

## King Wants Heavyweight Tournament

Written by Rick Folstad

Tuesday, 14 December 2004 18:00

---

It's a strange concept, this idea of putting on a heavyweight tournament to finally clear up the division. If we're not careful, a lone, legitimate heavyweight champ could emerge from the ruins of what's left after the bloodshed.

The tournament would be promoted by Don King, which quickly leads to a certain amount of skepticism and serious eye rolling. It's like Barry Bonds claiming he uses the syringe in his locker to get rid of warts. You want to believe what you hear, but your head keeps reminding you of who you're listening to.

I don't know about you, but with King behind the tournament, I'd immediately start looking for the fine print, checking out what's behind curtain No. 2 or looking up his sleeve to see what he might be hiding. Make sure that's really a rabbit he just pulled out of his hat. Is there a secret clause in the contracts we don't know about? Are they all written in disappearing ink?

OK, Don, what's the catch? What is there about this tournament that you didn't you tell us? What are you hiding? What if Vitali Klitschko enters the tournament and wins? He's not one of your guys. Doesn't that kind of ruin the party, kill the fun? You willing to risk losing all three of your heavyweight champs in a single tournament? A tournament you came up with?

Right now, King claims he is.

According to the Las Vegas Sun, King admitted that the only way the tournament would work was if Klitschko was one of the names tossed into the circle.

"I don't want any options (to promote Klitschko)," said King, talking about the proposed tournament shortly after Klitschko's back-alley beating of Danny Williams on Saturday in Las Vegas. "They try to say I want options. That's an excuse they use not to deal with me. I will deal with anybody."

No surprises there.

King went on: "If Klitschko thinks he's the best fighter out there, he can show he's the best by beating all the rest of the guys without me standing in the way."

This could bring on a whole new age in the fight game. One champ in a division? What's next, 15-round championship fights?

King hopes to get it all going this spring, with Klitschko, IBF champion Chris Byrd, WBO champ Lamon Brewster, WBA champ John Ruiz and a few of the other top heavyweight contenders filling out the dance card.

The list of honorary invitees would probably include former champ Hasim Rahman, who is

## King Wants Heavyweight Tournament

Written by Rick Folstad

Tuesday, 14 December 2004 18:00

---

suddenly on the A-list of the next possible challengers to Klitschko's WBC title.

"I'm willing to gamble all three of my (champions)," King said. "Let's throw Klitschko in there with them and see who comes out on top. The guy who is left standing will get the respect of the public because he did it with his talent and skill, not because of the maneuverability and machinations of the promoters."

Don King said that? Quick, somebody do a DNA test to identify this imposter.

King went on to say the only way he can get Klitschko in the ring was by a mandatory defense against Rahman, and if Klitschko wanted to be in the heavyweight tournament, he was welcome.

"But I predict he won't get past Rahman," King said.

I'm surprised he got past King.