

Legends of Boxing Supplemental:

House Rules and FAQ topics

Updated November 2020

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. The current TKO point conversion chart (from 2010 to present) reflects the safety protocols of contemporary boxing. This will result in more TKO stoppages as refs are compelled to save fighters when they appear to be in trouble. However, many of you prefer a more conservative approach to TKOs. Here are a couple ways to tweak the game for the conventions of earlier eras:

- **20th Century:** A flat TKO point ratio of 6 punch points to 1 TKO point. This was the original method used in the pre-2010 version of the game. This ratio is most appropriate to reflect the 1940s to the mid-80s.
- **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.

This idea is related to content in 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.

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.