



# WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

## INTRODUCTION

The present ruling emanates from an order issued by this Committee on Friday, December 10, 2021, addressed to the WBO Bantamweight Champion, John Riel Casimero, requesting to "Show Cause" why this Committee should not declare the WBO Bantamweight Championship Title Vacant in light of his failure to participate in the scheduled WBO Mandatory Championship Contest against Paul Butler on Saturday, December 11, 2021, in Dubai, UAE. Casimero was granted 10 days to submit a medical certification by the hospital institution where he was admitted for medical treatment as well as his medical record.

Having Team Casimero complied with our order, and having carefully examined the documents before this Committee, and having reviewed the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests and their applicability and enforcement in this matter, and having the power, authority, rights, and ample discretion conferred by our rules, it is hereby determined as follows:

## STATEMENT OF FACTS

**WHEREAS**, this Committee granted sanction approval for the WBO Bantamweight Championship Contest between John Riel Casimero and Mandatory Challenger Paul Butler, scheduled for Saturday, December 11, 2021, at the Coca-Cola Arena in Dubai, UAE; and,

**WHEREAS**, on Thursday, December 9, 2021, the WBO confirmed receipt of email correspondence on behalf of Probellum's Chief Legal Officer, Harrison Whitman, indicating that approximately at 2:00 a.m. local time in Dubai, John Riel Casimero was admitted to the American Hospital Dubai in Dubai, UAE, due to a medical condition, and therefore, Casimero was unable to box as scheduled; and,

**WHEREAS**, attached with Harrison Whitman's correspondence were (i) Medical document dated Thursday, December 9, 2021, issued by Dr. Vishnu Priya Midhun (General Practitioner) from the Dr. Reena Begum Clinic in Dubai, UAE, indicating as principal diagnosis vomiting unspecified and secondary diagnosis acute gastritis, dizziness and giddiness, other fatigue and epigastric pain. Based on these findings, Casimero was provided numerous prescriptions; (ii) Medical certification issued by the boxing vent physician, Dr. Ahmed Khalifa, who, after examining Casimero, diagnosed him as moderate to severe form of dehydration with Viral Gastritis and consequently, declared unfit to box; and,

**WHEREAS**, considering Casimero's medical condition and unavailability to fight Butler, "Probellum," informed the WBO that current number 10 rated WBO Bantamweight Contender, Joseph Agbeko was ready, willing and able to fight Butler, and requested sanction approval; and,



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**WHEREAS**, having this Committee considered the aforementioned circumstances, granted sanction approval for an Interim Championship Bout meanwhile ordering Team Casimero to "Show Cause" within 10 days based on the provided information and documents furnished by "Probellum;" in support of their request; and,

**WHEREAS**, Paul Butler and Joseph Agbeko both complied with the required weight limit for the WBO Interim Bantamweight Championship Contest as authorized by the Committee. Nonetheless, thereafter, Team Butler notified "Probellum" that they would not proceed with the bout and the Interim Championship Contest was not conducted; and,

**WHEREAS**, on Sunday, December 12, 2021, the WBO confirmed written correspondence by Casimero's Attorney, Mr. Steve Pacitti, addressing the events that caused Casimero to withdraw from the bout. In support of the preceding, Mr. Pacitti provided medical documents for the Committee's consideration and requested that Casimero not be stripped his title and be granted the opportunity that, upon returning to active competition, reschedule the bout against Butler; and,

**WHEREAS**, on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, this Committee responded to Mr. Pacitti's correspondence and granted Team Casimero 5 days to provide a medical prognosis as to when John Riel Casimero would return to active training to enforce the mandatory title defense against Butler; and,

**WHEREAS**, on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, in compliance with our order, Mr. Pacitti submitted a medical certification issued by Dr. Derrick Moore, Chief of Emergency from the American Hospital Dubai, ratifying the diagnosis rendered by the other physicians who examined Casimero and indicated that Casimero's recovery prognosis was within one week upon discharge; and,

**WHEREAS**, on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, the Committee received an email communication by Harrison Whitman on behalf of "Probellum" forwarding a "Youtube" video weblink showing Team Casimero speaking in the Filipino language allegedly talking about Casimero's medical situation, the Dubai Boxing Commission, and the appointed physician; and,

**WHEREAS**, having Team Casimero complied with this Committee's order, and having the Committee carefully considered the arguments on behalf of Team Casimero, and having examined the submitted documents and medical certifications, and having reviewed the WBO regulations of World Championship Contests and their applicability and enforcement in this matter, and having the power, authority, rights, and ample discretion conferred by our rules, it is hereby determined as follows:

### APPLICABLE PROVISIONS



## **WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

It is an uncontested fact that WBO Bantamweight Champion John Riel Casimero is bound by the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests. Specifically, Section 35 (f)<sup>i</sup> 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"*. 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 Sections 1(b)(8) 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 have the following powers and discretion:

*(8) To recommend to the President and the Executive Committee that a Title should be vacated if a Champion fails to comply with the WBO World Championship Rules; and*

### **ANALYSIS**

Before the WBO World Championship Committee, is whether the supportive medical evidence provided by Team Casimero satisfies the Committee for the purposes of whether it merits declaring the WBO Bantamweight Championship Title "Vacant," or it constitutes justified cause to rule otherwise. We believe the submitted evidence suffices for a justified cause, and therefore, Casimero retains WBO Champion status. We explain accordingly.

There is no controversy as to the cause of Casimero's physical impediment to engaging in the WBO Bantamweight Mandatory Championship Bout against Paul Butler per the medical documents furnished to the WBO. In essence, all the supportive evidence concluded that Casimero's diagnosis was Viral Gastritis. Furthermore, these findings were rendered by duly licensed physicians and certified by the respective medical institutions. Therefore, we deem it unnecessary to challenge these findings through independent medical review.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, we must stress that the "YouTube" video whereby Team Casimero discusses the fighter's medical situation and other matters is concerning as it may constitute conduct deemed by the World Boxing Organization contrary to the fundamental principles of the organization. Any similar acts or conducts in the future by Casimero and his team will carry severe consequences imposed by this Committee. Nevertheless, even assuming whether Team Casimero probably incurred in the actions per the statements referred to in the video, this



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Committee must rule based on the preponderance of the evidence per the certified medical records furnished and in accordance with our governing rules and regulations.

Conversely, Casimero won the WBO Bantamweight Championship on Saturday, November 30, 2019, via defeating Zolani Tete by TKO in round 3; bout held at the Utilita Arena, Birmingham, West Midlands, United Kingdom. Thereafter, he successfully defended his title against Duke Micah on Saturday, September 26, 2020, via TKO in round 3; bout held at the Mohegan Sun Casino, Uncasville, Connecticut, United States of America, and against Guillermo Rigondeaux on Saturday, August 14, 2021, via Split Decision; bout held at the Dignity Health Sports Park, Carson, California, USA.

Casimero's last two outings (Micah & Rigondeaux) have been voluntary title defenses. His scheduled mandatory title defense was against Butler, but based on the events that transpired stated herein, the bout was terminated. Today, 755 days have elapsed, and no mandatory title defenses have been discharged. Therefore, Casimero's mandatory title defense obligations are long overdue.

Moreover, this Committee has confirmed receipt of information whereby John Riel Casimero is scheduled to participate in a non-WBO Championship Bout<sup>1</sup> against "YouTuber" Jormiel Labrador Fitness on December 28, 2021. This bout will be presented live via PPV on Vloggerstv.com. The foregoing bout has not been authorized by the WBO nor by "Probellum," which holds the promotional rights of the WBO Bantamweight Mandatory Championship Contest and has the right to reschedule the Casimero/Butler bout per the terms and conditions stated herein.

Therefore, Casimero is hereby prohibited from engaging in any negotiations and/or participating or fighting without the express authorization from the WBO or "Probellum." Any agreement, covenant, or accord reached between Casimero and a third party that may conflict with the terms and provisions set forth in the "Purse Bid" proceeding held on Thursday, October 1, 2021, at the WBO offices, will result in this Committee taking all actions per WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, including but not limited to declaring the WBO Bantamweight Championship Title "Vacant" "Ipso Facto."

We remind Casimero that a World Championship is not the property of any boxer. The Championship is a trust, subject to the conditions defined in our regulations, for the use and benefit of all boxers and boxing fans, who, through their contribution of time, effort, risks and resources, sustain the existence of the profession. The World Boxing Organization encourages each World Champion and Challenger to be an example of the highest ideals and spirit of sportsmanship. A World Champion is an integral part of the sport of boxing, but he is not greater than the sport of boxing. See, Preamble of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests

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<sup>1</sup> See, <https://m.facebook.com/battleoftheyoutubers/photos/a.124409463253473/154340363593716/>



## **WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

Now, in light of today's ruling and the pending discharge of the WBO Mandatory in Bantamweight Division, this Committee is granting "Probellum," which holds the promotional rights for the Casimero/Butler bout to inform the WBO within the next 15 days upon issuance of this "Resolution" whether they will reschedule the bout on a certain date and venue to proceed with the corresponding sanction approval process. Non-compliance with the term provided herein will result in the WBO Championship Committee proceeding according to our governing rules and regulations and with "Probellum" waiving all rights hereunder without further notice, summons, and/or hearing.

Whereas if "Probellum" proceeds with rescheduling the Casimero/Butler WBO Mandatory Championship Bout, all the provisions set forth per the Purse Bid<sup>2</sup> proceedings conducted on Thursday, October 1, 2021, at the WBO main offices in San Juan, Puerto Rico, shall remain in full force and effect, but we modify conditions 3 & 4 by adding the following conditions:

1. In the event that John Riel Casimero does not attend the official weigh-in for any reason whatsoever, the WBO Bantamweight Championship Title will be declared Vacant "Ipso Facto."

2. In the event that John Riel Casimero is injured or suffers an injury, refuses to fight, or is unavailable to participate, fight, or engage for any reason whatsoever, the WBO Bantamweight Championship Title will be declared "Vacant," and John Riel Casimero shall be rated in the WBO Bantamweight World Ratings per the ABC and WBO Rating Criteria.

3. In the event that Paul Butler does not attend the official weigh-in for any reason whatsoever, the WBO Championship Committee shall withdraw mandatory challenger status designation and proceed to select the first available contender in the WBO Bantamweight Division.

4. In the event that Paul Butler is injured or suffers an injury and depending on the type of injury and recovery period, or is unavailable to participate, refuses to fight, or engage for any reason whatsoever, the WBO Championship Committee may order a new purse bid with the first available contender in the WBO Bantamweight Division or issue any other ruling per WBO Regulations.

Lastly, this Committee reserves its right to issue all further rulings and determinations necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests.

### **CONCLUSION**

**WHEREFORE**, this Committee will rule as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> See, *Casimero/Butler Purse Bid Minutes* <https://www.wboboxing.com/official-documents/wbo-official-documents/purse-bid-minutes-wbo-bantamweight-championship-contest-casimero-butler/>



## **WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

### **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. The WBO World Championship Committee hereby rules that John Riel Casimero retains his WBO Bantamweight Championship Status subject to the conditions set forth herein.
2. Probellum is granted 15 days upon issuing this ruling to determine whether they will proceed to reschedule the Casimero/Butler bout subject to the conditions herein.
3. 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 in San Juan, Puerto Rico on this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December 2021

**WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Luis Batista Salas".

By: Luis Batista Salas, Esq.  
Chairman/Championship Committee

Cc: Francisco Valcárcel, Esq./President  
Harrison Whitman/Probellum  
Steve Pacitti, Esq./Team Casimero

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<sup>i</sup> See, § 35 (f) of the WBO Regulations