The selfishness of the men who have bled boxing dry seemingly is the one thing about the sport that is still boundless.

Certainly talent is not anymore, at least not in the United States. Neither is money or people still willing to spend it on the sport. Lastly, television dates are not only no longer boundless, they are in ever shorter supply, especially if HBO's suits go through with a threat to cut 20% from the sports department's budget in 2010.

Yet the people running boxing into the ground – and frankly it's nearly everyone involved on the management side of the sport – never seem capable of stopping themselves when their own self-interest comes into play. The latest examples of this are provided by West Coast promoter Dan Goossen and German promoter Wilfried Sauerland and his hatchet man, Chris Meyer, thus proving at least that greed is universal.

The former has raised the possibility that if Jermain Taylor is unable or unwilling to continue in SHOWTIME's Super 6 super middleweight tournament after being savagely knocked out for the second straight fight and third in his last four losses last Saturday night by Arthur Abraham, his fighter, Edison Miranda, should get a shot at the designated first alternate, Allan Green, before Green is admitted because several years ago Miranda gave Green his only loss.

To this there is one obvious answer: NO!

What is the point of having designated a first alternate if when it comes time to use him somebody else interjects themselves into a debate when there should be no debate? That's the essence of the business of boxing. Muddy the waters, raise enough red herrings to feel like you're Norwegian. Do whatever you can to get your fingers into the till, even though it is just this kind of confusion that has so marginalized the sport with the public in the first place.

Although world champion Lucian Bute deserves to be in the tournament more than half the guys in it (including Taylor) he's not. So be it. Green deserves to be in it less than Bute but more than Taylor or Miranda, who has been exposed several times as a wild-swinging amateur with power but no defense and a glass head.

Did he beat Green? Yes. Has he lost enough times since while Green has not to nullify any claim to tournament entry? Yes.

Most significantly, it's SHOWTIME's tournament. Vice-president Ken Hershman came up with the idea and the format and named Green first alternate. The result has been wide spread acceptance of the idea in the public's mind and a clear likelihood that when the winner emerges he will be accepted universally as the world champion regardless of what any phony alphabet group or bombastic promoter has to say.

What Goossen is trying to do is what boxing promoters always try to do. Bend the situation to their favor by making an argument when there is no case. Because A happened to B doesn't mean E should happen to B when you conveniently leave out what C and D did to A in the interim. Miranda had many chances to further his career while Green was doing the same. He failed miserably at it. It happens. That doesn't mean he didn't defeat Green when they met. It only means what he did after that cost him. For SHOWTIME to be intimidated or bamboozled into anything but following its original plan would be folly. It would also be typical boxing.

Same is true for the foolish situation heavyweight contender Alexander Povetkin is now being led into by Sauerland. Povetkin is a kid with 17 professional fights. Somehow his success in those fights led him to becoming the IBF's No. 1 contender, which is ludicrous on the face of it but a story for another day.

What it means is Povetkin is the mandatory challenger for Wladimir Klitschko. What it doesn't mean is that he yet knows how to fight.

Klitschko has a WBO mandatory due as well and the two organizations agreed the WBO's would come first, followed immediately by the IBF's sometime next summer or fall. That would leave Povetkin (who has been training with Teddy Atlas in New Jersey for about two months) time for several tune up fights to better prepare himself to win. Klitschko has said he has no problem with that, yet Sauerland, Meyer and allegedly Don Majeski, who is the kind of guy who has helped diminish boxing for decades, combined to convince the IBF that Povetkin had been "harmed'' by having to wait for Klitschko and thus got them to order an interim title fight against Eddie Chambers.

Except A) he wasn't going to be harmed by the time off, he was going to benefit by improving himself as a fighter and B) they knew Chambers was not available because he was already negotiating with Klitschko for the WBO mandatory in March. What the latter meant is that Povetkin would end up fighting the dangerous and powerful Samuel Peter in January without having had a fight in nearly a year.

How is that good management? How is that acting in the best interest of your fighter? How is it even legal after the IBF told Klitschko to go first and fight his WBO mandatory without penalty?

Klitschko has violated no rules of either organization, has not asked the IBF for an extension on his mandatory and has told the organization that while he is willing to let Povetkin fight for an interim title if he'd like he is not willing to give up any of the rights of a full champion, meaning most importantly there will be no extra 10% to Povetkin or Peter if they win a phony "interim'' championship.

So here's the picture. Sauerland, who hates Klitschko and also doesn't trust him, blocked a tune up fight in Baltimore for Povetkin by threatening to sue while trumpeting all over Germany a January heavyweight "title'' fight for Povetkin with Chambers when he knows it will be with the far more dangerous Peter and will lead to NO improvement in his fighter or his negotiating position with Klitschko because Klitschko is prepared to sue the IBF if they try any shenanigans that cost him a nickel.

Why would Sauerland do this to his own fighter? For the same reason Goossen is trying to interject his fighter into a tournament he hasn't earned the right to be in. Greed and in the former's case perhaps by having little interest in or understanding of how to properly develop a young fighter into a guy who doesn't just fight for a title but comes prepared to win it.

A fighter with as little experience or understanding of what his identity is in the ring as Povetkin has is not going to beat Wladimir Klitschko but the real danger is that he won't beat Peter, who despite his flaws is the division's most dangerous puncher when he's in any kind of shape excluding round.

Yet rather than do your job properly, which is get your fighter as prepared as possible to win a real world title, Sauerland is willing to sell him out so he can promote a heavyweight "title'' fight that is nothing of the kind. He might fool the German public with that. He might fool Povetkin's Russian managers with that. But it's not likely he's fooled Povetkin. Povetkin in his heart knows damn well he's not ready for Klitschko and shouldn't be taking the risk of fighting a puncher like Peter. Not when he has a bigger fight waiting that is still far enough off that he could fight several more times while continuing to train with Atlas in America and thus be at his optimum, whatever that is, when he finally gets a shot at the real champion next year.

That is the kind of selfish, self-absorbed thinking that has boxing on the brink of extinction. Saddest of all, it's not exclusive to Goossen or Sauerland, its epidemic in a sport where these kinds of men all say they love boxing and then work regularly to destroy its legitimacy in the public's mind just to make a fast buck.