

Legends of Boxing Supplemental

Updated January 2022 (new additions in [blue](#))

Section 1: House Rules

20 on CONTROL

When a fighter rolls a 20 for Control and the other fighter does not, the 20 is an automatic Plus column attack. The Control Interval is ignored (the amount over the CTN). The Defense die is also ignored.

Example #1: Both fighters have a CTN of 10. The Red fighter rolls a 20 on Control. The blue fighter rolls an 18. The Red Fighter gets an automatic Plus column attack.

Example #2: Both fighters have a CTN of 10. Both roll 20 on Control. Go to the Split Action chart.

Example #3: The Red fighter has a CTN of 9, the Blue fighter a CTN of 11. The Blue fighter rolls a 20 for Control, the Red fighter rolls 19. The Blue fighter gets an automatic Plus column attack, even though the Red fighter is over by 11 and the Blue fighter is only over by 9.

This house rule represents fortunate timing and gives brawlers a little more opportunity for their efforts.

D8 Defense

For those who feel defense is over-powered, simply use an eight-sided die (d8) instead of the standard six-sided. This rule is useful in conjunction with the Advanced Mode card adjustments, particularly when a DEF 4 fighter is in Elusive Mode, increasing his effective Defense to 5. On the downside, it reduces the effectiveness of an "average" defender (2) from 33% to 25%.

TKO Alternatives

TKOs are the hardest part of the game and it is also the most difficult aspect for real-life referees to manage. Over the years, rules have been considered for about every conceivable situation, but ultimately we decided to keep the core game as simple as possible. In 2020, the original 6-to-1 ratio was put back into the core instructions as an option. Below is an additional option:

- **Early 20th Century:** Also uses the 6-to-1 ratio, but knockdowns count as 5 punch points instead of 6. This reflects the mentality of the day when not as much weight was put into knockdowns by referees, seconds, or even the fighters themselves.

For more on this topic, see Gamescape video #13 which can be found [here](#).

Stoppages Late in a Round

So you get to the "bell" segment of a round and the TKO conditions are met. You stop the fight and roll for the time and you see that there was mere seconds remaining or maybe even no time left! What? How could they stop it there? This happens in real boxing too, perhaps more frequently than you think, but it always makes us question the fairness and timing of the decision. The fighter is mad; his seconds are mad; and half the crowd is ready to throw stuff at the referee. If you don't want this kind of controversy in YOUR boxing ring, consider this idea:

Answer the Bell House Rule: When TKO conditions are met in the final segment of a round, instead of an instant stoppage, let the action go to the bell. Then roll a WIL check for the fighter between rounds. This represents the corner, the fighter, and the ref assessing the situation. When the WIL check fails, the fighter retires between rounds and fails to answer the next bell. Otherwise, keep going.

Section 2: FAQ

Are Conditional CTN adjustments cumulative?

No. For Advanced Optional conditional adjustments, only apply the greater effect.

So let's say a fighter was Staggered in Round 3; I would apply that effect for the current round. But later in the round, he's Knocked-down. Now the knockdown adjustments take effect until the end of the 4th round. Now let's say, that the fighter is Staggered again in the 4th. The knockdown modifiers are still in-effect, so no need to stack more modifiers on.

Any advice for rating your own fighters?

It's more art than science. The best place to start: Find another fighter who most closely resembles the one you want to rate and use those ratings as benchmarks. You have to pay a lot of attention to the quality of the fighter's competition to avoid being drawn off course.

The Control ratings are crucial. Most championship level boxers should have CON ratings of at least 5. If they're consistently good for a number of years and tend to win a dominant majority of rounds (75-85%), CON ratings of 6-7 are probably warranted. If the fighter is considered a rare talent and one of the elites of a decade or era, perhaps CON ratings of 8-9. On the next tier, fighters have to display something remarkable in terms of speed, accuracy, timing, ring generalship, and effective aggression (the last two seem rare these days). So for CON ratings of 10 or 11, the fighter has to be debated as one of the best of all-time.

Defense is easier:

- 1 is common
- 2 is good, considered average among most ranked fighters.
- 3 is excellent, a fighter who is known for defensive and counterpunching prowess.
- 4 is the best. It is difficult to land solid leather on a defensive master.

Most of the other ratings require context in terms of what kind of opponents the fighter has been up against. For example, a 90% KO rate doesn't actually mean much if he's only fought regional scrubs. It's also hard to judge DUR for a fighter that rarely goes the distance (and these days, the distance is only 12 rounds).

So, as you see, context is huge and YouTube videos are a great resource. If you think a fighter compares to a great one from the past, go look at footage of the past fighter - preferably a full-length fight (highlights can skew impressions) and then see if your comparison holds water. Hope that helps!

Are you going to do ratings for Current Fighters?

Ratings based on a particular "season" or year of boxing are highly perishable and can be regrettable in hindsight. It is very easy to overrate or underrate a fighter based on a snapshot, only to find out that first impressions were off-the-mark later. Many times the opposition of a particular fighter will go on to help define -in hindsight - how great or not, the subject fighter truly was in his prime. So it can even go beyond the fighter's specific track record. The more context the better.

While the focus of this game remains on the legends of the sport and the fighters who made them, we hope to produce new ratings when fighters have left a concrete track record in a given division. A handful of still active fighters do appear in the LOB collection, but those fighters are clearly post-prime or have moved up from the rated division.

Where are all the Pioneer Era fighters?

Most sports journalists of the day (late 19th-early 20th century) specialized in colorful storytelling, to the point of embellishment (all sports, not just boxing). Their accounts of events and accomplishments could often be over-blown in an effort to sell more copy and there was nothing or little to corroborate such reports. While I do believe that some of the early all-time greats were truly great, I also feel that many of them were overrated.

The basics of the sport we know today were still evolving. Overall, the action featured a lot more wrestling and clinching, and a lot less in the way of serious punches being thrown. Knockdown procedures were different. The surviving scraps footage of many of these fighters is not very compelling. Also, the color barrier was in effect (see McVey, Jeanette, Langford, Wills to name a few), so many great matchups were not being made. Many foreign and black fighters were stuck in a loop fighting each other in half-hearted rematches just to make a modest living. We hope to produce a vintage expansion set at some point, but how and when remains to be determined.

Do you have recommendations for moving fighters up/down in weight class?

The effects of moving up in class vary quite a bit. Some fighters perform better because they aren't drained by the effort to make weight. As a result, they may increase DUR (and thus Endurance) or POW. But more commonly, fighters lose something, such as:

- POW against bigger stronger opponents
- CHN or WIL absorbing punches of more powerful opponents.

- or CON due to reach disadvantage or a more cautious mentality.

We know that's merely food for thought, but hopefully it explains why generic guidelines for such moves cannot really be applied. So we leave this to the realm of house-ruling.

Are fighter ratings reduced to zero or into the negative?

By-the-book, fighter ratings are not reduced below 1 (see page 7, fatigue modifiers). However, it is OK to house rule that DEF can be reduced to 0 in double jeopardy situations. For example, a DEF 1 fighter drops to Level 1 fatigue, but his DEF rating is unaffected. However, he later incurs a cut effect with a -1 DEF modifier. At that point, it is justifiable to reduce his DEF to 0, because now you have two separate factors impairing his ability.

How has the game developed through the years?

2004-2006 - Original free version this included the 2005 Windows game. Many suggestions emerged for additional advanced rules. Several of those were adopted as the Advanced Options that are featured with the core game today.

2007 - Alongside the original, there was also a Basic version that used 1d20 for control, instead of 2d20 and omitted Advanced Options altogether. It was response for some players who didn't like the 2-dice approach.

2011 - This free version used FACs instead of dice - although you could still use dice just the same. The biggest update was the TKO rules, bringing them more in-line with contemporary stoppages.

Current - This is the 2011 version, only dice-driven instead of FACs - although you can still use FACs if you prefer.

As the creator, how do you prefer to play LOB?

I enjoy a mix of basic and advanced options. Here are the things I typically use and omit:

Things I Use:

- Career Stage Adjustments - LOB ratings represent fighters at their best, i.e. during the peak of their careers. However, nobody is at their best every time out. This is why the Prime Career Stage table gives a chance that some of the fighter's ratings could be decreased a notch or two for a given appearance. So when I am using a group of fighters in the context of a campaign, the Career Stage tables are in-play.
- Conditional CTN adjustments (for Stagger and Knockdown effects), because it adds to the ebb-and-flow of the action in a way that feels right and adds to the narrative.
- 6:1 TKO Point ratio (as discussed earlier). This reflects the era of boxing that I enjoy the most.

- Late Round Stoppage (also discussed earlier) - Very rarely an issue, but - for me - it is always a judgement call when it comes up. Essentially, if the fight feels competitive to me, I will let it go and make the WIL check between rounds. But when it feels like the fighter has no chance at a comeback, I will let the stoppage stand per the core rules.

Things I Often Omit:

- Advanced Mode Adjustments - These were officially added a few years after the game came out (2005, I think) and I was already used to the way the original game played - and I still like it that way. I think the modifiers work well for the mass majority of fighters rated, but sometimes, when extreme ratings are involved, such as DEF 1 or DEF 4, the effect can be a bit much, such as a DEF 4 fighter in Elusive Mode.
- Foul Points - I am usually disappointed when a real match ends in a disqualification, so I generally avoid that on my table top.

Over-Rated Fighters (Ali, Robinson)

The base ratings (As-Carded in the computer game) are the fighter's peak abilities throughout his career. For campaign play, LOB is designed to work with modifiers to those base ratings (that's why career stage tables are included in the core game), which represent the ups and downs of life, training camps, so forth. Even fighters in their prime are not at their best in every fight. So this brings that x-factor to the mix. If you use the base ratings in long-running universes without engaging the career aspect, guys like Ali, Sugar Ray Robinson, and a handful of others are going to be at their best every time they fight. They'll be extremely tough to beat. Lastly, It is safe to say, some fighters will eventually get updated ratings too. Ali and Robinson will be considered. The combination of high CON and high DEF can be over-powered. Remember, we didn't have the benefit of a computer game to test fighters when those ratings were produced.

Career Campaign Guide Topics:

You should have a chart for generating opponent's win/loss records.

GWB: This was a case where I had to draw the line somewhere. The supplement was already getting ambitiously large. Generating records is quite a rabbit hole too, because some opponents may be former elites that are now in decline; others would be on a parallel course with your featured fighter, some could be veterans who have stalled in their prime at a given level. Then, that beckons questions about the opponent's career stages and so forth. Real boxing is all over the map too. There have been mediocre fighters with gaudy records (like 38-1-1) and really good fighters with less impressive records (like 41-13-2) who were willing to take on much tougher competition. So without getting "deep into the weeds" with this, it was best to let players decide whether they want that aspect for themselves.

(You need a section on)... how often you should defend and when a title should be vacated.

GWB: Similar to the records answer above, title management is another convoluted aspect of the sport. No systematic approach I would come up with would be satisfactory for the majority of gamers. That's why I had to go with the concept of this being a "guide" or "toolkit" rather than a comprehensive system.

For the training and career development charts, it feels (at least so far) that positive events happen too infrequently. And feels almost impossible to get a special strength. Also, I don't see where you would ever roll on the neutral trait column.

GWB: It is not intended for that kind of balance. Virtually all fighters have stories of battling against the odds and overcoming challenges outside the ring. For instance, a "business as usual" result IS a GOOD result, because nothing is dragging down your fighter at the moment.

ST: 5) If you get a training injury, do you just skip the rest of turn

GWB: Yes. You only roll for development after a fight.

ST: 6) Future expansion idea: Have a referee chart for each of the levels. Raise or lower their threshold for calling TKOs or fouls, slow or fast counts (adds or subtracts from WIL roll) favors champ, etc. lots of fun twists to add for a career and same as a rival boxer, if yo

GWB: It comes down to my personal preference. I get this quite a bit; "Why don't you have referees (or specific judges) in the game?" etc.... Fact is, I'm not interested in that. I want the action to be focused squarely on the fighters, but I don't want/use umpire ratings in baseball either. Ha! To me, these things add complexity without adding much fun. I don't like the idea of reaching the conclusion of fight and getting the feeling that the referee was mostly responsible for the outcome.