



**WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE
RESOLUTION**

In the Matter of WBO Super Middleweight Participant – Saul “Canelo” Alvarez

Parties:

Mr. Greg Smith, Esq.
Attorney on behalf of
Saul Canelo Alvarez

Mr. Eddie Hearn
Matchroom Boxing
on behalf of Saul Canelo Alvarez

ISSUE PRESENTED

Whether WBO Participant Saul “Canelo” Alvarez lost his status as WBO Super Middleweight (168 lbs) Champion in wake of his unanimous decision (UD) loss to World Boxing Association (WBA) Light Heavyweight Champion Dmitrii Bivol, on Saturday, May 7, 2022, at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada, United States of America.

Pursuant to his privileges as “WBO Super Champion” and this Committee’s power and discretion conferred by the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, we respond in the negative and explain below accordingly.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On Saturday, March 5, 2011, Saul “Canelo” Alvarez won his first world title contesting the “Vacant” World Boxing Council (WBC) Jr. Middleweight (154 lbs) Championship via unanimous decision (UD) against former world-rated contender, Matthew Hatton. This bout was conducted at the Honda Center in Anaheim, California, United States of America.

Thereafter, Canelo had six consecutive successful title defenses against top-tier former world champions and title contenders such as Ryan Rhodes, Alfonso Gomez, Kermit Cintron, Shane Mosley, Josesito Lopez, and Austin Trout, respectively. Against Trout, Canelo won his second world championship by unifying the World Boxing Association (WBA) Jr. Middleweight title via unanimous decision (UD).

With an impressive perfect record comprised of 42 wins, no losses, and only 1 draw, Canelo at just 23 years of age, faced one of boxing’s biggest stars and considered by experts one of the greatest boxers of all time, in Floyd Mayweather. Like Canelo, Floyd had a perfect professional record consisting of 44 wins with no losses and no draws. In 2013, The Mayweather/Canelo bout was the biggest fight in sports entertainment. In fact, to date, it is the third highest-grossing boxing fight in history with approximate 200 million dollars in total revenues surpassing Mayweather-De La Hoya.

The Mayweather/Canelo bout was held at the MGM Grand, Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada, United States of America. Unfortunately, Canelo was not successful and lost a majority decision (MD). Nonetheless, months later Canelo successfully returned to action and continued facing formidable opposition in the likes of Alfredo Angulo, former world champion Erislandy Lara, and James Kirkland.



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Following his fight with Kirkland, Canelo moved up to Middleweight (160 lbs) to challenge future Hall of Famer and four-division (three-division WBO Champion) world champion Miguel Cotto for the “Vacant” World Boxing Council (WBC) Middleweight Title conducted at the Mandalay Bay Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, United States of America. After twelve competitive rounds, Canelo obtained a unanimous decision (UD) victory becoming a two-division world champion.

One year later, on September 17, 2016, Canelo moved down to Jr. Middleweight winning his third world title and his first World Boxing Organization (WBO) Championship against then-champion Liam Smith. Canelo won via KO in round 9. This fight was held at the AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, United States of America. Thereafter, Canelo relinquished his WBO Championship and returned to Middleweight to challenge then former undefeated Unified WBA, IBF, and WBC Middleweight Champion Gennadiy “GGG” Golovkin, considered by many as the best Middleweight in the division and one of the top pound for pound fighters in boxing.

After twelve high-level back and forth action, the judges rendered a split decision (SD) draw. As result thereof, the Golovkin/Canelo rematch took place the following year on September 15, 2018. However, on this occasion, Canelo won a majority decision (MD) victory and unified the WBA, WBC & IBF Middleweight Championship titles. Following his two fights of the year candidates with “GGG,” Canelo decided to test the waters at Super Middleweight (168 lbs). In doing so, he signed a massive 5-year, 11-fight contract with “DAZN” streaming service app worth \$365 million dollars, making him one of the highest paid sports athletes in the world. At this juncture, Canelo’s profile exemplified boxing’s biggest star.

Continuing to chase legacy fights, Canelo challenged then IBF World Super Middleweight Champion Danny Jacobs on May 4, 2019, at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada, United States of America. Also, at stake was the WBC Middleweight Championship. The bout resulted in a unanimous decision (UD) victory in favor of Canelo Alvarez becoming the Unified WBO/IBF Super Middleweight Champion. Post Jacobs, Canelo again decided to make history by moving up to the Light Heavyweight (175 lbs) division to challenge the hard-hitting veteran Sergey Kovalev for his WBO Championship. After ten close rounds, Canelo scored a highlight reel KO in round 11 winning the WBO Light Heavyweight title and becoming a four-division world champion and a three-division WBO Champion. This bout was held at the MGM Grand, Grand Garden Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada, United States of America.

Canelo continued cementing his future hall of fame trajectory by moving down to Super Middleweight to become the first-ever Undisputed Super Middleweight Champion in the four-belt era. His first test was on December 19, 2020, against then former WBA Super Middleweight Champion and winner of the World Boxing Super Series Super Middleweight Tournament, Callum Smith. Canelo won via unanimous decision winning the WBA and the “Vacant” WBC Super Middleweight Championships. Said fight was held at the Alamodome, San Antonio, Texas, United States of America. Thereafter, Canelo won the WBO Super Middleweight Championship via TKO in round 8 against former two-division WBO World Champion Billy Joe Saunders at the AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, United States of America.

With one more championship to be contested, on November 6, 2021, Canelo faced IBF Super Middleweight Champion Caleb Plant for the Undisputed WBO, WBA, WBC & IBF Super Middleweight Championships at the MGM Grand, Grand Garden Arena, Las Vegas, United States of America.



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Canelo won via TKO in round 11 becoming the first-ever boxer and Mexican fighter to win world championship titles from all four recognized sanctioning organizations in the four-belt era.

Notwithstanding Canelo's historic accomplishment, his aspirations to achieve greatness in the sport continued, but this time returning to the Light Heavyweight division against the top Light Heavyweight WBA Champion Dmitrii Bivol. With no catch weigh agreement nor rehydration clause, Canelo challenged Bivol, however unsuccessful losing via unanimous decision. The Canelo/Bivol bout was a non-WBO Championship contest and therefore, subject to specific conditions by this Committee, most notably (i) in the event Canelo was unsuccessful against Bivol, his WBO Super Middleweight Championship would be declared "Vacant" "Ipso Facto." The notice letter was duly notified on May 4, 2022.

Nonetheless, on May 9, 2022, this Committee confirmed receipt of correspondence from Mr. Greg Smith, Esq., on behalf of Canelo Alvarez requesting that the WBO retain Canelo Alvarez's status as WBO Super Middleweight Champion arguing that (i) this Committee in its sanction letter of Canelo/Bivol, reserved its right to issue all further rulings necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, including but not limited to serving the best interests in the WBO Super Middleweight Division, and therefore, it is in the best interests of the WBO Super Middleweight Division, and boxing in general, for Canelo to continue as WBO Super Middleweight Champion per his status as WBO "Super Champion" and the rights and privileges afforded by such distinction.

Furthermore, Mr. Smith argued that Canelo is a future hall of famer, a world champion in four different weight classes, and the first and only undisputed Super Middleweight World Champion. Moreover, Mr. Smith contended that should the Committee declare the WBO title vacant by virtue of Canelo chasing history by moving up a weight class, it could have a chilling effect on any other fighter looking to do something great. Instead of incentivizing champions to risk losses in tough fights, it would encourage them to play it safe. Consequently, this course of action could severely diminish the sport in the eyes of both the general population and its biggest fans.

Now, having this Committee considered the facts herein, having considered the arguments submitted by Team Alvarez, and having reviewed the 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 WBO Participants 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



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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 Sections 1(b)(15)(20) 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 have the following powers and discretion:

(15) To recommend to the Executive Committee whether a boxer should be designated as Super Champion; and

(20) To make or recommend exceptions or variations from the Rules as the WBO 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 these rules.

Furthermore, pertaining to WBO Participants recognized as “WBO Super Champions,” Section 14 of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests sets forth the applicable criteria for consideration and the rights and privileges afforded upon granting such distinction. The rule states as follows:

SECTION 14. SUPER CHAMPIONS

(a) It is the policy of the World Boxing Organization to encourage its Champions to pursue recognized status as undisputed World Champions and to unify the Championships of the four major world sanctioning organizations (the WBO, WBA, WBC, and IBF). A World Champion who has achieved preeminent status may require and be entitled to additional scheduling flexibility to achieve his place in boxing history and for the good of the sport. A boxer may be considered for designation for Super Champion status when he meets the following criteria:

(1) The boxer presently or previously has or had a multiple bout contract with a major television network (HBO, SHOWTIME, ZBF, Sky or other similar broadcast company), for multiple years; and

(2) As a WBO Champion,

(A) The boxer has successfully defended his title cumulatively a minimum of ten (10) title bouts, or;



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(B) In the event of less than ten (10) successful defenses has defended his/her title against opponents of high recognition and high skills; and

(C) Has substantially met the other standards set forth herein.

(3) The boxer's amateur history will be considered; and

(4) The quality of prospective Super Champion's record including the quality of his opponents and their records will be considered.

(5) Additionally, the following factors will be considered in determining Super Champion designation:

(A) If the prospective Super Champions has been a WBO World Champion in more than one (1) weight division; or

(B) If the Prospective Super Champion has held more than one (1) Championship of the four major world sanctioning organizations; or

(C) If the prospective Super Champion has unified the Championships of more than one (1) of the four (4) major world sanctioning bodies

(b) Current champion status is not required to qualify or continue as a Super Champion.

(c) The Championship Committee may recommend Super Champion status for the boxer to the Executive Committee, if a boxer has substantially complied with the conditions set forth herein. Super Champion status shall be determined by the vote of the Executive Committee.

(d) PRIVILEGES AFFORDED SUPER CHAMPIONS. Those fighters recommended by the Championship Committee and approved by the Executive Committee qualify for the following rights and privileges:

(1) EXTENSION OF MANDATORY TITLE DEFENSE.

The Championship Committee may extend a Super Champion's mandatory title defense for good cause shown one or more times beyond the time provided for in the WBO Regulations for World Championship Contests for the purpose of giving a Super Champion opportunity or opportunities to unify the titles of more than one major sanctioning body either in a unification bout or a unification tournament, or any other important match or matches that the Committee determines would contribute to the Super Champion's legacy or would be of great interest to boxing fans.

(2) ELIGIBILITY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR DESIGNATION AS THE MANDATORY CHALLENGER IN HIGHER OR LOWER DIVISION.



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If requested by a Super Champion, the Championship Committee may designate the Super Champion as the mandatory challenger for the higher or lower division.

(3) ELIGIBILITY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR DESIGNATION AS THE MANDATORY CHALLENGER IN SAME DIVISION.

If requested by a Super Champion who has lost his title and who wishes to fight for the title again, the Championship Committee may designate the Super Champion as the mandatory challenger in the Super Champion's division.

(4) An Honorary member of the WBO for life

(e) PURSE BID

(1) In case of a purse bid involving a contest between contestants one or more of whom are WBO Super Champions, or a contest between a current WBO Champion and another current WBO Champion or a contest between a WBO Champion and a WBO Interim Champion, or a contest between two WBO Interim Champions, the following rules shall be applied in conjunction with the purse bid rules contained in the WBO Regulations for World Championship Contests; these provisions concerning the division of purse bids shall supersede the rules for division of purse bids contained within Section 13 of these WBO Rules, "DIVISION OF PURSE for CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD PURSUANT TO PURSE BID. "

(2) In any of the situations described in Section 14(e)(1) above and a purse bid takes place, the division shall not be greater than 80/20 in any case and shall be calculated by the Championship Committee using a ratio based upon the average purse of each fighter's last three (3) fights. The WBO may rely upon the purses reported to the WBO on the WBO Participant's Promoter's receipts for the fights that are used to calculate the Purse Division for this purpose. By way of example, if contestant A has had his last 3 purses of \$1,000,000, \$500,000, and \$400,000 (a total of \$1,900,000) and contestant B has had his last 3 purses of 1,000,000, \$2,000,000, and \$2,500,000 (a total of \$5,500,000), the purse division would be $\$1,900,000/\$7,400,000$ or 25.68% for contestant A and $\$5,500,000/\$7,400.00$ or 74.32% for contestant B. If by way of further example, if contestant A has had his last 3 purses of \$500,000, \$400,000, and \$300,000 (a total of \$1,200,000) and contestant B has had his last 3 purses of 1,000,000, \$2,000,000, and \$2,500,000 (a total of \$5,500,000) the purse division would be 20% for contestant A and 80% for contestant B (as the ratio of the purses is $\$1,200,000/\$6,700,000$ or 17.91% for contestant A to $\$5,500,000/\$6,700,000$ or 82.09% for contestant B and the purse division cannot be more that 80/20.

(f) LOSS OF PRIVILEGES

(1) All Super Champion privileges referred to in Section 14(d) shall be terminated in the event (a) a Super Champion violates any of the WBO Rules and Regulations, (b) for unsportsmanlike conduct or activities unbecoming to a professional boxer, (c) for drug abuse (of either illegal drugs or performance enhancing drugs), or (d) conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude.



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(2) The Super Champion Privileges referred to in Section 14(d)(1) to 14(d)(3) shall be terminated in the event of the loss of any boxing contest or in the event a WBO Champion relinquishes the WBO World Championship Title unless the World Championship Committee recommends that Super Champion status be retained and a majority of the WBO Executive Board resolves that Super Champion status be retained.

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]*

The first question before this Committee is whether Canelo’s “WBO Super Champion” status is terminated based on his unanimous decision (UD) loss to Dmitrii Bivol. The provision governing the preceding has an exception whereby unless the WBO World Championship Committee recommends that “Super Champion” status be retained and a majority of the WBO Executive Committee resolves that such status be retained. Accordingly, this Committee convened to discuss the matter at issue and unanimously voted in favor of recommending the WBO Executive Committee that Canelo’s status as “WBO Super Champion” be retained considering his unprecedented professional accomplishments as referenced herein.

Now, the second issue at hand is whether pursuant to Canelo’s status as “WBO Super Champion” this Committee should extend the scope of the applicable provision and maintain his recognition as WBO Super Middleweight Champion after his loss to Bivol. This Committee is of the opinion that per the powers and discretion conferred by our governing provisions, we can make exceptions from the rules, when necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of the WBO Regulations, including serving the best interests in the sport, the fighters, the Super Middleweight Division and the WBO. However, the key factor in granting the exception is Canelo’s “WBO Super Champion” status with the privileges and rights afforded by such designation.

In support of today’s ruling, we must stress Canelo’s unparalleled achievements in the sport as a basis for our decision. A summary of the foregoing is as follows:

- Professional record 57-2-2 (39 KO’s)
- Total combined record 1,196 wins / 216 losses / 48 draws
- 4-Division World Champion (154 lbs, 160 lbs, 168 lbs, 175 lbs)
- 3-Division WBO World Champion (154 lbs, 168 lbs, 175 lbs)
- WBO “Super Champion” status (Privileges and Rights)
- Two-time Jr. Middleweight Champion
- Two-time Super Middleweight Champion
- Current and only Undisputed WBO, WBA, WBC & IBF Champion at Super Middleweight

¹ See, Preamble of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests



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- Future First Ballot Hall of Famer
- Considered by experts and the public as boxing's best pound for pound fighter
- Boxing's highest-paid fighter
- Boxing's biggest PPV Star in America
- Fought Multi-Division World Champions, Future Hall of Famers, World Title Contenders of the likes of Carlos Baldomin, Matthew Hatton, Alfonso Gomez, Kermit Cintron, Shane Mosley, Josesito Lopez, Austin Trout, Floyd Mayweather Jr., Alfredo Angulo, Erislandy Lara, James Kirkland, Miguel Cotto, Amir Khan, Liam Smith, Julio Cesar Chavez, Jr., Gennadiy Golovkin, Daniel Jacobs, Sergey Kovalev, Callum Smith, Billy Joe Saunders, Caleb Plant, and Dmitrii Bivol, respectively.

The foregoing accomplishments speak for themselves. Therefore, having this Committee reserved its right to issue all further rulings necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of our WBO Regulations, including serving the best interests in the Super Middleweight Division, we agree with Team Alvarez's contention, most notably considering Canelo's "Super Champion" status, whose distinction is key in today's ruling. The Committee is of the opinion that Canelo has multiple opportunities to continue defending his Super Middleweight Supremacy against formidable world championship level opposition, and therefore, it is in the best interests of the sport, the fighters, the public, and the World Boxing Organization that Canelo retains his recognition as WBO Super Middleweight Champion.

DECISION - WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE

Now, having carefully reviewed and appraised the facts stated herein, having examined the arguments submitted by Team Alvarez and having examined our governing rules and regulations, this Committee resolves as follows:

1. The WBO Championship Committee hereby rules:
 - a) WBO Super Middleweight Participant Canelo Alvarez retains his "WBO Super Champion" status with the rights and privileges afforded by such distinction.
 - b) WBO Super Middleweight Participant Canelo Alvarez retains his WBO Super Middleweight Champion status.
 - c) This "Resolution" is definitive, final, and enforceable.
 - d) The WBO Championship Committee reserves the right to issue all further rulings, deem necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests, including serving the best interests of the sport, the fighters and the WBO.

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



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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.

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

Dated: May 19, 2022
San Juan, Puerto Rico

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

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ⁱ See, WBO Regulation §35(f).