

SENTINEL SPORTS

King Confirms Tyson To Fight Mathis, Probably

LAS VEGAS, Nevada - Boxing promoter Don King confirmed on Tuesday what had been rumoured all along: Buster Mathis will be Mike Tyson's next opponent - probably.

In a separate development, the Nevada State Athletic Commission set next Monday as the date to decide whether to lodge an official complaint against the manager who threw in the towel on behalf of his fighter Peter McNeeley in the first round of Tyson's return to the ring last Saturday.

In a typical rambling King press conference, the promoter said Mathis "is our first choice" to fight Tyson in his next fight, on November 4 at the MGM Grand, but added that International Boxing Federation cruiserweight champion Al Cole and Nate Miller "are also under consideration."

Later in the press conference, Tyson's co-manager, John Horne said: "It is going to be Buster Mathis, unless you find someone better for us."

King then said: "Mike Tyson will fight Buster Mathis on November 4."

Mathis is ranked fourth by the International Boxing Federation but unranked by the World Boxing Council and World Boxing Association.

In a bout he was losing badly to former world champion Riddick Bowe last summer, Mathis was saved by a "no contest" ruling when he was hit in the fourth round while on his knees. The light-hitting Mathis is 20-0 with six inside the distance.

In a telephone interview from Catskill, New York, Tyson's head trainer Jay Bright said he did not know if Mathis had been officially decided as the next opponent.

But Bright added: "I gave my opinion about Buster Mathis from a boxing viewpoint. In my opinion it would be terrific for Mike. You don't want a guy who can punch too hard, especially with a guy who's coming back."

Tyson's return after serving a three-year prison term for rape has other boxers and promoters salivating at the prospect of big money.

At the press conference and on radio shows, King has allowed the possibility of a Tyson fight

with popular but 46-year-old George Foreman.

When King was asked about a proposal from rival promoter Bob Arum to enlist former Caesars World chairman of the board Henry Gluck to help put together a match against Foreman, King told the news conference: "Henry Gluck isn't needed. I can deal effectively with Bob Arum."

King also said he had been approached by "third parties" saying they were representing Foreman without Arum. "I am not the best of friends with Bob Arum," thundered King, "but he's a professional and I trust him. I would not do a Foreman fight without him."

Tyson's return has the money men excited but the former world heavyweight champion's 89-second, \$25 million victory over McNeeley was almost universally rated as a farce by fans.

The event Saturday night was stopped when the unknown McNeeley's trainer Vinny Vecchione stepped into the ring at 1 minute, 29 seconds of the

first round. Nevada State Athletic Commission rules say that if any member of a fighter's corner enters the ring during a round, it will result in an immediate disqualification.

McNeeley had been knocked down twice, but referee Mills Lane and commission officials have repeatedly said they felt he was not in danger. Vecchione responded: "I made a choice. I made a decision and went with it. I thought my fighter was in serious trouble."

The Nevada commission is withholding \$179,820, Vecchione's one-third share of McNeeley's take of the purse, \$540,000. If the commission decides to hold a hearing questioning Vecchione's actions,

Taylor Takes WBC Middleweight Title From Jackson

LAS VEGAS - In a stunning upset, American challenger Quincy Taylor took the World Boxing Council middleweight title from Julian Jackson Saturday when referee Jay Nady stopped the bout at two minutes, 33 seconds of the sixth round.

Taylor, 32, withstood an aggressive attack from Jackson in the first three rounds and then turned the tide in fourth, when the champion missed with a right hook and Taylor countered with a crushing overhand left.



Tyson will be in top shape for his November 4th bout against Mathis. Photo by Savoy/LVS-Voice

it will take place within 30 days of the Monday, August 28 date.

The World Boxing Council, closely linked with King, said in a

statement from its headquarters in Mexico City that Vecchione should be suspended from boxing.

Jackson staggered and then fell forward, nearly falling out of the ring as the bell sounded ending the round.

Jackson, from the U.S. Virgin Islands, seemed to recover in the fifth round, as the two battled back and forth, exchanging heavy-handed punches. But then in the sixth, Jackson faded badly as Taylor seized control with solid combinations before the referee rushed in to save Jackson. It was the 34-year-old Jackson's fourth defeat in 55

outings. He had twice lost to former WBC titlist Gerald McClellan in 1993 and 1994, but regained his crown in his last fight on March 17 against Agostino Cardamone.

For Taylor, who ran his record to 26-3, with 22 wins within the distance, it was easily the biggest victory of his nine-year professional career. Taylor had never fought for a world title before, but had stopped his last four opponents dating back to March, 1994.

National Sports Briefs

Cleveland State Basketball Player Slain

BOSTON - Cleveland State basketball player Jamal Jackson was stabbed to death early Friday in Boston. He was 22.

Boston police said Jackson, who is from Boston, was found unconscious and bleeding in a clothing store at approximately 4:30 a.m. EDT. He was pronounced dead shortly after at Boston City Hospital.

Police said the slaying is under investigation. No arrests have been made.

Police responded to a report of a man found lying on the floor at East Coast Cuts, a clothing store. Emergency medical personnel immediately transported Jackson to Boston City Hospital where he was declared dead.

The Freedom Bowl, played in Anaheim, matches a Western Athletic Conference team against an at-large school. The WAC will attempt to affiliate with the Independence Bowl in Shreveport, La.

Utah of the WAC beat Arizona, 16-13, in the 1994 Freedom Bowl.

Terry Norris Regains Super Welterweight Title

LAS VEGAS - Terry Norris, gaining revenge for two controversial losses, knocked Luis Santana down three times in the second round Saturday to recapture his W-B-C super welterweight title at the M-G-M Grand in Las Vegas.

Norris (39-6) used a sharp left hand to put Santana to the canvas 47 seconds into the second round, floored him again 40 seconds later, and put him to the canvas for the final time with 51 seconds remaining in the round. Referee Joe Cortez stopped the fight with Santana still on the canvas.

Santana (40-16-2) won the title from Norris on a disqualification and successfully defended it against him with another disqualification victory. Both times, Santana was announced as the winner as he was being carted from the ring on a stretcher.

Knicks Negotiate To Free Riley

The New York Knicks reportedly are negotiating a deal that would enable Pat Riley to become head coach of the Miami Heat next season.

The New York Times reported Saturday National Basketball Association Commissioner David Stern is encouraging a settlement to the tampering charges the Knicks filed against the Heat over Riley, who stepped down as head coach of the Knicks in June.

The Knicks are believed to be asking for one of the Heat's two first-round 1996 picks, players or both to release Riley from his contract.

Financial Problems Doom Freedom Bowl

ANAHEIM, Calif. - The Freedom Bowl will not be played this year due to financial problems.

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