Jose Luis Castillo hangs on to his WBC lightweight title with a decision over Joel Casamayor in a fight that didn't heat up until the end. Jeff Lacy outpoints a tough and game Omar Sheika in the best fight of the weekend. Samuel Peter establishes himself as the heavyweight to watch in an otherwise horrid division. And Jermain Taylor becomes a serious challenger to the best fighter in the world.

Random thoughts on a busy last weekend.

Castillo-Casamayor was disappointing overall, but the last few rounds showed that both fighters are warriors. Extra kudos to Casamayor, who went toe-to-toe in the late rounds with a bigger man - a man with 45 knockouts in 50 wins, no less.

Castillo should be commended for taking on such a dangerous opponent in his first title defense. But he didn't help himself by neglecting Casamayor's body for the first seven rounds. He was lucky to have escaped with his title.

Castillo wants Diego Corrales next, which could end up being the fight of the year. The Casamayor fight was a stinker for the most part because their styles failed to mesh. That won't happen with Castillo-Corrales, two home run hitters who have an inherent itch to brawl.

After Corrales, Castillo wants Kostya Tszyu. Also an interesting matchup because of both men's determination, punching power and durability. Tszyu may be have too much of everything, however.

With decision losses to Acelino Freitas, Corrales and now Castillo, Casamayor is the Buffalo Bills of the boxing world. The slick southpaw should get the winner of whatever combination fights next.

Judge Dave Moretti's card of 117-111 for Castillo was ridiculous. Enough said.

What has this world come to when golf, tennis, "extreme" sports and even play-acting - otherwise known as pro wrestling - outdraw boxing by the thousands? Showtime could do little to hide the embarrassing crowd that turned up to see Castillo-Casamayor in Las Vegas - a fight that pitted two of the best fighters on the planet. Something should be done soon to make this game a power again - whether that be creating a federal commission or some sort of boxing league to give it higher visibility and viability - or it risks being run off the sporting map for good.

Sam Peter is as intriguing a prospect as the heavyweight division has seen in some time. Yeah, it was Jeremy Williams he knocked out. But he did it spectacularly. It had a Tyson-esque quality to it.

Then again, Henry Akinwande did that to Williams eight years ago.

Omar Sheika showed some kind of grit in lasting the distance with bigger, stronger Jeff Lacy. He may have lost, but who wouldn't mind seeing him in another title fight?

And while we're saluting guys, let's give it up for William Joppy. He may not be the most talented guy in the world, but he has given this sport everything he can give. He took his beating like a man against Hopkins last year, and did his best against Taylor on Saturday - though he was miserably overmatched in both. And let's not forget all those Felix Trinidad knockdowns he got up from in 2001. Jop, when you retire, you will exit the sport with an abundance of dignity.

It's official: Jermain Taylor is the goods. He left little doubt that he can give Hopkins the fight of his life, maybe as early as next year. How will a 40-year-old Hopkins deal with the speed and reflexes of the amazingly gifted Taylor - a fighter 14 years his junior? Hopkins-Taylor is perhaps the best fight of 2005.