

Closer But Wright Decisions Shane Mosley Once Again

Written by Chris Gielty

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It was closer this time, but Winky Wright successfully defended his WBC and WBA junior middleweight belts tonight with a majority decision victory over Shane Mosley at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas.

Two judges scored the bout 115-113 in favor of Wright, the third judge scoring the fight 114-114.

Wright (48-3, 25 KOs) scored a unanimous decision over Mosley in the first bout in March. Though Mosley performed much better in the return, the outcome was ultimately decided—as it had been in their first meeting—by Wright's natural size advantage and by Wright boxing behind his dominating southpaw jab. Wright moved forward all night and used his jab to control Mosley for much of the action.

Mosley opened in the first round with flashes of combination punching, including some effective work to the body. Wright countered with his straight jab and looked to have shaded a close round to open the fight. Still, the signs were there that perhaps trainer Joe Goossen's reclamation work on Mosley might pay dividends on the night.

From rounds 2 through 4 Wright pressed the action, and as the fight neared the quarter pole it looked like it might play out as a replay of their first meeting.

But then in the 5th, Wright did a 'Mayorga,' standing in front of Mosley and inviting the challenger to pot shot him—which Mosley did. It was a moment of poor judgment by the usually shrewd Wright. As Wright exposed himself, Mosley landed to the body and most notably to the chin, as the champion appeared momentarily wobbled. Wright did end the round, though, with a straight right that scored.

After trainer Dan Birmingham berated Wright for the full minute between rounds 5 and 6, Wright came out working the jab again during round 6, looking like the Winky of old.

Rounds 7 through 10 saw Mosley land some effective power shots—particularly the right hand—while Wright continued to serve up a steady diet of jabs and occasional straight lefts.

Through the championship rounds, Mosley continued to land some scoring power shots, though as the fight neared its conclusion he appeared to be searching for the knockout blow more and more. Wright continued to apply pressure behind the southpaw jab and left hands, neutralizing Mosley enough to make the possibility of a night ending shot look remote, as indeed it turned out to be.

Though the decision was closer this time, PunchStat numbers suggested Wright domination. According to Compubox, Wright landed 273 of 662 punches (41 percent), while Mosley landed 154 of 642 punches (24 percent).

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Not discounting the possibility of a 3rd fight with Mosley down the road, Winky Wright said he would like to face Felix Trinidad next.

"We're looking at (Felix) Trinidad next, but I'll fight De La Hoya, Hopkins, any of them really," said the champion.