

# King comes out swingin' in court fight with Lewis

By DEVLIN BARRETT

Boxing boss Don King slammed heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis in court yesterday, saying the champ used "chicanery and subterfuge" to duck a fight with one of King's boxers.

King took the witness stand in Manhattan federal court to say Lewis should be stripped of one of his three championship belts for refusing to fight the World Boxing Association's top-ranked challenger.

Lewis unified the heavyweight title (WBA, World Boxing Council and International Boxing Federation crowns) last year by beating Evander Holyfield.

In the contract for the Holyfield fight, Lewis agreed to fight the WBA's top challenger — at the time Henry Akinwande, who is backed by King.

Lewis later balked at fighting Akinwande and opted instead to take on Michael Grant, who is not one of King's fighters.

The British boxer is suing King, saying the contract he signed allows him out of the Akinwande fight if the WBA approves.

"They didn't honor their contract, they didn't honor their word," fumed the wild-haired King on the witness stand yesterday.



**DON KING**  
Defends "law and order."

"The heavyweight champion is supposed to be honorable — don't try to use chicanery, subterfuge," he said. "It's a despicable situation."

King also blamed Lewis' advisers for pushing him to break the deal.

"A man ain't just going to act dishonorable for no reason," he said.

Lawyers also read into the record King's earlier sworn statements that he was trying to maintain the integrity of boxing

by duking it out in court with Lewis.

"I'm representing law and order," said King, who has been accused throughout his career of shady dealings. "Because without law and order, you have nothing, you have chaos."

After testifying, King said the Lewis camp was "trying desperately" to shut him out of the champ's upcoming fights.

Even before King took his shots at Lewis, the judge got into an angry sparring match with one of the fighter's lawyers.

Judge Lewis Kaplan threatened to send the lawyer, Milton Chwasky, to jail for contempt after one angry exchange.

The showdown began when Kaplan warned Chwasky, who was on the witness stand, to be less combative in his answers. The judge also said he noticed Chwasky's "behavior" in court the previous day and didn't like it.

"It's more than a one-way street, your honor," shot back Chwasky, prompting an angry stare from the judge.

"You sir, are coming close to spending a night in jail," the judge warned.

Lewis was also expected to testify, but his lawyers decided at the last minute not to call him to the stand, saying his account didn't matter to their case.