Boxing press conferences, like boxing promoters, come in all shapes and sizes. They're sometimes S, M, L, XL and even XXL in size, but Tuesday's Don King press conference in the Pegasus Suite of the Rainbow Room on the 64th floor of Rockefeller Center was a one size fits all affair.

The ostensible reason for yesterday's presser was to announce the Jan. 6 rematch at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood, Fla. between heavyweights Samuel "The Nigerian Nightmare" Peter (27-1, 22 KOs) and James "Light's Out" Toney (69-5-3 43 KOs) for WBC bragging rights and an eventual possible shot at Oleg Maskev's crown, but after an extremely long afternoon (three hours) of self-adulation, mangled facts and barely comprehensible doublespeak, one couldn't help but conclude that the press conference was less about Peter/Toney II than it was about Don King himself.

Tuesday's presser was in a room with a view and a room fit for a King, but it began not with a bang but with a whimper. A tasty repast of steak, chicken, fish, veggies, salad and sugary meth-like desserts was served buffet style at 11:30. There was enough time, half an hour was allotted for the meal, to scarf down those goodies with time to spare for the commencement of hostilities at noon, but there was one small problem: Don King, one of America's busiest men, is always running late, so the press conference began at about 1:00, by which time many of the assembled press were contemplating their afternoon naps instead of the goings-on behind the podium.

But there was to be no sleeping on the job, not that sleep was possible with the video-heavy production DK brought to NYC for our delectation. Instead, those in the Rainbow Room hoping to find a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow found King, Dino and Lou Duva, Jose Rivera and his trainer John Scully, "Connecticut Yankee" Travis Simms, James Toney's promoter Dan Goossen and advisor John Arthur, Sam Peter's manager Ivaylo Gotzev, and of course the two main eventers on the dais, and got to partake in what amounted to a celebration of Don King and his illustrious three decade-plus run in the sweet science.

In the middle of a short, all things being relative, introduction, where King expounded on patriotism and his view of American history as seen through the eyes of his Casino hosts the Seminole Indians, the maestro's cell phone rang to bring a halt to the proceedings. Don pulled the cell from his pocket and told us, "It's the President calling. Sorry." Everyone laughed uproariously, even though King has used those exact same words, if not the exact same cell phone, many times in the past. (Rumors of DKP's Alan Hopper calling from another room have yet to be proven.) Then the promoter, with the eyes and ears of the world, well, with the eyes and ears of the boxing world, upon him, snapped open his phone and said, "I'll have to call you back Mr. President," whereupon he snapped shut the phone and on went the show.

A Seminole Indian medicine man, without a doubt the grooviest cat in the room, said a prayer of protection or benediction for the assembled throng and assembled fighters, but since he was

speaking in either Creek or Miccosukee, Lord knows what he actually said. But it was a sober moment, a pious moment, a serious contemplative moment, made all the more moving, and all the more incongruous, given the context and setting.

As mentioned, many video clips were shown, some of which you'll see on Showtime as the date of the fight grows near, but the first one, a tribute to the career of you know who, lasted 30 minutes, but didn't feel a minute over 29. I was taking copious notes, in lieu of counting sheep on my king-sized bed, and the notes reveal that on the video clip in question former heavyweight champion of the world Larry Holmes said, "We need more Don Kings," boxer/priest George Foreman said, "This man has been a blessing to boxing," and Seth Abraham, late of HBO and now working with the crew from The Contender, said, "Don King is even formidable in his sleep."

The clip evoked many of the champs past and present who King had a hand in promoting, in addition to Holmes and Foreman: Muhammad Ali, Joe Frazier, Ricardo Lopez, Roberto Duran, Mike Tyson, Evander Holyfield, John Ruiz, Bernard Hopkins, Sugar Ray Leonard, etc., and reminded us, "He's made more millionaires than most corporations." Then the video referred to Don King as the "Messiah." Honest to God, that's what the voiceover said… End of video.

King likes nothing better than to hold a crowd in the palm of his hand, and those on hand were putty in the hands of the verbal virtuoso. He compared the upcoming fight between Sam Peter and James Toney, which is modestly called "Redemption," to the unforgettable "Rumble in the Jungle" between Ali and George Foreman in 1974, DK's first really big promotion, in the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko's Zaire no less, a fight that had it all, even, according to King, "cannibals in the bush."

Those of us in the Rainbow Room were alerted by the promoter to the fact that members of the New York Police Department will be in Florida providing security at the Peter/Toney rematch. "Nobody is finer than the NYPD," said King, even though they "go off every once in a while on the errant," making a oblique reference to the shooting of an unarmed black man named Sean Bell in Jamaica, Queens last week. But King wasn't in New York to discuss the psychology of boredom versus the physics of an itchy trigger finger, but to remind everyone that "Boxing is not down and out. Boxing is in a state of opportunity."

Dino Duva of Duva Boxing, who just sold half his promotional business, and half his interest in Sam Peter, to King, described Peter/Toney II as nothing less than a "historic event." His dad Lou Duva, one the game's great old-timers, said about King, "I've been in boxing long enough to know the good guys and bad guys and what they meant." Dan Goossen of Goossen Tutor told us he "tells his kids" to "become lawyers, become doctors," but whatever they do they shouldn't get in "the boxing business."

Don King got in the last word, which seems only right, but Samuel Peter summed things up beautifully when he said with a Cheshire cat grin lighting up his face: "Only in America."