

Universal Boxing Manager



The Official Manual/Strategy Guide

By Ken Goding

Welcome to the world of boxing! Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to take charge of a stable of boxers and bring them to the top of the boxing world. You make the choices with training, who they fight, and and get your fair share of the credit when they win. When they lose, however, it's a lonely world.

A Quick History

Celso Riva created this fun and addictive game and has spent quite some time refining it for your pleasure. While there is always more that can be done, he has made a fairly complete game that is challenging even as it keeps you glued to the computer. Our current version is 1.3.6, we'll keep you posted as new changes are made. We will refer to the game as UBM hereafter. Find the game at www.universalboxingmanager.com or www.winterwolves.com and get the latest version if you haven't already. The forums at www.winterwoves.net will keep you posted for new additions.

Understanding Boxing

For the uninitiated, boxing is a barbaric combat sport where two men (women do it too, but not nearly as many) stand in a ring hitting each other until one of them can't stand up anymore. To someone in the know, it is a science where fractions of inches and fractions of seconds are the difference between victory and defeat. The basic goal is to hit the other guy while not getting hit yourself. If you can cause him to fall and not get up again, so much the better.

But there is a lot to it. You need to be able to move quickly towards your opponent and back again, get out of the way when he swings, and have enough energy to spend up to 36 minutes doing this without getting too worn out. Because of this boxers are some of the best conditioned athletes in the world.

The World of Scoring

The scoring in boxing is a little confusing until you understand it, but you will need to understand if you want to be successful at this game. A round lasts three minutes, and there are up to twelve rounds in a fight. Each round has its own score according to who did better in it, and the scores are tallied to determine the ultimate winner if a knockout has not occurred. The scoring is done on a ten point system by three judges, so you will see scores like 10-9 and 10-8 (the two most common).

There are several factors that go into who wins a round. One of the biggest is landing punches, particularly if you hurt your opponent. If you land more punches and have hurt him more, you will generally win the round. But if more damage is dealt with fewer punches, the judges have to make their own choices about who really won the round, so over the course of a fight they may have different ideas about who really is winning. You may not always agree with their choices, but you don't get to argue. The winner of the round usually gets 10 points, while the loser gets 9 or less, and occasionally it will be scored even.

If a fighter is knocked down in a round he loses a point, and another if he is knocked down twice. This is where you start to see 10-8 and 10-7 rounds, although if one boxer wins a round very strongly without a knockdown he may get the 10-8 score. In UBM the three knockdown rule is in effect: If a fighter is knocked down three times in a round, the fight is over.

As mentioned, the scores are added up and determine the winner at the end of the fight. Because it is the ten point system, scores seem pretty high. You might see a score of 116-112 and think it was a really close match, but in reality it wasn't. If there were no knockdowns the winning fighter won eight of the twelve rounds while the other only won four. Draws are possible if the fight was very even, but they happen much less.

Knockouts

There is an easy way to keep the fight from going to the judges: knock the other guy! This is abbreviated as KO. There are two kinds of knockouts though, the second is called a Technical Knockout or TKO. If a fighter falls he is given ten seconds to get to his feet or he is knocked out. If he falls and gets up but is in really bad shape, the referee may choose to stop the fight to protect the fighter, and that would be a TKO. A TKO is also called if a fighter is knocked down three times in a round. This happens in UBM, in real life it is determined sometime before the fight if the rule is in effect or not. On fewer occasions the referee may decide that a fighter has taken too much punishment and stop the fight even if there wasn't a knockdown involved.

In UBM a fighter can be “saved by the bell”, meaning if the round ends while he is down, he is not considered KOed but can continue when the next round starts. Like

the three knockdown rule, different fights have different rules about that in real life.

Weight Classes

It's not fair to make a 140 pound man fight a 250 pound man, so there are quite a few weight classes in boxing. You will be able to manage fighters from different weight classes, so you can have multiple world champions at the same time. The higher the weight, the more money they bring in, since the general public tends to like big men duking it out the most. Heavyweight boxing is the top of the heap for money and popularity.

The “Other” People

In the ring it's a one-man show, but there are other people needed for a boxer to be successful. He needs someone to take care of him medically. He needs someone to get him sponsorships. He needs someone to make sure he's getting the proper training. That person is you! You make all the important decisions in his boxing life, and his success or failure lies heavily upon your shoulders. Very few have the talent to get by with sub-par management, so you have to be on top of your game just as much as he does. You can't get in the ring for him, but you can help him to be at his very best when he fights. And even better, you get paid to do it! So let's get going into the actual game.

Starting the Game

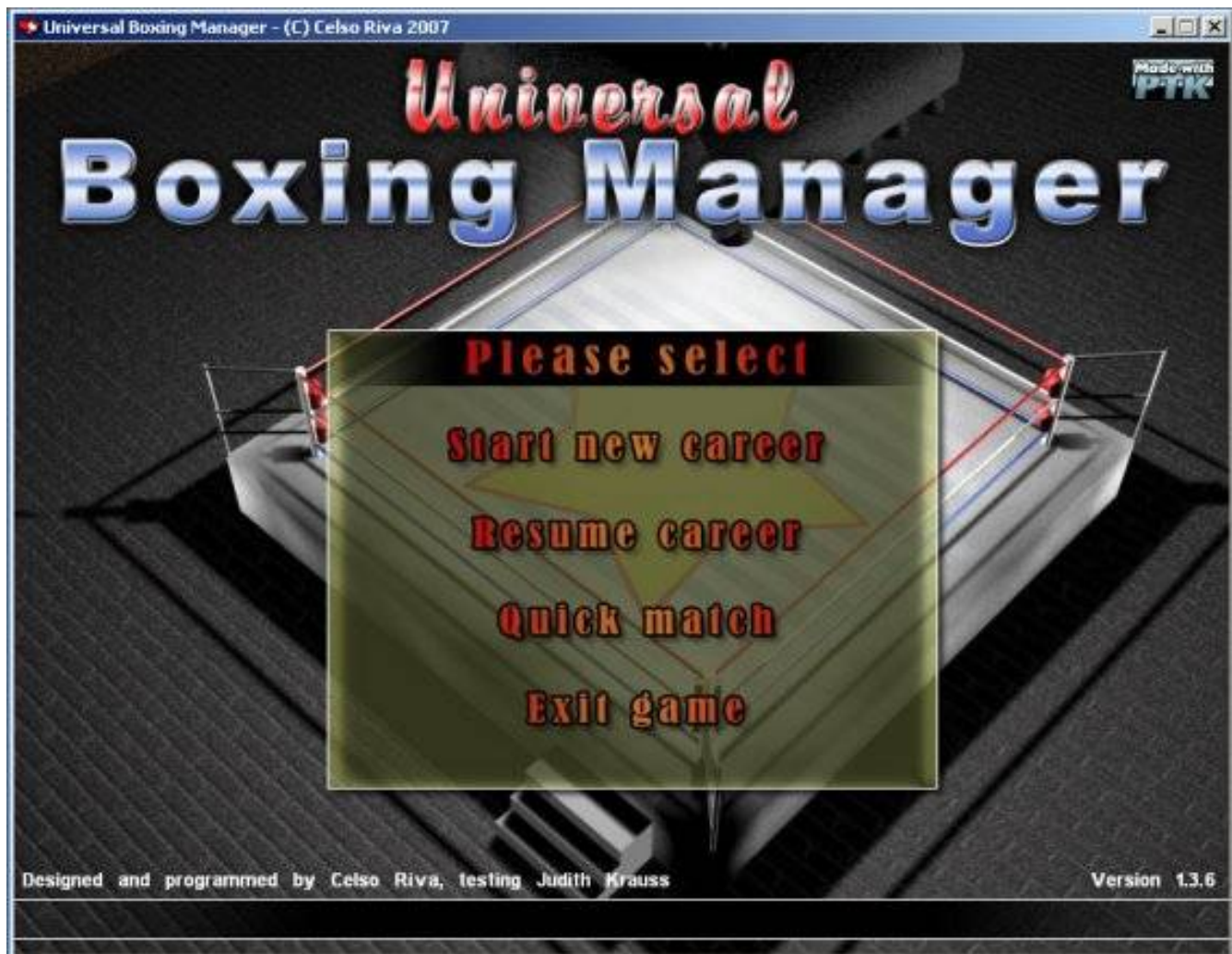
Upon starting the game (after you've registered) you are greeted with this screen:



If you do not choose DirectX, it will default to OpenGL, which in my opinion is much nicer to look at as long as your computer can swing it. Using fullscreen mode or not is your personal choice. If it is not fullscreen you can switch to other programs easily and the game will simply pause, but it is much smaller on the screen. Make your choices and hit Play!

The Main Menu

Here is where your pre-managing life starts:



If you have a game saved you will want to resume your career, otherwise you will need to start a new one. You can do that either with the “Start new career” option or “Quick match”. The difference is that a Quick match randomly creates a profile for you, you don't get to choose anything about yourself. This can make for a fun challenge, as you might not get the skills you prefer. You should only exit if it's after 1AM and you need to be up at 7. Or if you *really* need to do something else.

Starting a New Career

If you click that button you will be taken to a new screen. You only get to do this once a career, so unless you feel like starting over a lot, you'll want to make good choices. Here's a look at what you'll be seeing:



Hint: If you wind up with multiple careers you may want to differ on the names to make it easier to pick out which game to resume.

If you change the age up and down you'll find that your starting boxers and starting cash change accordingly. If you start young you won't have much money as well as fewer boxers, but can have a nice long career. If you start at an older age, you'll have an easier time getting on your feet financially and will have more boxers to manage from the get-go. I prefer to start young and build, but it does take a while to get a comfortable bank account.

Your nationality matters, because different boxers will gravitate to different people. The trump card is the United States, because it is the biggest boxing market in the world and you'll garner the most attention as an American. Well, that's how it should be anyway, I haven't fully tested what happens with different nationalities, but I have noticed an easier time as an American.

Your skills are very, very important to your success or failure as a manager. Each affects different portions of your life, and each has its own use.

Training

The higher your training score, the faster your boxers will gain in skill. It almost always takes many months for a boxer to reach his full potential, so you don't want this to be too low. Your training equipment (in another section) factors in as well, so there is a balance that needs to be kept.

Scouting

In my opinion this is the most important trait of all. It is your ability to look at a boxer and determine how good or bad he is. If you're inaccurate you may wind up signing a contract you'll regret with a boxer that just doesn't have it. You might also arrange a fight that is pretty much hopeless for your fighter and watch him get beat up in the ring. I say that you should assign the most points to this trait, even if you let others slide a little bit.

Charisma

A happy boxer is a better boxer, and your charisma skill will determine how easily you can keep your boxer's morale up. The higher the value, the more motivation you can give them in a fight, and the more likely they will be to respond to you if you talk to them from month to month. I don't give this a lot of weight, but you do need a bit or you'll spend too long getting fighters into top form.

Negotiating

Yes, there is satisfaction in bringing a nobody to the world championship, but everybody knows you're really in it for the money. You don't do these things for free, you've got to be paid for your expertise. The higher the value, the more money you'll make from a fight, which is your main source of income. You cannot leave this one all the way down unless you really want to be poor and unable to sign boxers. When you are looking for a new boxer but don't have much negotiating skill they will demand a much higher percentage of the purses if you can convince them to sign at all. I believe it

also affects the amount of money you make from sponsorships, although the fighters figure in as well. Give it at least a couple of ticks up.

Luck

That chance you took on a boxer worked out because you got lucky. The higher it is, the more likely that you'll come out on top in iffy situations. It is not, however, a substitute for skill. I say skip it and make sure you can do your regular job better, but some may find it to be a bit of help.

Click on “Proceed” and let's start managing some boxers!

The Boxers Screen

You'll be brought to the screen where you can actively manage your boxers, it looks something like this:



The second button from the left up top (it looks like a man) will also bring you to this screen.

It has an alarming amount of stuff when you first look at it, but you'll be comfortably working with everything within a reasonable amount of time. You can see that the "Skills" button is highlighted, and you are looking at how good or bad the selected boxer is.

If you have multiple boxers you can click on their names to the right and switch which one you are actively working on. The right side shows their careers at a glance; their wins, losses and draws as well as knockouts. The ranking shows how far up they are in the world for their weight class. The little yellow dot under the word "Rank" is the symbol for money, and the number by it is how much the boxer is "worth" to you based on his weight, skills, ranking, and perhaps a couple other things. The number changes every year, hopefully going up. Heavier classes get a value boost because the public likes to watch big men fight, but it is not the "be all and end all".

Down below you can see your own career at a glance. Your age, the total wins and losses by your fighters, and the ever important bank balance. If your balance becomes negative you must get it back up quickly. Your creditors will give you six months to operate at a profit again or it's curtains for you. You can't take out loans, so you and your boxers must make money!

Let's now look through the options for the fighters. Above the Skills button is the view choices. The top is the default 3D view, showing what your fighter looks like. Underneath that is his "Fights stats" which will give you a summation of his last nine fights; who he fought, whether he won or lost, and if any knockouts occurred. The "Ranking Graph" shows you how fast he has traveled through the ranks over the past year, like his value this is hopefully going up. These three buttons really just give you information, but they will help you determine if a fighter is going to really make it in the sport or not.

The Skills button allows you to look at your fighters raw skills along with an estimate of his potential for each one. Each skill has its own use to a fighter, as his career progresses and he trains, they gradually head towards 99, although most never make it that far. The bright red indicates where he is now, in the picture you can see that Mark Hoggadon's agility is currently 36. The darker red extending from the brighter shows what his potential is, which would be about 41. If a fighter wins, his potential will slowly increase, but never as fast as you would like it to. You can't get buff overnight, and neither will your fighters.

So let's take a look at what each of the skills means to you:

Strength

This is your boxer's raw power, showing how hard he will be able to hit his opponent. A higher number will help him to get KOs, but he has to be able to hit his opponent for it to happen. A boxer who is good at going the distance in a fight can actually do pretty well without a lot of strength, although he won't be as exciting as the knockout artist. The heavier the boxer, the more likely he will be to naturally have high strength, although there are always exceptions.

Agility

One of the goals in boxing is to not get hit. If he's quick to get out of the way, he won't get hit so much. If the opponent is powerful but he can keep away from him, the opponent will be left frustrated and losing. Lighter boxers tend to possess more speed naturally, although they sacrifice power for it.

Endurance

Endurance is part of a boxer's "chin" factor, dictating how much punishment he can take before getting knocked down in a round. Over the course of the fight it lessens and late knockdowns become more common. Endurance and stamina work together to make a boxer easy to knock out, or very hard.

Charisma

Like you, your boxer has a charisma rating. For him it determines how popular he is with the public. Winning increases it, although he will always have his limits. Some boxers are really nice guys, others are jerks. His rating matters to your wallet, as high charisma boxers will be offered better sponsorship deals.

Quickness

This is his offensive speed, his ability to get in and punch at the right time. If a boxer is slower he'll be swinging at air a lot and his punches will be blocked more, wasting energy. High values will help him to connect more, although other factors will determine how much he hurts his opponent.

Stamina

This is your boxer's long-term ability to fight and stay on his feet. With high stamina he'll recover better between rounds and after being knocked down, helping to

replenish his endurance. A boxer who can't get a lot of knockouts and needs to go all 12 rounds will need plenty of stamina to keep him on his feet.

Technique

Technique is a boxer's hitting ability, how well and flush he hits his opponent. With lower technique the punches will glance off more, causing less damage to be dealt. A boxer with good technique and quickness but low strength will be good at hitting his opponent a lot to score points, but will get less knockouts.

Lefty or Righty?

In UBM I'm pretty sure it doesn't matter if a fighter is left or right-handed, although it matters a lot in real life. Lefties are completely different to fight with because it's the opposite angle to punch. Perhaps it can be programmed in at some point, although it would be tough to code.

What Makes the Perfect Fighter?

Well, the only *perfect* fighter is one with all 99's (I've seen 100 for a single skill only a couple times), but you won't see that too often. A complete fighter will have high skills in certain areas to balance out lower skills in others, so that he can fight and win with his own style. A less powerful boxer can win with good speed and a decent chin, he'll have the tendency to go the distance in fights. A powerful boxer can make up for being slow if he's not completely outclassed in speed, I've seen some very interesting fights between strong boxers and quick boxers.

The one defining factor to me is the chin, the total endurance and stamina. A strong boxer may blow everyone away in the lower ranks, but will discover that not everybody will just fall down in front of him when he moves up. Twelve rounds with an opponent he can't knock out will be tough, he'll need to be just as tough to knock out or he'll start seeing early nights going the wrong way.

Different weight classes have different tendencies. Lighter classes tend to lean towards speed, while higher classes head towards power. Heavyweights in particular tend to be slow with so-so chins, but if you get hit it really hurts! For spectacular knockouts, you can't beat the heavyweights. So if you're signing a boxer in a particular weight class, you want to look for someone who has skills that are abnormal for it. A light boxer with good power as well as decent skills elsewhere will be rarer, but excellent for your stable. A heavyweight with a really good chin will be able to withstand the wars and hopefully deliver his own knockouts. Or a heavyweight with really good speed will flummox the lumbering powerhouses. In the middle ranks it's

more balanced, so finding your next champion becomes a little tougher. I still lean towards a good chin, because being able to take a punch is a good quality to have.

The Training Button

Underneath the Skills button is the Training button, where you decide how hard your boxer will work on specific skills:



You have a certain number of points that you can assign to him, so you have to choose wisely. The approach I take is to see what skill he is lacking in most – often endurance or stamina - and make sure he works on that extra. From there I focus on skills where he has the most potential to improve. There's no point in really working on technique if he's already maxed out in it as Mark Heggadon is. You need to assign at least a couple points to each skill, however, or their skills will decline over time.

Running increases endurance, speed bag works on quickness, rope adds to agility, weights is for strength, sparring improves technique, and the heavy bag provides

stamina. You can only increase charisma through winning.

If you really messed up on your assignments, hit the “Reset” button and start over. I often flip back and forth between Skills and Training to make sure that I've got the numbers set exactly how I want them. Over time you'll need to change what he focuses on as skills improve and potentials are reached, so glance in at least once in a while.

The Biography Button

The Biography button supplies the rest of the information about your fighter; how old he is, his weight class, and personality being the most important.



As fighters age their skills start eroding rather than gaining or maintaining, it happens in the early thirties. Fighters tend to retire between the ages of 35 and 39, and having a high morale will help them fight longer. In the case of a world champion this can become quite the challenge as he won't have the ring skills he once had, you may find that dropping his contract is better than letting him get knocked out of the top 10 for

his weight class. Or you can keep him out of loyalty and choose his fights *very* carefully.

If you've forgotten a fighter's weight, this is the place to get a reminder. You don't want two fighters of the same weight unless they are far apart in ranking, or they'll get into each other's way. The height does not matter at this time, although it is a feature to be worked on, another tough bit of coding for Celso!

You don't find out a boxer's personality until you sign him, and it at least slightly affects his fighting. A reflexive fighter will be slightly better at defensive counter-punching, while an aggressive fighter wants to be moving forward to take out his opponent. There are a few possibilities, the most interesting being a crazy boxer who is liable to do anything, including get less sponsorship money. A boxer with good skills will be able to overcome his personality, however, so don't feel that you have to make him fight the same way as his personality dictates.

The Manage Button

Here you can check up on how your boxer is doing in terms of fitness, morale, and his contract.



A boxer has to have at least two fitness points to be able to fight, and it goes up one point a month. You can work on fitness during a fight, but if he's taken a beating you will have to wait a month or two before scheduling him another fight.

His morale has a sizable effect on how well he fights, you need to get it up, especially when his skills haven't developed yet. As with personality, a fighter with good skills may still do well with a low morale, but you still want it to be high. You can improve morale during a fight, but you get the chance to talk to your boxer every month, so you might as well do it until he's all the way up. The chances of it working depend on your charisma skill, and it won't work every month.

The maximum usable stars for either fitness or morale is 10, although morale can temporarily hit 11 if you talk to him. It'll go back down the next month so it doesn't have much use. Once his morale is at 10 there's no real point in talking to him anymore unless his morale drops.

When a boxer's contract gets down to about 8 months you have the option to renew it at a price that is determined by your negotiating skill. You'll notice that the boxer gets a low percentage for the sake of the gameplay. You get the lion's share of the money since you are the focus of this game. You can also cancel a contract, but you pay a fee for dropping him. The more months that are left on his contract, the more it will cost you, so you want to make sure it's the best choice. If you let his contract run out he will simply leave and you will have no penalty.

Note: The game will warn you if a contract is about to expire, so you don't need to sweat about renewing contracts all the time.

The Finances Screen

If you click the gold coins at the top of the screen you will switch to the financial management. On the left you control the training equipment, doctor, and sponsorships, while on the right you can check your balance sheets.

Your income is mostly made up of fight purses and sponsorships, although popular boxers will make a little bit from their fan clubs. "Various" refers to miscellaneous income, usually through an anonymous donation. Expenditures are mostly with your training equipment, doctors, and the fighter's share of purses, although there is miscellaneous expense as well.

Using the buttons you can see your income and expenditure, and the profit/loss button will let you know if you're financially stable or going down the drain.

Here's what the financial screen looks like:



If you click the left or right arrows by the words "Training Equipment" you will cycle to the Health Care and Advertising and back again. The left and right arrows by the words "Amateur Kit" cycle through the options for whatever section you are in, in this case the training equipment.

Training Equipment

Your training equipment follows a logical order: The more you spend, the better your boxers will train. The Amateur Kit is very cheap but skills will be gained at an agonizing pace. Your other options in order are the Professional Kit, Deluxe Kit, and Champion Kit.

Warning: The prices get exponential as you go higher with training equipment. Overspending on it is the quickest way to find yourself on the street without a job,

so make sure you can afford the equipment that you buy. Your monthly costs will also go up if you sign a new boxer, so make sure you know how much you're spending. The same goes for Health Care.

Health Care

Your boxers would be in serious trouble without a doctor working the corner during a fight. They will keep him patched up and in the best shape possible, but they come at a price. The Standard Doctor is the cheapest, followed by the Specialist, and the Health Clinic makes sure you have the best of the best.

In my opinion spending extra on a doctor is worthless, I find you can manage their health reasonably well without using the higher-priced guys. At the very least stick with the standard doctor until you're on your feet financially.

Advertising

In advertising all you have to do is cycle through your fighter's names and see if anyone has offered them a sponsorship this month. If one is offered take it without trying to get a better offer, even if it's low money and low months. By the time you get another offer you'll have missed out on whatever money was already offered. If a boxer has a advertising deal going already, he won't be able to get another until the current one expires. The more popular the boxer, the more offers he'll get. Add your negotiating skill and hopefully you'll be getting good prices as well. Sponsorship is a beautiful supplement to the purses you'll be getting and can sometimes hold you over when you have fewer fights going from month to month.

Fighters never get an offer until you've had them at least a month, but they will start adding to your expenses immediately.

The Rankings Screen

At the top the fourth button over takes you to the rankings section where you get to arrange your fights. You will need to choose your fights carefully or risk your fighter's career as well as your own. Matchmaking is everything, you need to pick out fights that your boxer has at least a reasonable chance of winning, or the only satisfaction you will get is your paltry paycheck. Winning is everything; money, prestige, and world champions won't happen if you can't put winners in the ring.

It's hard to describe the button to go to the rankings screen so I've put the mouse cursor over it so you can pick it out easily:



You can cycle through the weight classes if you wish by clicking the left and right arrows where you see the word “Strawweight”. It's easier to simply cycle through your boxers underneath “Select one of your boxers”. You set up a potential fight with a boxer by clicking on his name on the right side. Your boxer is highlighted in red, and the one you have clicked on is highlighted in green.

You are allowed to challenge boxers up to five places above yours in ranking. If you are challenging someone ranked lower than you, I've found that you can go to about seven places.

When you click on a potential opponent, his name and stats will come up on the left side underneath “Versus”. Their won/lost record doesn't really matter to you, but their skills do! You will notice that there are four question marks in place of numbers for Goce Mise. The question marks are a reflection of your scouting ability. Less scouting ability means more question marks and potentially dangerous opponents for your boxers.

The potential fight with Goce Mise is a dangerous one because of how little I know about him. He might have low values and be a pushover, but he might be too much for my boxer. Check the boxers around to see if you have a fight that your boxer has a reasonable chance of winning.

If you can't find a good fight and can afford to skip a month, it might be a good idea. In a month's time your fighter will gain a little skill and the fighters around him might change. Your scouting can also change a bit from month to month, so next month you might be able to see that a potential opponent really is a smart move for you as one of the question marks becomes a real number. Sometimes, though, you have no choice but to get a fight because you need to pay the bills.

You don't find out how much money a fight will make you until you have given it the go-ahead, nor will you know how many rounds it will last. The lower the ranking, the less money you will receive, and usually it is for fewer rounds. You will actually care about the number of rounds, because some boxers do better in long fights and some do better in shorter. Once a fight is under contract you will pay a fee to back out by clicking "Cancel", so you don't want to mess up unless you're rolling in the dough. You can schedule fights for several months in advance, although I much prefer doing it this month to keep things moving.

As long as you keep them healthy, your fighters can fight every month until they reach the top 10 in ranking. Reality says this won't happen, eventually they'll wear down and need a rest. The top fighters can only fight about 3 times a year, but by then you'll be pulling in very nice purses to make up for it.

You want to find fights where your fighter's strengths will exploit the opponent's weaknesses. Many times a weak chin is the best target, but sometimes a slow boxer is a good one if yours is quick. It takes some time to learn the perfect combinations. If your boxer is in all ways better than an opponent, grab him and you'll probably get an easy victory.

Over to the bottom right you can cycle through the pages of boxers in the current weight class, there are 5 pages for each class going up to the champion. If you look through the top 10 fighters you can get an idea of what it will take for your boxer to become one. Because of the tendencies according to weight, you may discover that a very light boxer with only 60 for power can dominate the division, whereas a heavyweight without power of at least 85 will fall short. It takes a while to learn the numbers, and each game you start will have slight variations in the top guys. You'll need this kind of information when you're scouting out new fighters, but that's more advanced.

The “Next Month” Screen

If you click on the calendar button at the top left, you will get to see some boxing action or move to the next month. I've scheduled fights for both of my boxers as you can see on the right:



The left side gives you some details about yourself and how well you're doing as a manager. Your skills are at the top. Supposedly they can have minor changes throughout your career, but I'm not convinced. Underneath you can see what kind of fights you're having, wins by KO, TKO, judges decisions, and things like that. You'll eventually be getting title shots and it keeps track of how many championships your boxers win and defend.

The “Go” button will take you to the next month of your career, but you cannot do it unless all scheduled fights have been accomplished. You go to the fights on the right side, and you may do them in any order that you wish. You don't have to do them all at once, you can have a fight and switch back to other things, then come back and finish

your fights, because it's all in the same month.

On the left side of a scheduled fight you see the icon that looks like an eye. If you choose that, you will play the match interactively, you get to make decisions between rounds about what your fighter does, as well as see how he's doing as the match progresses. If you choose the icon with the computer monitor on it, you will instantly simulate the match and you simply get the results.

Which is better? Most of the time interactive mode is the right one, although it makes the game last a lot longer (be prepared for many hours to accomplish even one career). In interactive mode you can react to your fighter and help change the outcome of the fight. If he needs to back off and fight defensively, you can arrange for it to hopefully keep him from getting KOed. If you just get the instant result, that decision might have been different and all you get is the loss. You can improve your fighter's morale in interactive mode, while with a result it will always remain the same.

So in my book it is only good to start simulating matches at a certain point. When your boxer is already happily motivated and he has a very good chance of beating his opponent, that's when you want to be simulating matches. Otherwise you'll be much safer making every little decision yourself.

Let's Get it On!

I have chosen the interactive mode for Heggadon's 10 rounder, so we are brought to the round screen:



You get a lot of information about how your fighter is doing and how he is going to fight, so let's go over them. On the left you see your fighter's health in individual areas, the eyes, nose, mouth, and torso. As he gets hit in his various parts, they will start to go down, the bar underneath will start erasing towards the more ominous colors and the pictures will change to show the damage. As they get close to red your fighter becomes likely to suffer a TKO on account of the referee, because he won't want your fighter to be irreparably damaged. So if they are getting dangerous, you'll want to step back and have some defensive rounds so he can recuperate.

To the right you see the Boxer Condition, which is a summation of his fitness and morale. He will be able to fight regardless of where they are, but higher is of course better. Fitness can actually be raised during a fight if your doctor works on him and he doesn't get too much. It'll go lower if he gets hit a lot and your doctor can't keep up. Morale will go up if you work on motivating your boxer, and at this time doesn't come down unless he has a tragedy in his life.

Below that you have your options for what you do in between rounds, where your

boxer will aim to hit his opponent, his aggressiveness, and whether you will focus on motivation or healing your fighter.

The top is his strategy – will he go to the body, head, or try to hit anywhere? You will generally change strategies throughout the fight, depending on how much you hurt your opponent and how many rounds there are. The first round is usually a feeling-out type of round, since you haven't fully sized up your opponent. I recommend starting with either body punching or mixed. The old formula for boxing is that if you go to the body, the head will eventually come to you. Headhunting is good in the late rounds, especially if you can damage him and get the ref to stop the fight. However, individual fights may need slightly different strategies. Mixed is the safest way to go, I often spend most of a fight on mixed and then switch to headhunting. Another strategy is four or five rounds of body, a couple rounds of mixed, then finish with the head.

Fighting style is next. You can have him fight in an offensive manner, defensive, or with movement. Fighting aggressively will cause him to hit his opponent more, but will also mean that he gets hit more, plus it uses the most energy. Unless your boxer has a world-class chin and plenty of energy, he probably can't be aggressive for an entire fight.

Defensive fighting has him pick his spots to punch, dealing less damage but also taking less. Defensive fighting is good when you need a round or two to recover energy and patch up the wounds. If you're fighting someone who really can't mount an offense, you can sometimes cruise through a fight staying defensive, working on health and motivation. I usually start a fight with a defensive round unless I could tell that my fighter is going to outclass his opponent. You don't want him coming in from the first round nearly finished off, it might take several rounds to recover, costing you the fight. If you're going to lose, you might as well lose with the least amount of damage dealt to your boxer. Besides, who knows if your opponent gets sloppy, you might catch a break.

Fighting with movement would be called “running” in real life, but there are times when it's the only way to avoid being knocked out. Your boxer will try to avoid his opponent and will only throw a few punches in the round. Unless he scores a flash knockdown he is likely to lose the round, but it might get him enough of a rest to continue fighting. If the opponent is a lot faster than your boxer, this tactic might not work at all,

The bottom button is for motivating or healing your boxer. If you choose incite, his morale will rise a bit but the doctor will do nothing for him. If he has a rough round it'll cost him dearly in his health, but he'll be fighting a little bit better. If he doesn't get hit a lot, his health will stay about the same and you'll have won the gamble. If you choose heal, he'll get the best medical coverage, but his motivation will remain as is.

Normal will accomplish about nothing in my estimation, attempting to do a bit of healing and a little motivating. Don't bother with it.

Your choice here will have tremendous effect on your boxer. You need to get his motivation all the way up, but not at cost to his health. If you have a relatively easy fight for your boxer, a combination of defensive fighting and motivation will help him to gain his morale while still winning. If he's in tougher fights you can alternate healing for two rounds and inciting for one round so that he will slowly gain in motivation. It will probably take a few fights to get him to the top of his morale, while it takes only a couple rounds to wreak his health. Once his morale is at its best, leave it on heal permanently unless something happens to break his morale.

The middle of the screen is where you can see estimates of the scores, what round is going to be next, and your choices for watching the fight. The ring girl never changes or gets prettier, sorry.

Note: There will be some fights when your fighter just doesn't have it. For all the skills and motivation, he just won't be able to bring it like other times. It's part of life, and you have to hope he can overcome his lousy night.

Watching the fight in normal mode shows you the ring and lets you watch the fighters move around and swing, which is more entertaining. Watching the fight as text gives you a commentary on their punches and any psychological advantages one fighter may have. Here is a view of normal mode:



When you're watching the fight the only thing you can do is speed up or slow down the simulation, your fighter is on his own. On the left you get to watch the guys duke it out, you see their swings, connects, misses, and where they are in the ring. Lighter guys will be smaller, heavier guys will be bigger. When someone is hit, the number of damage floats up from his body of the same color as he is. You can see here that my blue fighter took 5 damage from the last punch.

Below that is your “expert” commentator who says useless things, much the way people often think of real-life boxing commentators.

The right side gives you all the information about what's happening in the ring, and finally you get to see just how good or bad your opponent really is. Your fighter is always blue and on the right, your opponent is always red and on the left.

At the top you see the punch tallies and knockdowns in the round. The top figure with a white flash is the number of swings and misses the fighter has thrown. Below it with the yellow flash is the number of connects. The bottom with a green arrow is the

number of times he has been knocked down in the round. Expect to see a lot more misses than hits, for even the best of the pros only get about a 50% connect rate.

Below that is the bell with a red bar going across. This shows you how much time is left in the round, remember it goes for three minutes.

Below this is the summation of skills for each fighter, you can see that they are actually fairly evenly matched. The first set is indicated by lightning and is the boxer's punching ability; the average of his strength and technique. The heart shows his chin and is his overall strength and endurance. The shoe is his speed, the quickness and agility.

As punches are thrown and damage is dealt, all of these head down over the course of the fight. There is some rejuvenation after a knockdown and between rounds, but they will have an ultimate shift towards zero. The chin rating is the toughest to read, because a fighter can be knocked down with seemingly plenty of energy left. If he's hit just right a flash knockdown can occur, and he may run out of energy for the round while still having long-term stamina. When it gets low, however, expect an imminent knockout. Occasionally a big punch will just drain a fighter like happens in real life, adding excitement to the match.

Once you know how your fighters match up, you can make better decisions about what to do. The question marks from when you were arranging the fight have been replaced with real knowledge of your opponent's skills.

Down at the bottom you have the arrows to choose how fast the round moves, it simply speeds the whole thing up. I find the fastest setting to be the best, as it can really drag at slower speeds.

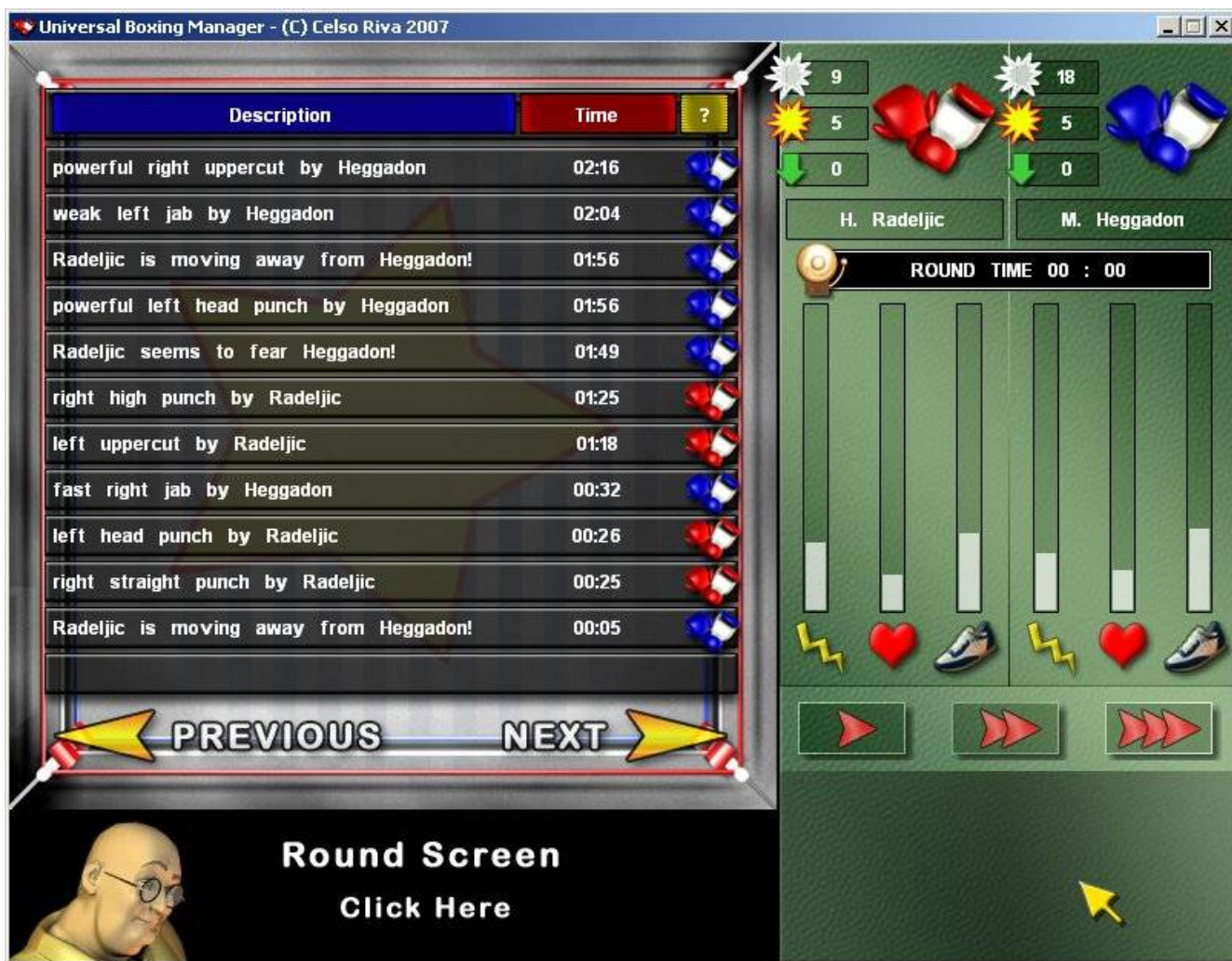
I have finished the round, let's see what we have now:



You can see that I took the calculated risk in inciting my boxer for the first round, and because not a lot of punches were thrown I got away with it. The fitness has gone down a bit, but the morale has gone up a little so I will now need to switch to healing to avoid him getting hurt. His eyes and nose took just a bit of damage but nothing major.

Now you can see the scoring for the round and the entire fight. Since it was an even round, we got 10-10. Consider this to be an estimate and not set in stone. Close fights will be draws or split-decision victories or losses. The best way to make sure you win is to see at least a four point difference by the last round, or of course, score a knockout. The judges will disagree with you from time to time about how a round went, but their view is what counts. Overall they tend to get the scoring right as the fight progresses.

Now let us view a round in text only:



You now get to read everything that happens, including the psychological factors. About halfway down you can see that the opponent seems to fear my boxer, which is a good sign. You have to click after the round is done in this mode, giving you extra time to assess your situation. Both guys are a bit worn down, but mine is holding up a little better. Both landed 5 punches, but my fighter threw more often. He should probably get the round because of his aggression. Let's see if I'm right:



Yes I am right, he took the round. However as I sat here writing I forgot to switch to heal and have paid the price in fitness. I'll play out the fight for a bit to see what I can show you.

In the fifth round my fighter scored a knockdown, although the opponent was not badly hurt and got up again:



Now comes a fun decision. If I switch to aggressive fighting, I may very well get the knockout next round. But because my fighter is also hurting, he could get knocked out himself for the effort. Because my fighter is in control of the fight in terms of scoring, I will stay conservative.

My fighter faded in the second half though, and entered the last round needing a big finish to win. I switched to aggressive fighting and paid the price, he got knocked out after a beautiful flurry from his opponent. Had I stayed conservative I probably would have at least pulled a draw.

When the fight is over you get returned to the “Next month” screen where you can do the other fights, move up a month, or switch to other screens.

When you switch months you generally get a tip, a warning of an expiring contract, or a random event. The events don't happen very often, you have two good ones and two bad ones. Sometimes you get an anonymous donation, and occasionally a boxer increases his potential skills a bit. Other times a boxer has an accident and his

health bottoms out, forcing you to wait a few months before he can fight again. Or his girlfriend may break up with him and his morale drops to zilch, so you have to work him back up.

Careers last a long time, I believe until you are 55.

The “Search Boxer” Screen

The button that looks like a magnifying glass is where you hunt for new boxers in your stable. You can have up to six at a time, and you'll need new ones here and there. Your reputation, however, will dictate who you can and cannot sign. Nobody wants to fight for a manager they've never heard of, you're going to need some wins under your belt before the better boxers will look your way.



The first time you go in you see a list of every boxer out there, 125 pages worth.

This needs to be refined quite a bit so you can find a boxer who will fit into your plan. There are two kinds of searches you can do; either by skill or statistics. I usually go for statistics, because you can then switch and see what their statistics are without searching again.

By skill is easy. Set a minimum for each category and off you go. It will not reflect potential, but where they are today. Checking off the “Free boxers only” will limit to boxers who are free agents, they are shown in blue on the right. Boxers with a manager already are in green. You can steal boxers, but you have to offer a pretty good contract to make it worth their while. The “Interested boxers” will limit to guys who think you might be a good manager for them, which can include ones with a manager already. Of course without a reputation no one is interested, and it takes winning to get the reputation you need. Later on as you get a good reputation, it will be easier to land good boxers.

Searching by statistics changes the scope a little bit. Here you can look in a certain weight class and specify the ages you're looking for. You can also choose how many fights he has won or lost with KOs. So if you're looking for a boxer of a certain age, you use the statistic search. By clicking back over to the skill search their skills will be shown without needing another search, so you can find out their age, record, and raw skills with ease.

Clicking on a boxer will show approximations of his skills and potential on the left side, like this:

Universal Boxing Manager - (C) Celso Riva 2007

Ken Goding (US) MAY 2007

Your reputation as a manager is **Unknown**

Alvarado Alvaro, age 18, Lightweight

Use the buttons below to offer a new contract

Duration: 0 Year(s) Shares on Fights: 0 %

Free boxers only Interested boxers

Search Boxer by Skill

STRENGTH	- 0 +	QUICKNESS	- 0 +
AGILITY	- 0 +	STAMINA	- 0 +
ENDURANCE	- 0 +	TECHNIQUE	- 0 +
CHARISMA	- 0 +	SEARCH	RESET

Name	STR	QUI	AGI	STA	END	TEC	CHA
Ackworth S.	44	44	18	34	12	?	19
Acton K.	?	?	52	35	39	87	69
Adorno F.	25	?	65	36	43	?	?
Aguilar G.	14	36	29	18	7	33	13
Aguilar O.	49	53	95	43	39	?	96
Alcaraz G.	54	49	?	?	48	35	32
Allain M.	11	40	16	20	21	21	16
Alvarado A.	42	46	35	62	31	38	37
Alvarado D.	13	?	38	15	15	24	46
Amaya R.	?	45	31	69	60	36	61
Andric D.	55	85	74	24	77	98	48
Andric D.	32	?	19	13	?	41	33
Angrove P.	?	25	42	13	?	17	32
Arce F.	40	73	?	54	61	79	92
Archuleta P.	50	28	?	41	32	?	51
Armenta D.	?	20	?	?	?	48	14
Aspell C.	?	36	41	31	58	?	47
Aspinall J.	19	?	38	?	11	82	37
Audouard B.	85	?	?	75	89	43	95
Auger M.	?	50	42	?	44	?	29

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Your Age: 25 Career Statistics: Wins (0) Draws (0) Losses (1) Bank Balance: 235

The red bars show where he's at now in skill, and the blue bars where you think his potential is. The less scouting skill you have, the more optimistic you'll be about his potential, and often you'll find he doesn't have nearly the ceiling you thought he did. The bars are kind of relative, if you compare numbers on the right with the bars, you'll notice that high numbers don't always mean high bars, so you have to check things carefully.

Once you pick out a boxer you like, you have to convince him that it's worth his while to sign with you. You do so by offering a duration in years, as well as his percentage of fight purses. Longer contracts are more likely to be accepted as they provide security, and of course more money is welcomed. You can offer up to 5 years and 50% of the shares, but usually shares are below 20% if you have at least some negotiating skill. In this case I might as well not even bother trying to sign the boxer. He's a decent fighter, and I have no reputation.

It's pretty rare that you'll pull a young boxer with no fights under his belt, but it

can happen. Most of the time they have at least a few fights to their name, and the older they are the more they're likely to have.

You'll pretty much be stuck with your starting boxers for a while. If you can sign someone, it won't be a fighter with a high ceiling, but he'll at least be able to go out and fight hopefully. The toughest part of the game is getting a decent record without a lot of money. Once you have the record and your reputation rises, you'll be able to get good boxers and then it's a matter of finding potential world champions.

Types of Boxers

When you're choosing a new boxer to sign, there are three basic types that you will find. You'll find guys that just plain don't have it, so they're no-hoper's. You sign them, they'll win a few fights, but they just don't have the talent to be good and will lose plenty too .

Workhorses are much better for you when you can sign one. They are usually a bit older but have already developed some skills, at least in the 30's to 40's. When you sign a free-agent boxer, he will always start in the 90's for rank. If his skills are as good as someone ranked in the 50's, for instance, he'll be able to win fights and move up in rank, giving you higher purses. A couple workhorses will give you steady cash flow while you develop world champions.

And of course you have guys who are potential champions, diamonds in the rough who need your expert guidance. Usually you're looking at 16-18 year olds who don't have a lot of skills yet, but have a lot of potential. You groom them carefully and by their late 20's they are at the top of the heap.

The Load and Save Screen

You can't complete a nice career in a night, so you're going to need to be saving your game. The last button up top is the door, where you can load and save at will. Choose a slot and save so you can come back next time where you left off.

As I mentioned back at the beginning, you should use different names for careers so you don't mix them up, or put them in slots far apart so you keep them separated. That's what I've done here:



Your save files are stored in the Application Data on a Windows machine – in XP you'll find it in [c:\documents](#) and settings\<(Your User Name)\application data\Universal boxing manager. The files are named Slot0 through Slot9. It's easy to grab a saved game and transport to another computer, copying and pasting will do you fine. On a Mac I am not aware of the procedure at this time, as I do not own a Mac.

While all the essential stuff is saved, when you open a game up again you'll find that your options are reset on fight night. Not a big thing, but you'll want to check your strategies and styles before starting the first round.

You can quit to the main menu from the Load and Save menu, or if you aren't playing full screen mode you can X out at anytime, including in the middle of a fight if the boss is coming. You'll lose whatever you had done since the last save, but at least you can exit the game easily.

Advanced Strategies (and Underhanded Tricks)

Once you're used to the game you'll want to really get to winning, so here are some of the things I have learned over hundreds of hours of playing. You might find some to be fair, others a little underhanded, so use whatever ones you feel like. Cheating happens in real life, so too are exploits part of the game. Okay, I'm done justifying myself, let's get some tips!

Stealing a boxer from a rival manager can be very lucrative and gain you an easy champion. When you're comfortable in the rankings screen, you can spend some time finding out which boxers are really good but ranked lower than they deserve. Some of them haven't fought their way to the top, so you might find an excellent boxer ranked pretty low and save yourself a lot of training time. Once you pick a couple good targets, you can search for them according to the skills that you had observed. It usually takes a long contract and a higher percentage than with a free agent, but if you immediately start earning good money for fights, it's well worth it.

There is satisfaction with grooming a young boxer to be a world champion, however. When you have a good reputation and are financially stable, it is wonderful to grab a 16-18 year old and bring him to the top for a reign of terror. When you find a boxer with very good potential, you want to sign him but not let him fight until he gets close to reaching his raw potential. When he reaches his peak, that's when you start fighting. Fight every single boxer you can, just go one at a time up the ladder, if he jumps two slots fight the guy you missed. Over time his potential will increase little by little, and after about three years of fighting he'll be even better than when he started.

This is also fun, because with very high skills he will just mow down his opponents who can't even hope to compete with him. By the time he reaches the upper echelons, he'll have developed enough skills to compete on an even basis.

In real life this wouldn't work because he wouldn't be able to feed his family for several years, so it does have a bit of a moral problem. Guys like this usually become champions in their late 20's and can hang on well into their 30's.

As I mentioned earlier, workhorses (or journeymen) will be a big help for you. Older guys who won't be top ten fighters, but can win fights and earn you decent money are very, very valuable. They won't be as hard to sign as the top fighters, and while you're training a potential champion these guys are paying for everything, fighting nearly every month.

When you start a new career your beginning boxers can make or break you financially. Especially if you start young, you need guys who are going to win a few

fights, earning the cash you need and the good reputation that you are striving for. Since they are given out at random, you might be inclined to ditch a career and immediately start over if you get hopeless boxers to start with. If you pull a workhorse to start, you're golden because they'll start raking it in for you within a few months.

Real life doesn't have a save button, but you do. You can save the game before a huge decision – such as which young boxer to sign with a big contract – and just reload it if you find that he really doesn't have all that much potential. Now *that* is underhanded, but very effective.

The length of fights can be very important, even to the point where you're willing to cancel a fight and reschedule with the same guy to get the length you need. I find a lot of knockout artists need extra rounds when they're chasing a faster boxer, so 10-12 rounds can mean a knockout win while 8 rounds can mean a decision loss. Seriously.

Lower ranked boxers pull 8-10 round fights more often, higher ranked fighters get 12 rounders more often. Top 10 fighters always go the full 12 rounds.

There is one big cheat to the game, but if you use it wrong you'll take all the fun out of it. Press the space bar during a round to knock down your opponent without hitting him. Easy way to win rounds or just TKO him out of there.

A strong boxer always has a “puncher's chance” if he's losing to a speedster. If he has enough energy, let him fight aggressively and hope for a lucky shot. They don't happen all the time, of course, but every now and then someone will land a huge punch that just knocks his opponent silly even if he had great energy. Just hope it doesn't happen to your guy, because they usually don't recover and the ref stops it.

I mentioned earlier that you don't want multiple boxers in the same weight class if they are close in ranking. Your boxers can't fight each other, so it loses potential opponents if they are within 5 spots of each other. If you have an aging veteran it's okay to sign a young talent, however.

Check all your advertising every month. The more boxers you have, the easier it is to forget how many months they have left. It only takes a few seconds, you might miss a money opportunity otherwise.

Boxers love 5 year contracts, even taking 1% sometimes to have the security in length. If you're certain you want a boxer, go immediately to 5 years and work the percentage up from 1%, it'll give you the best possible rate.

You can “duck” fighters that might derail your boxer's career. Choosing the right

fights is very important, your boxer can get to the top by “missing” fights along the way with boxers who have a lot of skill but haven't moved up in rank yet. Fortunately you don't have the media hollering about how your fighter is ducking a certain opponent. I like to fight everybody if possible to prove that he can beat the best, but sometimes it's just not worth the risk.

Opponents with weak chins are your best friend, never forget that. Even if he totally outclasses your fighter in other categories, you can usually hang in there long enough to get the knockout if you manage the fight carefully.

Happy boxing!