

WMA STATEMENT ON BOXING

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Boxing is a dangerous sport. Unlike most other sports, its basic intent is to produce bodily harm in the opponent. Boxing can result in death and produces an alarming incidence of chronic brain injury. For this reason, the World Medical Association recommends that boxing be banned.

Until that goal is achieved, the following recommendations should be implemented:

1. National Medical Associations (NMAs) should encourage the establishment of a national registry of boxers for all amateur and professional boxers, including "sparring mates", in their country. The proposed functions of the registry would be to record the results of all licensed bouts, including technical knockouts, knockouts, and other boxing injuries, and to compile injury and win/lose records for individual boxers.
2. NMAs should consider whether to plan and conduct conferences with interested members of the medical profession, medical representatives of various government boxing commissions, and representatives of organized professional and amateur boxing organizations to review criteria for the neurological and physical examination of boxers, to determine other comprehensive medical measures necessary for the prevention of brain injury in the sport, and to develop specific criteria for the discontinu-ance of a bout for medical reasons.
3. All boxing jurisdictions should ensure that the ring physician should be authorized to stop any bout in progress, at any time, to examine a contestant and, when indicated, to terminate a bout that might, in his/her opinion, result in serious injury for either contestant.
4. Boxing jurisdictions should conduct frequent medical training seminars for all ring personnel.
5. All boxing jurisdictions should ensure that no amateur or professional boxing bout is permitted unless:
 - a. the contest is held in an area where adequate neurosurgical facilities are immediately available for skilled emergency treatment of an injured boxer;

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- b. a portable resuscitator with oxygen equipment and appropriate endotracheal tubes are available at ringside; and
 - c. a comprehensive evacuation plan for the removal of any seriously injured boxer to hospital facilities is ready.
6. Boxing jurisdictions should be informed that unsupervised boxing competition between unlicensed boxers is a most dangerous practice that may result in serious in-jury or death to contestants, and should be condemned.
7. All boxing jurisdictions should be urged to mandate the use of safety equipment such as plastic safety mats and padded cornerposts and to encourage continued development of safety equipment.
8. All boxing jurisdictions should be urged to extend all safety measures to sparring partners.
9. All boxing jurisdictions should be urged to upgrade, standardize, and strictly enforce medical evaluations for boxers.

RESCINDED