A week after Thomas Mashaba makes the first defense of his IBO featherweight world title against former WBA kingpin Yober Ortega in Nelspruit, there is a bill featuring 6 International titles in Johannesburg. South African boxers have taken ownership of a large portion of WBC International crowns, so much so that one could perhaps call it the new national title.

While March 31 will undoubtedly deliver a feast of fistic action and will be a good showcase of some of the country's best boxers, the opposition being flown in are not all of the highest caliber. Perhaps one must relent and say, well, that's the global trend. That's why when two top boxers are matched, we call it a superfight. This super bill which is being promoted by Branco Milenkovic and Baby Jake Matlala of Branco Sports Productions is being held at Wembley Stadium.

The Wembley has a proud boxing history and was once one of the busiest and most popular venues for the sport. Legends like Willie Toweel, Mike Holt and later Sugarboy Malinga packed it out with fans. Situated in the South of Johannesburg, this fight card could well be the thing to bring the crowds back to its hallowed halls.

Headlining the tournament is former WBO and WBU light flyweight and IBO flyweight world champion Masibulele "Hawk" Makepula. He puts his WBC International super flyweight crown on the line against French national flyweight champion Chrostophe Rodrigues. Makepula, IBF # 3, WBC # 4, WBO # 7,WBA # 11,is treading water waiting for a crack at a credible crown. More to lose than to gain in this outing, Makepula, 27 -3 (18), is in sterling shape and ready to take on the best in the division. A slip against Rodrigues, 13-12 -2 (2), would be an incredible disaster. There's not much to gain out of beating somebody whose been beaten 12 times already so a quick finish would be the best option for Makepula on this one. At least it would look good for the replays and people forget that the guy shouldn't have been in the ring with him. Just look at all those sensational knockouts Mike Tyson used to land on veritable nobodies to build his brand as the baddest man on the planet.

The main supporting bout sees Gabula Vabaza defend his WBA Inter continental super bantamweight title against Chilean Super bantamweight champion Moises Gutierrez. Vabaza has tremendous skill and when motivated can stand his own against any opposition. Gutierrez, 14-2 (6) should give the South African southpaw a good contest. While Vabaza, 22 -0-1 (15) does possess a good punch, he is more of a boxer than a fighter reminiscent of a young Tommy Hearns. Vabaza, WBA # 2, WBC # 5, IBF, 5 & WBO # 11, is also marking time for a title opportunity. He is a former WBU super flyweight world champion, but has the ability to go up against the best in the world and if he can reclaim the devastating confidence he had at the start of his career there's no reason why he can't do that and win.

The next bout I'm at a loss for words on why this match was made. The charismatic and entertaining Vusi Malinga who holds the WBC International bantamweight title faces Russian fighter Andrey Kostin. Kostin fought Makepula last year in a non-title fight and delivered one of

the most boring and unwatchable fights I have ever seen. Malinga, 14-2 (8), is an entertaining boxer and one can only hope this fight doesn't last long. Kostin, 17-5 (6), is entitled to make a living, but that doesn't mean I have to watch. Boxing is entertainment and if a boxer is not entertaining he needs to do something about it. Who knows? Maybe Kostin will surprise us.

The next bout on the bill is one which could well steal the show. WBC International flyweight champion Mhikiza Myekeni, WBC # 4, IBF # 7, WBO # 8 and WBA # 13, makes the second defence of his title against Filipino Benedict Suico. Suico, 12-1 (9), is a southpaw who likes to mix it. Myekeni, 20 -2 (8), a former IBO light-flyweight world champion, is also not afraid of being pulled into a battle and has won his last two fights by knockout. I've got a good feeling about this one.

Following the hype around Olympians, there has been high expectations placed on Jeffrey Mathebula, 16-1-2 (8), since he turned pro. He'll be defending his WBC international featherweight title against Filipino Mercito Gesta, 10-0-1 (2). Gesta replaces fellow countryman Jun Paderna, who suffered an injury during training. I've always found him a little awkward, but he's a developing boxer and if kept active could well still deliver on his initial promise.

Tshepo Lefele, WBO # 3, IBF # 10 and WBC # 12, making the first defense of his WBC international minimum weight title, will have a lot to prove when he steps into the ring against Filipino Gabriel Pumar, 8-0-1 (5). Judges were overgenerous when the gave Lefele, 13-0 (7), the title winning decision over Elmer Gejon last year and thus the South African will have to prove that he is a worthy champion against Pumar. Lefele does have good skill, but must win decisively if he is to take vanquish the memory of the Gejon encounter. Certainly a rematch would be welcomed if Lefele retains his crown.

With both this tournament and the Mashaba – Ortega fight the week before, being screened live on National television, the Month of March should go down as a winner for South African boxing. If the fights are good and competitive, it matters little whether all the locals win or not. It's about a good evening's entertainment and if the fights deliver the fireworks, the fans will be there; it is, after all, about the boxing.

In other local news former IBO middleweight world champion and current WBA intercontinental super middleweight champion Mpush Makambi has challenged newly crowned national light heavyweight champion Soon Botes to face him in the ring. Whether he expects Botes to come down to super middle or whether he's prepared to move up another division is not yet clear.

Former 3-time world champion Dingaan Thobela who has been co-promoting boxing in Namibia with Nestor Tobias, has also been exploring the option of facing Makambi in a bout in that country. "Boxing is growing in Namibia," says Thobela. "We've been working at it for five years now and a big local event there would certainly speed things up."