



**WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE
RESOLUTION**

**In the Matter of the WBO Jr. Heavyweight Mandatory Championship Contest
Lawrence Okolie vs. David Light**

Parties:

Mr. Eddie Hearn
CEO Matchroom Boxing
On behalf of Lawrence Okolie

Mr. Themba Smith
Head of Commercial and Operations
On behalf of Lawrence Okolie

Mr. Matt Rose
CEO No Limit Boxing
On behalf of David Light

Factual Record

On March 20, 2021, WBO Participant Lawrence Okolie won the vacant WBO Jr. Heavyweight Championship via KO in round six (6) against Krzysztof Glowacki. This bout was held at the Wembley Arena in Wembley, London, United Kingdom. Thereafter, Okolie successfully discharged his mandatory title obligation defeating Dilan Prasovic via KO in round three (3). This fight took place at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, Tottenham, London, United Kingdom.

Following compliance with his mandatory defense against Prasovic, Okolie fought world-rated contender Michal Cieslak on February 27, 2022, at the O2 Arena, Greenwich, London, United Kingdom. Okolie won via unanimous decision (UD). Since the latter bout, Okolie has not defended his title nor is scheduled to defend it against a world-rated contender determined and approved by the WBO World Championship Committee. Furthermore, per WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, the time provided for compulsory title defenses has transpired as 283 days have elapsed (9 months and 10 days) exceeding the applicable time provision. Therefore, Okolie's mandatory title defense is overdue.

Conversely, on December 2, 2022, number six (6) world-rated WBO Jr. Heavyweight contender David Light fought number seven (7) world-rated counterpart Brandon Glanton. Both fighters defended their respective WBO Regional Championship Titles in a highly competitive bout. After ten (10) hard-fought rounds, the fight was ruled a split decision (SD) in favor of David Light.

As a result of David Light's victory and per our governing rules and regulations, this Committee determined and selected the aforementioned participant as Okolie's Mandatory Challenger. Accordingly, on December 5, 2022, this Committee ordered Team Okolie and Team Light to begin negotiations granting the parties 20 days to reach an agreement or purse bid proceedings would be called per WBO Regulations.



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Upon issuance of the subject matter negotiation order, the WBO confirmed email communication by Mr. Themba Smith, on behalf of Team Okolie confirming receipt of the negotiation notice and advising that Matchroom Boxing was no longer Okolie's promoter. Consequently, Mr. Smith requested that the WBO refrain from including Matchroom in any further correspondence pertaining to Okolie/Light. Thereafter, the WBO received an email response from Mr. Shaun Palmer, on behalf of Matchroom Boxing asserting that Okolie and Matchroom are parties to a pending dispute resolution process and in order to preserve the legal status quo, Matchroom should remain informed on matters pertaining to Okolie. In response to Matchroom's position, Mr. Smith replied via email and argued that the referenced dispute resolution process relates to a promotional agreement that allegedly expired, and in considering the foregoing, Matchroom should have no right to be involved in any correspondence relating to Okolie.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Shaun Palmer responded via email to Mr. Smith's position arguing that pending the final determination of the dispute resolution proceedings, Matchroom puts a notice on all parties and advised that their legal rights are reserved and will take appropriate actions to protect such rights. Lastly, Mr. Smith on behalf of Okolie responded to Mr. Palmer's final communication stating that there is no dispute as to the legal controversy and advised the WBO that Team Okolie will not include Matchroom Boxing copied or informed going forward and will be removing Matchroom from the email chain.

Considering the foregoing events, this Committee convened on December 6, 2022, to discuss the controversy at issue and resolve accordingly. Now, having reviewed the facts stated herein, 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)¹ 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.

The WBO World Championship Committee's authority to consider the issue at hand is governed under Section 1 (b), (9) and (24); Section (5) (a) and (c); and Section 13, respectively of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, which provide, in relevant, as follows:

SECTION 1. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE

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



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- (9) To order purse bid proceedings; and,
- (24) To designate the Mandatory Challenger; and,

SECTION 5. DEFENSE OF THE TITLE

- (a) Each WBO World Champion except in the Heavyweight shall defend his title at intervals not greater than nine (9) months counting from the date of the acquisition thereof or from the last compulsory defense, as the case may be in a twelve (12) round fight against the Mandatory Challenger determined by the Championship Committee according to these Regulations unless an exception is made pursuant to these Regulations. [Emphasis Added...]
- (c) The WBO World Championship Committee may, in its discretion, vacate a Champion's title regardless of cause or fault if the Champion fails to defend his title within a nine (9) month period. This decision will be final unless appealed to the Grievance Committee within 10 days of notification to the Champion as provided for in these rules. A Champion so stripped of his title shall be classified using the WBO rating criteria and he shall classify in his division or in such other weight division as the Classification's Committee for good cause determines provided that he has complied with the WBO and ABC rating criteria.

SECTION 13. DIVISION OF PURSE FOR CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD PURSUANT TO PURSE BID

- (a) The purse for Championship Contests held and completed pursuant to Purse Bids. The Purse Bid division for which shall be distributed as per Section 14(e)(2) shall be distributed as follows:
 - (1) CHAMPIONSHIPS WITH AN EXISTING CHAMPION**
 - (A) In fights between the Champion and the first available contender held in the country of origin, residence or nationality of the Champion, or a neutral venue, the latter (Champion) shall receive 75% of the total purse, and the Challenger shall receive the remaining 25%.
 - (B) In fights for the title held in the country of origin, residence or nationality of the Challenger, the Champion shall receive 80% of the total purse and the Challenger shall receive the remaining 20%.

The minimum purse bid amount for the WBO Jr. Heavyweight Division is \$300,000. (Three Hundred Thousand Dollars).



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ANALYSIS

Today's ruling is straightforward. On December 5, 2022, this Committee ordered the commencement of negotiations between Team Okolie and Team Light as per the notice issued and published on the official WBO website and social media outlets. The parties were granted 20-days to reach an agreement or purse bid proceedings would be called per WBO Rules and Regulations. Immediately upon issuance of the notice order, representatives of Team Okolie and Matchroom Boxing began arguing about which party had the right to be included and notified of all official rulings by the WBO pertaining to Okolie.

Certainly, the above-referenced communications between Team Okolie and Matchroom Boxing reflect opposite positions and/or versions as to the promotional representation of Okolie. Therefore, considering the conflictive circumstances between the parties and the lack of communication going forward during the negotiation proceedings, this Committee strongly believes that purse bid proceedings shall be ordered immediately. In doing so, we avoid a futile negotiation process and a further delay in discharging the mandatory title defense obligation. By virtue of our decision, we put in immediate effect the applicable purse bid procedure; set forth the relevant provisions; protect the rights and interests of all involved parties and serve the best interests in the WBO and its Jr. Heavyweight Division.

Lastly, we must stress that today's ruling is rendered pursuant to the Committee reserving its right to issue all further rulings deemed necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of rules, including serving the best interests in the WBO Jr. Heavyweight Division.

DECISION - WBO WORLD 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 our governing regulations, now, therefore, resolve as follows:

1. The WBO Championship Committee hereby rules as follows:

Purse Bid Proceedings for Okolie/Light are **HEREBY ORDERED**. The proceedings will be conducted on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. (Eastern Time) in the WBO main offices located at:

World Boxing Organization, Inc.
1056 Munoz Rivera Avenue
Suite # 711-714
San Juan, Puerto Rico, 00927
Phone: +1 (787) 765-4444 / +1 (787) 765-4781
Email: golivieriesq@wboboxing.com / dmelendez@wboboxing.com

2. Purse Bid proceedings will be presided by the WBO President Francisco "Paco" Valcárcel, Esq.



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3. Lawrence Okolie and David Light must manifest in writing to the WBO within 48 hours upon the adjudication of the purse bid whether they will participate (available, ready, willing, and able) in the ordered WBO Jr. Heavyweight Mandatory Championship Contest. Failure to comply with this provision will result in the Committee determining that the WBO Jr. Heavyweight Participant is uninterested and unavailable to participate in the mandated bout.
4. If Okolie and/or Light suffer an injury, is impaired to fight, prevented to fight, refuses to fight, or is unavailable to fight for whatever reasons, this Committee may declare (i) WBO Jr. Heavyweight Championship Title vacant; (ii) order an Interim Championship; and (iii) determine any other course of action in the best interests of the WBO and the Jr. Heavyweight Division.
5. 20% of the total purse offers must be lodged with the WBO main offices in certified check, cashier's check, or bank money order payable to the WBO, or money in cash, in the legal tender of the United States of America (dollars) no later than 2 business days upon the adjudication of the purse bid. Failure to comply with this provision will result in the WBO Championship Committee declaring the winner of the purse bid in default automatically and awarding the promotional rights to the second-highest bidder per WBO Regulations. *See, Sections 11 through 13 of the WBO Regulations*
6. This Committee reserves the right to reduce or extend the 45–90-day period provision to which the Okolie/Light bout must be conducted upon the adjudication of the purse bid considering the present circumstances and the inactivity in the WBO Jr. Heavyweight Division.
7. The WBO Championship Committee reserves its right to issue all rulings deemed necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the policies, purposes, and intent of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contest as well as considering the best interests for the WBO and its Jr. Heavyweight Division.
8. 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: December 6, 2022
San Juan, Puerto Rico



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By: Luis Batista, Esq.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Luis Batista", is written over a horizontal line.

Chairman

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Cc: Francisco Valcárcel, Esq./President
Luis Batista Salas, Esq./Chairman Championship Committee
Eddie Hearn/Matchroom Boxing
Shaun Palmer/Matchroom Boxing
Frank Smith/Matchroom Boxing
Tom Dallas/Matchroom Boxing
Themba Smith/Team Okolie
Adam Rasul
Mohit Pasricha

ⁱ See, WBO Regulation §35(f).