

Paul Williams-Sergio Martinez Is A Go For Dec. 5

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The Sweet Science has learned that the transcontinental game of musical chairs set in motion on October 23, when a doctor's note got Kelly Pavlik excused from his December 5 date with Paul Williams, is near resolution. It now appears that Williams will face Sergio Martinez on Dec. 5. Atlantic City, the original site for Pavlik-Williams, has re-emerged as the leading contender to host the bout, although there remains the possibility that it could wind up at a Las Vegas venue.

Once Pavlik was off the card, the task of preserving the HBO date had fallen upon Williams' promoter Dan Goossen. Goossen had hoped to pair a Williams fight with another involving heavyweight Cris Arreola, which, since Arreola and the promoter are California-based, would have made total sense had he been able to secure a west coast venue. When no California sites stepped up to the plate, Goossen was forced to turn his attention elsewhere.

What had loomed a stumbling block to the matchup has been overcome in that Martinez' WBC junior middle title will not be at stake. Although Williams (37-1) could presumably have made 154, he had been preparing for a 160-pound fight against Pavlik. (His last fight, a 12-round decision over Winky Wright, had also been at middleweight.)

Although Martinez (44-1-2) is a natural 154-pounder, he has fought at middleweight in the past, though never against an opponent with Williams' pedigree, but the Argentine-born, Spain-based Martinez had been training for an over-the-weight bout on the Dec. 12 Juan Diaz-Paulie Malignaggi card -- in part at the behest of HBO, who wanted him to be available should Pavlik fall out.