OK, did you hear the latest from the WBC? No, you have to hear this one, it's actually pretty funny. The 'BC has decided to name Erik Morales, it's former featherweight champion, who has moved up to jr. lightweight, and Kostya Tsyzu, it's jr. welterweight king, who is being stripped as 'champions emeritus'.

Huh?

Now what in the world is a 'champion emeritus'?

It's a way for champions who either get vacated, stripped or move up to another division to keep their titles as 'champions' without actually having their titles. Silly me, and I thought possession was actually nine-tenths of the law. It's not even that.

But I give them credit, this is not like the WBA's 'super champion' category, which is just a way for that particular organization to collect an extra sanctioning fee without having it's actual champions make defenses of their crown. In other words if guys like Tsyzu and Bernard Hopkins who are basically undisputed champions of their respective weight classes, can't satisfy their annual commitments to take on their mandatory defenses- because remember, they would still have to satisfy the WBC and IBF mandatories, the WBA would give them a pass by letting another guy basically become their 'un-super' champion and let him make consistent title defenses for them while they pick up sanctioning fee's. No, you weren't seeing things when you saw Vivian Harris and William Joppy as WBA champions, when they had never actually faced or defeated Tsyzu or Hopkins in the ring.

From what I've been told there will be no sanctioning fee's collected in all this quagmire. But the question is this, why even do this? Isn't the sport marginalized enough to have guys who are no longer in a particular weight class, be called 'champions' in divisions they no longer participate in?

Erik Morales, who made his 130-pound debut a few weeks ago when he dispatched of Guty Espadas, is now in line to face the WBC titlist Jesus Chavez, but he has asked the body to keep him as their 126-pound champion until he entered the ring against Chavez at 130. Seriously what's the difference if he got stripped of his crown now or when his left foot touched down on the ring apron before facing Chavez?

But then at the same time, Michael Brodie and In Jin Chi, the two leading contenders for the WBC at 126 pounds will be fighting for a world title at 126, rather than the dreaded 'interim' title, which is harder to sell for a promoter.

My sources tell me the reason they came up with this whole thing was to appease the Russians, who work with Tsyzu, who didn't want to see him stripped(although, that's what happened). And now Arturo Gatti and Gianluca Branco will fight for his title- although, Tszyu will

still be called 'champion'.

Geez, what happened to the days when, oh, I don't know, when the 'champions' would actually still be in their particular weight division and defend that crown. I know, it sound so quaint, but is it that much to ask?

CRUISERWEIGHT LIMIT

A couple of the sanctioning bodies have raised the cruiserweight limit to 200 pounds. My question is why? That's even more of a 'no-mans land' than 190 pounds in my book.

At 200 pounds, do you know what you're getting? A lot of guys that should be at 190 pounds not training as hard because they've got ten pounds to play with. I'm telling you right now, you give a fighter that has to make weight an inch, they'll take ten pounds- at least.

And you know, I've always said what this game really needs right about now is a change in weight divisions. But it really shouldn't make too much of a difference either way. The reality is that no matter what the cut off is for cruiserweights the same disparity in terms of the money that can be made between cruisers and heavys are so great, it won't make a difference. Any fighter hovering around 199 pounds, will just put on a few pounds so he won't be a cruiserweight.

Think of it like this, when it comes to history and tradition, the heavyweight class is like the New York Yankees, the cruiserweights, are like the Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

OCTOBERFEST

Speaking of the Yankees, do you know why boxing is conspicuously absent from this months viewing calender on HBO?

It's because HBO doesn't want to compete with the baseball playoffs, especially with teams like the Yankees, Red Sox and Cubs involved. And why not? The reason is simple, when the playoffs come around, although baseball is now the national 'past it's time' it will still get a large amount of coverage in your daily sports pages. Which means sports like boxing will be pushed to the back- if not all together- of the sports pages. The head honchos at HBO are concerned that their events will be overshadowed by 'the Fall Classic'

Which would seem like a good move this year, although baseball ratings have waned in the past few years, with the story lines involving the teams involved, the ratings have picked up and interest is unusually high. I guess you can say that boxing, like the BoSox, is currently suffering through the 'Curse of the Bambino'.