



WBO CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

In the Matter of the WBO Heavyweight Division

Parties:

Frank Warren on behalf of WBO Participant Joe Joyce
Promoter
Queensberry Promotions

Ben Shalom on behalf of WBO Participant Joseph Parker
Promoter
Boxxer

Factual Record

On Tuesday, August 23, 2022, this Committee confirmed receipt of email communications from Queensberry Promotions, on behalf of current number one (1) rated Heavyweight contender Joe Joyce requesting that his scheduled bout on Saturday, September 24, 2022, in Manchester, England, U.K., against the current number two (2) contender and former WBO World Champion Joseph Parker be granted sanction approval for the Interim WBO Heavyweight Championship.

In support of their contention, Queensberry argues that (i) discussions are ongoing for the highly anticipated Undisputed Heavyweight Championship between unified titleholder Oleksandr Usyk and WBC Champion Tyson Fury; (ii) that the Usyk/Fury bout would take place in early 2023; and (iii) that considering the likelihood of the bout being staged the sanction approval of Interim Championship is justified between the highest two available world-rated contenders in Joe Joyce and former WBO Champion Joseph Parker. In support thereof, the petitioner asserts that by virtue of the Interim Championship being contested, the rights and interests of the rest of the Heavyweight contenders in the division would be duly protected.

Now, having this Committee considered the petition lodge by Queensberry Promotions, and having reviewed the applicable WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, their applicability, and enforcement in this matter, and having the power, authority and discretion conferred by our rules, it is hereby determined as follows:

Applicable Provisions

All parties agree that they are bound by the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests. Section 35(f)ⁱ provides in relevant: **“These Regulations apply to all WBO Participants. The term WBO Participant includes, but not limited to, WBO World Champions and WBO World Championship Contenders. All WBO Participants who participate in any WBO sanctioned activity do so on the express condition that such WBO Participant is bound by and subject to these WBO World Championship Rules and all WBO Rules and Regulations”**. [Emphasis Added]. As such, this Committee has jurisdiction and the authority conferred by its rules to resolve the matter at issue accordingly.



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The WBO World Championship Committee's authority to consider the issue at hand is governed under Sections 1(b)(19)(21) and (c), respectively of the WBO Rules and Regulations of World Championship Contests, which provide, in relevant as follows:

SECTION 1. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE

(b) The World Championship Committee shall the following powers and discretion:

(19) To determine whether if an Interim Championship is warranted and to sanction an Interim Championship Bout; and

(21) To make or recommend exceptions or variations from the Rules as the World Championship Committee determines are necessary; and,

(c) The above powers shall be interpreted to include any and all powers necessary, helpful, or convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests.

ANALYSIS

We begin our *ratio decidendi* referencing an excerpt of the WBO preamble¹, which states, in relevant as follows: *"The World Boxing Organization's Regulations are intended to reconcile the interests of all necessary elements of World Championship Boxing in a manner that is in the best interest of the sport. The most important interests are those of the Championship contestants themselves and their worldwide fans."* [Emphasis Added]

Today's ruling requires a straight-forward approach. Simply put, determine whether exceptional circumstances are present to grant sanction approval for an Interim Championship in the Heavyweight Division between Joe Joyce and Joseph Parker. We respond in the affirmative and explain accordingly.

At the outset, we must stress that the WBO sanctions Interim Championships only under exceptional circumstances such as (i) when a WBO Champion suffers an injury that prevents his participation up to 180-days and the division is thereby inactive; (ii) when a WBO Champion requests to contest another world title in a superior or inferior weight division is granted such request; (iii) when a WBO weight division is inactive for any other reasons and the Committee determines that an Interim Championship is warranted; (iv) any other circumstances deemed by this Committee as exceptional.

Conversely, it is an uncontested fact that the Usyk/Fury Heavyweight fight is a historic one in which the winner will become the first-ever Undisputed Heavyweight Champion in the four-belt (WBO, WBA, WBC & IBF) era. This highly anticipated matchup will determine Heavyweight supremacy in what many consider the biggest professional boxing fight in recent times.

¹ See, WBO Preamble



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Notwithstanding the foregoing, numerous factors come into play in such a high-stakes bout as Usyk/Fury. Although Fury has expressed that he is currently retired, this Committee has been advised that conversations are ongoing for the potential clash in early 2023. Consequently, if the bout materializes various scenarios could arise thereto, including but not limited to (i) a potential Usyk/Fury rematch; (ii) a controversial outcome that would warrant another bout; (iii) if the bout is declared a draw, no decision, or no contest another bout is warranted; (iv) whether Fury decides to maintain retired, retire or withdraw from the potential Usyk bout(s); (iv) any other exceptional circumstances that would move the Committee's discretion in making or recommending exceptions or variations from the Rules as the World Championship Committee determines proper for the purpose of serving the best interests in the WBO Heavyweight Division, the sport of boxing, and most importantly, the fans.

Furthermore, it is critical to note that during the last two years the WBO Heavyweight Championship has been at stake only on two occasions (Joshua/Usyk bouts). Therefore, the activity in the division has been significantly low. Consequently, we believe that affirmative action towards keeping the division active is warranted. Now, this Committee will take all necessary steps to ensure the fans and the general public that no impediment arises that would jeopardize the Usyk/Fury bout(s). In other words, by enforcing the provisions set forth herein or any others hereinafter, we believe that the best interests in the Heavyweight Division are best served for the fighters themselves and their worldwide fans, and the WBO.

Wherefore, in light of the foregoing circumstances and seeking to protect the rights, interests, and opportunities of the remaining contenders in the Heavyweight Division, we rule that an Interim Heavyweight Championship is justified even more so between the two highest-rated available contenders in the division the highly regarded undefeated Joe Joyce and the former WBO Heavyweight Champion Joseph Parker, respectively.

By virtue of today's ruling, we take affirmative action by assuring the fans that the fights that they clamor for and desire take place for the betterment of the sport of boxing without undermining the rights of the other contenders.

DECISION - WBO CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE

Thus, this Committee, having considered the facts stated herein and having reviewed the applicable WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, and having the power, authority and discretion conferred by the WBO Rules and Regulations, now, therefore, resolve as follows:

1. The WBO Championship Committee hereby rules as follows:
 - a) The Committee grants sanction approval of the Interim Heavyweight Championship between Joe Joyce and Joseph Parker subject to the conditions stated herein and all other provisions set forth by the WBO World Championship Committee.
 - b) The Committee reserves its right to issue all further rulings deemed necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of the WBO Regulations, including



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but not limited to serving the best interests in the WBO Heavyweight Division, the sport of boxing and the fans.

- c) Joe Joyce and Joseph Parker understand, agree, and accept all the conditions stated herein and any other provisions hereinafter established by this Committee as a condition to granting sanction approval for the Interim Championship Contest.
- d) Non-performance by Joe Joyce and/or Joseph Parker with any of the conditions or provisions stated herein will result in the WBO proceeding in accordance with the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests.
- e) If Joe Joyce and/or Joseph Parker suffer(s) an injury that prevents his participation, is prevented to participate, impaired to participate, or unavailable to participate for whatever reasons in the Interim Championship bout, WBO Championship Committee shall proceed per WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests.

2. This “*Resolution*” is hereby final, definitive, and enforceable.

This is a final decision of the WBO Championship Committee. The affected WBO participant may appeal such determination to the Complaint and Grievance Committee as per Rule 34, which as per Article 3(e) of the WBO Appeals Regulation, must be submitted in writing to the WBO President within fourteen (14) days of this decision as its sole and exclusive remedy.

Dated: August 29, 2022
San Juan, Puerto Rico

WBO CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE

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Alex Krassuyk/K2 Promotions
Egis Klimas/Team Usyk

ⁱ See, WBO Regulation §35(f).