



WORLD BOXING ASSOCIATION

GILBERTO JESUS MENDOZA

President

Resolution No. 201706011412 **WBA Championships Committee** *Super Middleweight Division* *June 01, 2017*

I. REQUEST

On May 8, 2017, on behalf of WBA Super Middleweight Champion Tyrone Zeuge (“Zeuge”), Sauerland Event GmbH requested that the WBA grant a special permit for a voluntary defense against WBA ranked #5, Paul Smith (“Smith”) (38-6-0), in Weltzar, Germany, on June 15, 2017

The WBA provided notice of Zeuge’s request to potentially interested parties, including the WBA #3 ranked Isaac Ekpo (“Ekpo”) (31-3-0) and his representatives. The WBA received objections from Ekpo’s representatives, Don King Productions, Inc, arguing (1) that the WBA Resolution # 201704181412 – Clarification of Super Middleweight Division determined an immediate rematch between Zeuge vs Ekpo; (2) As customary, the parties were given thirty (30) days to negotiate the terms; (3) In the meantime, neither boxer may participate in any other bout until after the rematch occurs; (4) In complete disregard of WBA ruling, Boxing Scene (boxing news website) reports that Sauerland has a deal for Tyrone Zeuge to fight Paul Smith on June 17, 2017 in Germany; and (5) Appeal to the WBA, in the name of fair play and justice for the boxer Isaac Ekpo which the WBA stands for, to please vacate the Super Middleweight Title and declare Isaac Ekpo the new champion.

Sauerland responded by (1) Zeuge won the WBA World Championship by defeating then Champion Giovanni DeCarolis on November 5, 2016; (2) His Promoter Sauerland Event had made a deal for a first voluntary defense versus Paul Smith scheduled to take place in Germany in March of 2017; (3) Subsequent to that deal being made, the WBA ordered a mandatory in early December against a new leading available challenger Isaac Ekpo.

Zeuge and Sauerland decided to participate in the mandatory defense which took place instead of the Zeuge/Smith fight in March 2017; (4) Sauerland then agreed to honor the existing deal with Matchroom Boxing for the Zeuge/Smith fight if Zeuge was successful in his mandatory, which was originally scheduled for March 2017; (5) The Zeuge/Ekpo bout ended in a technical decision in favor of Zeuge. The bout was stopped due to a cut on Zeuge’s right eye that was caused by a head butt of Ekpo in an earlier round. The referee ruled this head butt accidental. Therefore, the bout went to the score cards; (6) it was a unanimous decision, with all 3 judges scoring the bout in favor of Zeuge, 49-46 twice, and 48-47 once. The scoring was consistent for the first four rounds, with two judges having the fight 49:46 in favor of Zeuge, with the 3rd judge scoring the 5th round in favor of Ekpo; (7) The WBA officials, the commission, and all the press attending the Bout left the venue after the Bout believing that the scoring was accurate, and that the right

fighter (Zeuge), won the bout; (8) Also, the television and the print media reported to be in agreement with the result of the WBA officials, and that the right decision had been made that night. This is noteworthy, and attached an ESPN article for easy reference and (9) As a result the WBA ruling to order a rematch is not acceptable and this should not have occurred. Even if Zeuge had lost the last round on all 3 judges' scorecards, all 3 judges, would have been 100% consistent in their scoring that Zeuge had won the Bout. Fights must not be rescored "on screen" by selected judges sitting hundreds of miles away when the scoring of the 3 ringside judges is that consistent. Fights are always scored "on site" by carefully appointed neutral judges sitting ringside next to the ring. Any scoring from farther away, at a different angle or distance, or from a TV screen is a drastic measure and can only lead to wrong decisions, especially when the scoring at ringside was so consistent. To rule on a bout and to change de-facto decisions based on "on screen scoring", is not good for the sport, and sets a dangerous precedent. If such cases where consistent judging is allowed to be questioned by offsite officials, there would be no need to send any judges to fights anymore, instead all the judges would score the fight from the comfort of their homes. While I agree that we should use "on screen" judging for evaluation, review and teaching purposes, and maybe in an advisory format when decisions are so inconsistent as to be controversial, this was not the case here, as all the judges agreed and the media concurred that the right fighter was awarded the decision.

II. BACKGROUND

- A. Zeuge holds an impressive 20-0-1 record with eleven (11) knockouts.
- B. On November 05, 2016, Zeuge won the WBA Super Middleweight title via KO over Giovanni De Carolis in Brandenburg, Germany.
- C. On December 13, 2016, the WBA notified Zeuge that his mandatory defense was to be against Ekpo.
- D. On March 25, 2017, the WBA Super Middleweight Champion, Tyrone Zeuge ("Zeuge") faced Isaac Ekpo ("Ekpo") in Brandenburg, Germany. Ekpo lost the bout by a close and controversial technical decision. The bout was scored 48 - 47, 49 - 47, and 49 - 46. Thereafter, on behalf of Ekpo, his promoter Don King ("King") requested that the WBA order a direct rematch in light of the close and controversial nature of the decision.
- E. On April 18, 2017, the WBA issued resolution 201704181412 and order direct rematch between Zeuge vs Ekpo, with thirty (30) days to negotiate the terms of said rematch.

III. ANALYSIS

A. The WBA may modify the periods for mandatory defenses for good cause, either in response to a request for a Special Permit, or on its own initiative. WBA Rule C.16.

B. The WBA may modify or suspend the strict application of these rules when the WBA deems them justified in its sole discretion to accommodate special circumstances. WBA Rule C.46. Those reasons include to “engage in an optional title defense,” to “engage in a bout of recognized importance and significance for the boxing world,” or to “extend or otherwise modify a mandatory defense period,” or any other reason the Committee and President deem just. WBA Rule C.46.a, e and g.

C. The WBA may grant Special Permit Requests and require conditions. “The Committee and the President in their sole discretion shall consider the best interests of boxing, the purposes and policies of the Association, and such other factors that may be relevant, and shall make their best effort to balance competing interests.” WBA Rule C.47.

D. Boxers and promoters are obligated to “know and be familiar with all Association rules,” including those “for Special Permits.” WBA Rule C.14.

IV. DECISION

A. Based upon the above-mentioned Rules, the WBA has express authority to modify applicable defense periods and otherwise suspend application of various rules under a special permit.

B. Due to the Super Middleweight division lack of a mandatory defense to date and Ekpo’s opposition to the requested special permit, the Committee is hesitant to grant a special permit further delaying the mandatory defense of the title. Additionally, Zeuge did not submit written evidence confirming he was already under contract for a bout with Smith at the time the mandatory notice was issued. As such, Zeuge’s request is denied.

Date: June 01, 2017



George Martinez
Championship Committee Chairman

Answering Format

1) Yes, I agree with the resolution

2) No, I do not agree with the resolution

Reasoned Decision: _____

The undersigned, being member of the Championships Committee of the World Boxing Association, declare that have read, fully and completely understood the information stated in this communication, and, based on my boxing knowledge and experience, I hereby state my unbiased voluntary vote and opinion.

Name: _____
(Director's name)

Signature _____

Date: _____