Vitali Klitschko and Wladimir Klitschko free from promoters

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The Regional Court (Landgericht) of Hamburg ruled in a decision announced today that Vitali and Wladimir Klitschko are no longer under contract with Universum Box Promotion.

Universum Box Promotion had argued that their contract with Wladimir Klitschko was valid until Feb. 22, 2005, and that their contract with Vitali Klitschko was good until May 20, 2005. But the presiding judge, Dr. Mückenheim, overruled their claim, saying that the contracts had ended much earlier – Wladimir's on June 22, 2004, Vitali's on Oct. 22, 2004.

The ruling means that the Klitschko brothers and their contracting partners acted lawfully with regard to the boxing matches of Wladimir last Oct. 2 and of Vitali this past Dec. 11 since the contracts with Universum had already terminated by then. The Klitschkos should no longer have to fear being held liable for damages by Universum either, the court declared.

Said Vitali Klitschko, the World Boxing Council heavyweight champion:

"We are very happy and satisfied that it is at last certain our contracts with Universum have terminated and had already ended at the time of our last fights. We can now plan our future sporting and professional career without being disturbed by this dispute and do not have to be afraid of damage claims either."

Offered Klitschkos' lawyer, Dr. Sebastian Cording, of the law firm CMS Hasche Sigle:

"It is a Solomonic judgment that fits Dr. Mückenheim, who did not make this decision easy for himself. The court tried time and again to induce Universum to make a compromise and has now made a decision similar to a compromise in the final analysis. Although we are still of the opinion that the contracts ended as early as April 30, 2004, we have practically attained all the objectives we pursued in these proceedings. We therefore look upon the decision as a points win. Universum, on the other hand, could have achieved more by way of a compromise than the present outcome."