

Bryant Jennings Has Had a BIG Year

Written by The Sweet Science
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PHILADELPHIA - Heavyweight Bryant Jennings, 15-0, 7 KO's, didn't begin 2012 as the #5 IBF heavyweight contender, but after an incredible eleven months, four TV bouts, winning a USBA title, and three nationally televised fights on NBC Sports Network, the North Philadelphia boxer has put together a year that will be hard to top.

Jennings takes on Bowie Tupou, 22-2, 16 KOs, before Jennings' hometown fans at Temple University's Pearson / McGonigle Hall, on December 8th. The 12-rounder will be for Jennings' USBA title and will once again be featured on NBC Sport Network *Fight Night*. The telecast will begin at 10PM ET.

Jennings began the year as a 11-0 prospect who'd never been in a fight scheduled more than six rounds. But everything changed in January with the inaugural edition of NBCSN's *Fight Night* series. With expectations high for the beginning of the new recurring boxing show, Jennings saved the day by stepping into the main event at the last minute, and in doing so made his own career. Jennings not only won a 10-round decision against Maurice Byarm to claim the Pennsylvania State title that night, he also propelled himself into the heavyweight mix. He fought hard, looked good, and won big, all on national TV. A star was born.

"If you thought my fight with Byarm was a big transition for my career, then the rest of the year was magnificent," Jennings said. "I went from never being ranked by a major sanctioning body to being arguably the best prospect with a heavyweight title. That's unheard of."

Much of the Jennings' buzz came three months later, again on NBCSN, when he defeated former WBO heavyweight champion Sergei Liakovich by impressive 9th round TKO, in the evening's televised co-feature. The win proved Jennings was for real and further pushed him up the ladder.

"I dreamt it before, but I never knew it would come this soon," Jennings said of his sudden stardom and clear career path. He was really on a roll.

In his next fight, in June against Steve Collins, Jennings earned the USBA title on yet another

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NBC Sports Network *Fight Night* telecast. The win pushed the Philadelphian into the top ten of the world ratings. After blowing out his next opponent, Chris Koval, in just 35 seconds in September, Jennings wanted one more fight before the year ended.

He gets his chance on December 8th, right back where everything started for him, back home and on NBC Sports Network.

"It kind of puts a little more pressure on me," Jennings said about the logistics for his next fight. "I'm home, and I definitely have to be on my P's and Q's. I have to make sure everything is perfect."

A victory against Tupou would cap Jennings' very good year, and give him a chance to show his fans how far he's come in just twelve months.

"This year was definitely great because I exceeded my expectations," Jennings said. "I actually did it. That shows how focused and hungry I am to achieve my goals."