It is going to be a tremendous night of fireworks on Sept. 2. I can't wait. Thank you.