



WORLD BOXING ORGANIZATION

Luis Batista Salas, Esq.
Founder
Chairman Championship Committee

May 15, 2024

VIA EMAIL:

Mr. Bob Arum
Promoter/Chairman
Top Rank, Inc.
Las Vegas, Nevada

Re: Interim Welterweight Championship Contest
Giovanni Santillan vs. Brian Norman

Dear Mr. Arum:

On April 27, 2024, the WBO World Championship Committee issued a ruling denying the request for the sanction approval of the subject matter bout for the “Interim” WBO Welterweight Championship. The foundations for such determination were based on the following arguments: (i) the WBO’s policy on authorizing interim championships only under exceptional circumstances¹, and (ii) there are no governing provisions in our WBO rules and regulations that would oblige this Committee in sanctioning an “Interim Championship”. That is to say, there is no rule that confers any world-rated contender(s) rights to vie for an “Interim Championship” in a particular weight category when there is an active “World Champion”. In other words, the approval of an “Interim Championship” is a discretionary determination by the Committee based on whether exceptional circumstances are present and, on a case-by-case analysis.

However, WBO Welterweight “Super Champion” Terence Crawford has publicly announced that he will be moving to the Jr. Middleweight Division and confirmation of such was the public announcement of the Crawford/Madrimov WBO Interim Jr. Middleweight Championship bout scheduled for August 3, 2024, in Los Angeles, California.² Moreover, Crawford has publicly express that after his Madrimov bout, he will be pursuing fighting Saul “Canelo” Alvarez. Therefore, considering Crawford’s present and future plans and the circumstances in the Welterweight division, it is appropriate to reconsider our position in the Welterweight category.

¹ The WBO constantly criticizes publicly the proliferation of interim titles as well as other secondary titles (e.g., Regular, In Recess, Diamond, Silver, etc.), which undermine the legitimacy of “World Champions” and consequently, the sport of boxing.

² The Crawford/Madrimov WBO Interim Jr. Middleweight bout was sanctioned considering that current WBO Jr. Middleweight Champion, Sebastian Fundora suffered an injury and subsequently suspended by the Nevada State Athletic Commission (NSAC) because of his bout against Tim Tszyu on March 30, 2024, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Now, having this Committee reconvened and reconsidered the situation in the Welterweight division, and seeking to protect the rights and interests of the remaining fighters in the relevant weight category as well as procuring continuous activity, it is our position that the circumstances are appropriate to grant the sanction approval.

Notwithstanding today's ruling, it is important to note, that current WBO Welterweight Champion, Terence Crawford holds **"Super Champion"** status (Not a title), which confers specific rights and privileges, including but not limited to receiving immediate mandatory challenger designation in a superior or lower weight division, has a perfect professional record comprised of 40 wins with no losses with 31 wins by way of knockout. Furthermore, Crawford is a former 3-division WBO World Champion and a 2-division Undisputed World Champion and is considered as boxing's best pound-for-pound fighter. Consequently, it is the Committee's position to allow Crawford to enter the ring against Madrimov as WBO Welterweight Champion as a matter of deference and respect.

Therefore, having this Committee reconvened and reconsidered the arguments submitted by Top Rank, Inc., as well as the circumstances present in the Welterweight division, and having examined our governing rules and regulations, it is in the best interests of boxing to authorize the interim championship between Santillan/Norman subject to specific provisions in the official sanction letter³ to be issued by the Championship Committee. This Committee must stress that Santillan and Norman are the two Welterweight contenders available to vie for the interim title and scheduled to fight on Saturday, May 18, 2024, in San Diego, California, in the co-feature of the Navarrete/Berinchyk WBO Lightweight Championship.

Lastly, the WBO reserves the right to issue any further rulings deemed necessary, helpful, and convenient to accomplish the purposes, policies, and intent of the WBO rules, including, but not limited to rendering all rulings necessary to serve the best interests in the sport of professional boxing, including those in the WBO Welterweight Division.

Yours Truly,

Luis Batista Salas, Esq.

Cc: Francisco Valcarcel, Esq.
Carl Moretti/Top Rank
Jeremy Koegel/Top Rank

³ The provisions and conditions in the official sanction letter for Santillan/Normal shall governed and obliged the parties as well as all further rulings rendered by this Committee.





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Jolene Mizzone/Team Norman

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