

Boxing's absent warrior Kostya Tszyu stops Sharmba Mitchell

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Kostya Tszyu retained his title Saturday night and reaffirmed his status as boxing's top 140 pound fighter, stopping Sharmba Mitchell at 2:48 of the third round tonight in an IBF junior welterweight title bout in Glendale, Arizona. Mitchell was down 3 times in the final round as a result of Tszyu's power and precision attack .

Tszyu, generally know as a slow starter, showed no rust after 22 months out of the ring. Though it was crunching Tszyu right hands that eventually told the tale on the night, Tszyu was also able to find Mitchell with left hooks early in the action which helped set up the devastating right hands.

Having been angered by a head butt that bloodied his nose in the first round, Tszyu backed Mitchell onto the ropes and hit him with a hard right that dropped Mitchell late in the second round.

The third round had just begun when Tszyu clipped Mitchell with a right hand that sent Mitchell to the canvas once again. Tszyu then pursued Mitchell behind combination punching. The end, which by that point looked inevitable, came when Mitchell tasted the canvas for the third time in the round.

For Tszyu, vindication is sweet on the night, as so many had written off his chances against Mitchell due to his long layoff. For Mitchell, it is a night of immense disappointment. He had chased a Tszyu rematch for over 3 years and entered the ring tonight with total belief that he would emerge victorious, but in truth was never really in the fight.

In other boxing non-title bouts, WBO super bantamweight champion Joan Guzman won a 10-round unanimous decision over Joe Morales of San Antonio and former junior middleweight champion Yory Boy Campas beat an eight-round decision over Raul Munoz of Mexico.