

Taylor confident ahead of big fight

Two men with a massive date ahead of them stood inches apart, face-to-face with one thing in their mind, victory in a head-to-head in February.

Josh Taylor, The Tartan Tornado, dressed smartly in a grey jacket looked straight ahead at his opponent, with a slightly nervous smile. The slim boxer from Prestonpans was a shade taller, three inches in fact.

Thicker-set Jack Catterall stood motionless in a black sweat shirt and showed no emotion as the cameras clicked in the Royal Scots Club and viewers watched throughout the world on Sky Sports and on social media channels Facebook and Twitter.

The men will meet tomorrow in Oxford Street, London, for the second press briefing of the pre-fight sales promotion.

The message from both corners will be the same. Taylor (pictured) believes he will retain his four belts while Catterall from Chorley in Lancashire is confident they will be in his possession come February 26.

There is likely to be huge interest in this fight which has so much at stake. Catterall can annex four belts in one go after stepping aside to allow Taylor to unify the division.

The 30-year-old Scot is the undisputed junior welterweight champion and victory can move the ambitious fighter to another level, but the Scot refuses to take about the future. His focus is now and that date in February.

Both men are undefeated and something has to give. Taylor has 18 straight victories to his name including 13 inside the distance.

The former Commonwealth Games silver medallist returns to the ring for the first time since unifying the four belts in May with a convincing decision over the previously undefeated WBC and WBO champion, Jose Ramirez in Las Vegas, America.

Catterall, two years younger than Taylor, has won 26 straight fights with 13 knockouts and is a former British and WBO Intercontinental champion.

Southpaw Taylor, the first man in the UK to win the four belts, respects his opponent and publically acknowledged Catterall's quality at the press briefing but he added; "From today, he is my enemy."

Catterall, who was ringside for the Ramirez fight, admitted to doing his homework with his team on Taylor but he declined to go into details.

Taylor countered: "It was a lifetime achievement (to win the four belts) and my whole career, since I was 16 years old, was to become world champion.

"To believe I would become undisputed champion was a realistic goal, probably not. I always thought it was the superstars of the sport and I have surpassed my dreams of becoming the UK's first undisputed champion in the four-belt era. It is a massive moment and achievement and I am very proud of myself."

He added: "I am excited to be back in Scotland. It is the first time at home since I won the title in May 2019 (beating Ivan Baranchyk), just over two years.

"My last two fights have been won in front of no crowd and one in front of a very limited crowd and no UK fans. That was a big disappointment but, at the same time, it was more special for us as we felt it was me and my team against the whole world. It was a sweet victory."

Taylor said he was excited to be boxing in the Hydro and said

it was a cauldron on a big fight night. His opponent said he will be brining fans north for the big occasion.

The date: Saturday, February 26 at the SSE Hydro and live on Sky Sports (UK) and ESPN+ (US).