Saturday night on HBO we saw heavyweight mammoth Vitali Klitschko and Joe Mesi take steps that each hope will move them toward an eventual heavyweight title. If that happens we could have two of the nicest young men in the sport wearing title belts around their waists . . . but who wants that? I know that the holiday season is officially upon us and everyone is in the spirit of goodwill toward men, blah blah blah . . . so where's the Grinch when we really need him?

After Klitschko disposed of Kirk Johnson with a shower of thudding shots inside of 6 minutes, the two embraced each other and showed the love. Not long before, as he made his way towards the ring, Johnson had the look of a man who was about to - or already had - soiled his trunks, and he fought like it. Afterwards he seemed relieved, the money was made and there were presents to buy.

After Joe Mesi eked out a decision over Monte Barrett, Mesi was full of compliments to Barrett, describing him as a slick opponent and that it was the best of Monte Barrett we had ever seen. I imagine the Christmas card complete with a Mesi Family photo had already been signed, licked and posted. Yuck! These guys are out to hurt each other, they are in the business of inflicting pain upon other human beings for money and glory, no love, just pain . . . please.

Unfortunately, it only gets worse. At the post-fight press conference Klitschko put his arm around the flabby Canadian Johnson and told him he was sorry. Sorry? For what? Johnson told the big man not to worry, that it was just business, yeah, 'the business' of Johnson being ill-prepared and getting paid over a quarter million for less than 6-minutes work. 'The business' of Vitali becoming even more of a fan favorite in the U.S. since his gallant win, although people seem to forget that he actually lost, to Lennox Lewis. Since when do you apologize for doing your job the way it should be done? In a perfect word Johnson would be the one apologizing for coming in at a balloon-like 260 pounds and looking like a man who would go down if you gave him a dirty look. But there was still hope.

We were finally going to get what we wanted when life-long angry man 'Iron' Mike Tyson eased his way to the back of the press conference room. Perhaps Klitschko and Tyson would get it on right then and there ala Lewis and Tyson before their fight. This was gonna be good, it had to be good - the Grinch had arrived and he was ready to mess things up for all the little Whos in Whoville! I woke up from my dream to hear Klitschko tell Tyson that he was more than welcome to be there, that he had admired him for so long and how it would be a pleasure to share a ring with him someday to exchange fisticuffs. Tyson accepted the compliment like a gentleman and thanked Klitschko. Say it ain't so!

The undercard saw a decent but sloppy scrap featuring 'Buffalo's Third Franchise,' Joe Mesi , who managed to squeak past solid measuring-stick Monte Barrett. Mesi dropped Barrett in the 5th with a nice right hand than came over Barrett's jab that stayed out a little too long. In the spirit of Christmas the favor was returned by Barrett in the 7th when Mesi was caught flush on the jaw by a perfectly timed left hook by Barrett. The shot landed right on the "sweet spot" of

Mesi's chin and he went down briefly, as it was a shot that would have most men tasting the canvas. Still, Mesi overcame that and a closed left eye to win a majority decision that most would agree was fair based on Mesi winning early and things being closer as the fight wore on.

If Mesi is going to be the next heavyweight champion he will have to learn to protect himself a bit better and to capitalize on an opponent who carries his hands around his waist. Clearly Klitschko demonstrated he is head-and-shoulders above Mesi right now, but the lack of depth at the top weight class means Mesi will climb the ladder off this performance.

Next Saturday looks to be a breath of fresh air for those of us who appreciate fighters fighting and people hurting one another. The Grinch and Scrooge are certain to show up in the form of Ricardo Mayorga and Bernard Hopkins, respectively. There should be no shortage of arrogance and trash talk provided the building is big enough for all of the fighters, and their egos, to squeeze in - and Zab Judah will be on standby should Hopkins and Mayorga leave the mic unattended for any length of time.

Oh yes, Hopkins, Mayorga and Judah will be laying the verbal 'smackdown' in just a few days time to show Mesi and Klitschko what it's truly all about. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas after all.