

YAFAI: I'LL TURN BIRMINGHAM INTO A FORTRESS

SAN DIEGO, CALIF. – May 12, 2017 – Kal Yafai believes he can build something special in Birmingham and wants to unify the Super-Flyweight division as he prepares to make the first defense of his WBA title against Suguru Muranaka at the Barclaycard Arena in Birmingham on Saturday LIVE on AWE- A Wealth of Entertainment at 2 PM ET / 11 AM ET

For fans who do not have AWE, they can access the fight on the AWE channel on www.klowdtv.com

Yafai became the second city's first World champion in December with a punch-perfect display against Luis Concepcion in Manchester, and the unbeaten 27 year old wants to turn the Arena into a fortress – starting this weekend.

“It's such an honor to be Birmingham's first World champion. I consider myself to be the flag bearer for Midlands boxing now, I just want to make sure there's more talent and inspire more fighters to achieve the same.

“I want to be a big role model for Birmingham and the Midlands all together. Birmingham has been craving World Championship boxing for some time, for me to be bringing the World title back and with being born and bred in Birmingham is an honour.

“Walking out in front of my fans with the belt is a privilege and I can't wait. I'd love to turn the Barclaycard Arena into my fortress.”

Yafai is in a talent heavy division with Muranaka's countryman Naoya Inoue holding the WBO crown, Jerwin Ancajas the IBF and the WBC belt in the possession of Wisaksil Wangek, who edged out pound-for-pound star Roman Gonzalez in March – and Yafai wants to face the best to add more belts to his collection as

soon as possible.

“Unification bouts are very much part of my plan – and sooner rather than later,” said Yafai. “Whatever my team puts in front of me, that’s what I’ll take. I’ve got the best team in the business around me who advise me what to do and when to do it, so I listen to them first and foremost but I like to take it all one fight at a time. I’ve got to concentrate on this fight solely and then we’ll go from there and see what is next.

“I haven’t really studied Inoue much. I’ve seen a couple of his fights when he’s boxed lately. Obviously, he’s massive talent and a very good fighter. If that could happen down the line then that would be great.

“I thought Gonzalez nicked the fight with Wangek by a couple of rounds. In the rematch which seems to be on the cards, I think he’ll win convincingly. Before that fight Gonzalez was up there at number one on my pound for pound list and he’s still up there in my top three.

“Ancajas could be the likeliest of unification’s but it depends what and when they are available. Either or, I’m not really bothered. I’d love to fight Gonzalez, obviously he’s the name in the division. If I had to hold out and wait, have another defence or two before fighting Gonzalez then I’d do that.”

Yafai’s World title defense is part of a huge night of action in Birmingham, where Sam Eggington challenges Ceferino Rodriguez for the European Welterweight title.

Yafai’s brother Gamal defends his WBC International Super-Bantamweight championship against fellow Birmingham man Sean Davis, Ryan Kelly and Adam Harper meet for the Midlands Area Middleweight Title.

Frankie Gavin is back in action in his first fight with

trainer Jon Pegg, and there's action for Lennox Clarke, unbeaten Olympian Josh Kelly, Kieron Conway, Aaron Lovell, Jordan Clayton, Charlie Williams and Cori Gibbs.

Photos By Lawrence Lustig

About AWE LIVE BOXING

AWE LIVE Boxing features live world title championship and elimination bouts showcasing today's most exciting fighters. Since the inception of AWE's live boxing events in 2011, AWE has featured over 50 world title fights.

AWE has brought boxing fans some of the most exciting and controversial bouts, including the matchup of Ricky Burns against Ray Beltran for the world title. AWE featured live and exclusively the crowning of American Terence Crawford over Ricky Burns. AWE fans have witnessed the explosive power of undefeated heavyweight Tyson Fury multiple times on the network, including Fury's victory over Kevin Johnson. In 2017, AWE was the exclusive United States television provider of the historic matchup between legendary British heavyweight David Haye and Tony Bellew.

About AWE – A Wealth of Entertainment

A Wealth of Entertainment ("AWE") features a wide range of lifestyles and entertainment programming from exotic travel and outrageous homes to live world championship boxing. AWE is available on over a hundred cable systems, including AT&T U-Verse, ch 147 and 1147 in HD, Verizon FiOS TV, ch 169 and 669 in HD. and DirecTV, ch 387.