

Rivals feast on Jones defeat

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) - Glen Johnson and Antonio Tarver were on stage together, joking about a unification fight for the light heavyweight title. As for Roy Jones Jr., considered by some the world's best pound-for-pound fighter, he was in the back of an ambulance headed to the hospital.

Johnson had just given Jones the beating of his life, landing an overhand right and short left to put in doubt the future of one of the sport's big-time fighters.

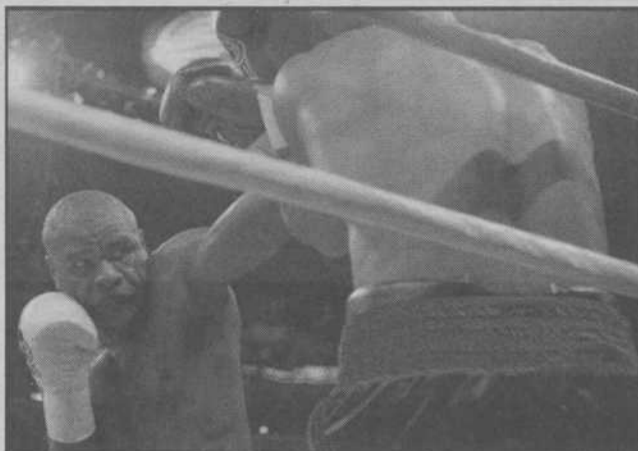
Johnson, the underdog despite being the champion, kept his IBF crown by knocking Jones cold in the ninth round of a scheduled 12-round Saturday night at FedExForum, the new \$250 million home of the Memphis Grizzlies.

"I was never hurt," said Johnson, a Jamaican living in Miami. "I was working to find what I needed. I keep working the body. I keep chopping him down one point at a time until I find the right punch."

Now, Johnson and Tarver, who took the WBC title from Jones — after Jones had taken it from him — are talking about a fight of their own.

Johnson, 41-9-2 with 28 knockouts, said he is ready to fight anybody, including Tarver. But Tarver, who jumped in on Johnson's postfight news conference, said Johnson holds a title he once owned and wants back.

"We've got to sell tickets, brother," Tarver said with a loud laugh. "You got to talk it



Glen Johnson corners Roy Jones Jr. during their IBF light heavyweight title fight Saturday at the FedEx Forum in Memphis. Johnson won by knockout in the ninth round.

up, baby. You can't get paid sitting up here being the nice guy. You know what I'm saying. We've got to get this thing started. You've got a piece of my championship and I'm coming for it."

Jones began a stellar pro career after the 1988 Olympics, where many believe he was robbed of a gold medal. Though 49-3 with 38 knockouts, he has been beaten only twice. The other loss was a disqualification in 1997.

Jones often was referred to as the best fighter anywhere, pound for pound, and he wasn't shy about calling himself the greatest. He won titles at classes ranging from middleweight to heavyweight. He got a piece of the heavyweight title in March 2003 by taking the WBA crown from John Ruiz.

Jones dropped weight quickly to fight Tarver in November, barely capturing the light heavyweight title in their first meeting. In the May rematch, Tarver stopped

Jones with a left that sent him sprawling.

Now, Tarver said, Jones is out of the picture.

"I want to see the man go on and enjoy his life after boxing," Tarver said. "We don't need to see Roy Jones go through the things he went through tonight, the things he went through on May 15. Let the man ride off into the sunset."

Johnson began his pro career at 24 and gained his title, his first, by beating European champion Clinton Woods in February.

"I hope the best for Roy Jones," he said. "I hope he's not hurt and everything else, and I'll fight anybody else."

Johnson came out charging. Jones began to draw boos by the seventh round.

Asked about the beginning-of-the-end punch, Johnson was matter of fact.

"The right hand? You want me to tell you about the right hand? It was a right hand. That's it."

Serena Williams wins China Open

BEIJING (AP) - Serena Williams won the China Open on Sunday after facing two match points in the second set and going on to beat U.S. Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova 4-6, 7-5, 6-4.

Both players appeared

rattled by the boisterous crowd, several times playing after a point was complete because they couldn't hear the call.

Professional tennis is new to China, and spectators clapped and cheered during points and between serves.

Cell phones rang repeatedly.

When the chair umpire tried to silence the crowd with a sharply spoken "thank you," the crowd cheered loudly as if to say "you're welcome."

Williams saved two of Kuznetsova's match points while down 4-5 in the second set. She went on to win the next three games to take the second set. She raced ahead 4-0 in the third before Kuznetsova could reply.

The second-seeded Russian broke Williams twice late in the third set. But Williams needed just one match point, serving big while up 5-4, and Kuznetsova's shot hit the net on the final point.

Williams is working her way back up the WTA rankings after missing part of this year because of injury. She will remain at No. 10 despite the victory while Kuznetsova will stay No. 5.



Serena Williams holds the China Open trophy after defeating Svetlana Kuznetsova in Beijing, China, Sunday.

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