The lightweight division, which we consider to be around 60-63.5kg, has always been living in the shadows of the two main divisions in kickboxing, 70kg and heavyweight. It still is, but 2012 was a big year for the lightweight division.

One of the main problems in evaluating the lightweight division has always been the separation between the fighters in Japan and the fighters in the rest of the world. Since Japan has so many quality fighters in this division, it's always been essential that we see some crossover and that fighters from Japan fight fighters from outside Japan, so we can really just get an overall feel for the landscape of the division. Well, that's started to happen this year with Krush's efforts to bring in foreigners, and to a smaller extent, other Japanese promotions such as RISE. There still really isn't a big stage like K-1 or GLORY where all of the best lightweights can fight on, but compared to the past, what Krush has done this year is a great start and was very much a large factor in LiverKick starting to do rankings for the lightweight division.

Even outside of Japan, there were a lot of meaningful and relevant fights between 60-63.5kg with some of the best fighters fighting each other. France is one of the main fight hubs for lightweight fights, housing Yetkin Ozkul vs. Thomas Adamandopoulos and Thomas Adamandopoulos vs. Karim Bennoui this year, to name a few. France, aside from in my opinion being one of the strongest countries in all of kickfighting, is also one of the strongest when it comes to the lightweight division, which I've been able to determine based on French fighters' results internationally and the quality of fighters domestically. More importantly, Krush forged good relationships with French managers and brought us fights between some of the best French fighters and some of the best Japanese fighters at lightweight, two powerhouses in the division.

Aside from Krush, It's Showtime played their part in putting on Javier Hernandez vs. Masahiro Yamamoto, another very important fight for the rankings of the division. Hernandez alone was involved in quite a few fights that were helpful in evaluating the landscape of the division,

notably against Ruben Almeida, against Yuki in RISE, and against Mickael Peynaud. Top lightweights in general have been pretty active this year in regards to fighting each other, and the same goes for fighters sitting outside the rankings that are trying to establish themselves as top fighters. As a result of all this crossover it's become much less of a difficult task to evaluate where lightweights stand amongst each other in kickboxing.

If everyone sticks with what they've said in regards to 2013, next year should be an even better year in establishing not just lightweights but lighter weights below 70kg in kickboxing. Krush is already bringing in foreign fighters for their scheduled January events and there are plans to bring in even more, and possibly even bring Japanese fighters to fight in Europe. K-1 is supposed to be doing 63kg next year and GLORY in turn is doing 65kg, which are the two platforms that can really spark interest in weights below 70kg and attempt to take these weights away from the realms of relative obscurity that they've been in for most of modern kickboxing's existence. 2012 was a good start in that there was finally some crossover created in match-ups internationally. Hopefully it continues throughout 2013.