

## Preview: Pavlik/Taylor

Written by {ga=fightdr}

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It's go time. Tonight, at about 11 PM on HBO, Youngstown's Kelly Pavlik will finally meet Jermain Taylor on the boardwalk in Atlantic City for the undisputed middleweight championship of the world. Understandably, my cousin Scott (our resident fight doctor) is all jacked up for this thing tonight, as is every boxing fan in the state of Ohio. In this excellent preview of tonight's big fight, Scott breaks down Kelly and Jermain and tells us what to expect.



Youngstown, Ohio is known for its tough will and has a history of producing boxing champions. Saturday night in Atlantic City, their favorite son, Kelly Pavlik, will look to add his name to the list of title holders from that great city.

If Kelly Pavlik is going to become the new undisputed Middleweight Champion of the world, he will have to beat easily the best fighter he has ever faced. Pavlik brings in an impressive 31-0 record with 28 of those wins coming the way of knockout.

Jermain Taylor, the current Middleweight king, also has a very nice resume. He is currently 27-0-1 with 17 knockout victories. "Bad Intentions" comes into the ring tonight having faced much stiffer competition. He has defeated former pound for pound top five fighter Bernard Hopkins twice and had a draw with another big name in Winky Wright.

The only knock on Kelly Pavlik is who he has fought. That being said, he has dominated everyone who stepped into the ring with him. The so called big test back in May with Edison Miranda was a severe beating. Pavlik walked right through him ... setting up the battle with Taylor.

Jermain Taylor has looked anything but impressive in his last few fights. Many observers had him losing at least one of the fights with Hopkins and also the draw with Wright. After those three fights, he stumbled to wins versus Cory Spinks and Kassim Ouma. The defense you hear from Taylor backers about his recent struggles centers around the awkwardness and styles of all of those fighters .

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There will be no strange style come Saturday night. It is known what Pavlik likes to do. He is a guy that wants to be in your face and pound on you. He will throw as many punches as it takes to get his opponent outta there. He chin was tested in the Miranda bout and he seemed unphased by some good solid shots.

Jermain Taylor will bring something Pavlik has never seen before. He is probably the most athletic boxer in the game today outside of Floyd Mayweather Jr. He has speed and will look to counter punch his opposition. He does have good power which has been overlooked because of his last few fights with defensive fighters.

On paper, this has the makings of an absolute classic. I look for it to be just that. By the way Taylor's trainer Emanuel Steward is talking, Taylor is coming in with a chip on his shoulder. He wants to prove he is the best with no questions asked. Something tells me that this is going to be an all out brawl.

If this fight turns into a slug fest, it will play right into Pavlik's hands and he should have the edge in the power department. That however, is something that is driving Taylor. He will look to show everyone that he can still knock people out.

If Taylor gets away from his game plan, he might just find himself looking up at the lights of Boardwalk Hall. The fighter who can set the pace early is going to have a huge advantage. This has the makings of a fireworks display.

The edge to me goes to Jermain Taylor as he has been in some huge fights with some big names in the sport of boxing. That being said, nobody can doubt the heart and will of Kelly Pavlik. Both fighters have a lot to prove and are going to lay everything on the line in this one.

As long as Pavlik hangs around in this fight it is a win-win for him. He will prove that he is a legit force in the sport. If he was somehow knocked out early then everyone will once again question whether he is a true big fight fighter or someone who has padded his record against so-so competition.

My heart will be pulling for the local boy in Pavlik. However, my brain thinks Taylor is going to be too much for him. His hand speed and power are going to shock Pavlik early on. I see Taylor winning by late knockout as Kelly will get desperate or by a unanimous decision.

This fight is the most anticipated in some time, not just because of the local ties. It

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is a true battle of top notch fighters going at it for the undisputed Middleweight Championship of the world.

I can't to see what happens and I would suggest you tune in. It just might be the fight of the year.