DEERFIELD BEACH, Fla.—Undefeated IBF No. 5-ranked junior welterweight Vernon “Ice Man” Paris (26-0, 15 KOs), from Detroit, today signed a promotional agreement with Don King.

“I can’t find the words to explain how I feel signing to fight for a legend like Don King,” Paris said in King’s South Florida office. “People are now going to see what Vernon Paris is truly capable of.”

King was energized by the exuberance of the 23-year-old fighter, and he also enjoyed speaking to Paris’s father, David, and mother, Rosa.

“I just got off the phone with Vernon’s mother, and Vernon’s father is here with me in my office, so this a real family affair,” King said. “I’ve been watching this young man closely, and Floyd, Manny, Amir Khan, Timmy Bradley and all the rest of them around 140 pounds better watch out. Vernon Paris is just 23, and his enthusiasm and confidence reminds me of Ali. I will set them up, and it’s up to Vernon to keep on winning. I like the path this young man is on. I think he is special.”

Born in Tallahassee, Fla., but raised in the Motor City since age 6, Paris hasn’t suffered a defeat since an amateur loss at 17. His best outing as a professional came on Aug. 5, when he stopped respected contender Tim Coleman with body shots in round seven when they met in California with the USBA junior welterweight title on the line.

A skilled boxer-puncher, Paris is fundamentally sound with a lion’s heart. His strong determination and will to win are his best assets.

“If I can continue to do well, I want to be a role model for the kids in Detroit who are literally killing each other in the streets of our city,” Paris said. “I’ve been shot and stabbed on those streets, and I can show kids that through good things like god, athletics and education you can avoid some of the pitfalls I fell into. If I can make it to a better life, so can others."