

Winky On Retirement: "It's Time For Me"

Written by The Sweet Science
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LOS ANGELES, June 5 - Following a hard-fought 10-round battle with Peter "Kid Chocolate" Quillin this past Saturday night at The Home Depot Center in Carson, Calif., former Undisputed Junior Middleweight World Champion and longtime middleweight contender Ronald "Winky" Wright has decided to retire at the age of 40.

"Part of being a boxer is knowing when to call it quits," said Wright. "It's time for me. I did what I set out to do and that was to be great and become a world champion. I have a lot of great memories from my career and will still support this great sport which I have dedicated my life to. I want to thank all of the people who helped me along the way and especially the fans that supported me all of these years."

"Winky Wright is a class act in and out of the ring and if you wanted to see what true skill was, you watched him fight," said Oscar de la Hoya, President of Golden Boy Promotions. "I congratulate him on his amazing career. I know we'll be seeing him in the Hall of Fame very soon. Winky, it was an honor to watch you in the ring and to promote some of your fights."

"Winky is the consummate athlete, but more importantly a man of character, trust and a great parent," said Jim Wilkes, Wright's attorney and long-time friend. "In a world of indulgence, he has never smoked a cigarette or had a drink of alcohol. He is a great friend and I look forward to his adventures to come."

"It's been an incredible and blessed experience to represent one of the all-time greatest pound-four-pound fighters in Winky Wright," said Damian Ramirez, Wright's advisor and long-time friend. "I'll miss the fun times and laughs we enjoyed during his road to greatness inside the ring. I consider him not only a friend, but a brother. He is an extraordinary person and, in my eyes, a world champion for life!"

A true throwback fighter who competed around the world while taking on all comers, Wright (51-6-1, 25 KO's) thrilled fans in the United States, France, Germany, Argentina, South Africa and England over the course of his nearly 22-year career, showing off the finer points of the sweet science every time he stepped into the ring.

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After building his reputation on the international scene, the only place where he could get anyone to fight him, the pride of St. Petersburg, Florida finally got his first shot at a world title in August of 1994, when he lost a decision to WBA Super Welterweight World Champion Julio Cesar Vasquez.

Undeterred, Wright ran off nine consecutive victories and in his 10th fight following his fight against Vasquez, he defeated Bronco McKart on May 17, 1996 to win the WBO Junior Middleweight World Title. Wright defended the belt three times before a loss to Harry Simon in August of 1999. Two fights later he made his HBO debut and lost a highly controversial decision to then unbeaten Fernando Vargas which was widely seen as one of the worst verdicts of 1999.

Wright's resilience was unmatched and by 2001, he was a world champion again, defeating Robert Frazier for the IBF 154-pound title. For the next six years, no one touched Wright as he earned a place on the pound-for-pound list by unifying the junior middleweight titles while defeating the likes of Sugar Shane Mosley (twice), Felix Trinidad and Ike Quartey.

Fighting sporadically following a 2007 loss to Bernard Hopkins, Wright would suffer defeats in 2009 to Paul Williams and this past Saturday night to Quillin, but as was his custom, he went out fighting, leaving it all in the ring for the world to see.

Wright now looks forward to the day he will be inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. Until then, he'll spend his time with loves of life; his wife Pie, his children, nieces, nephews and the golf courses of the west coast of Florida.