

## Donaire decisions Harutyunyan; Hernandez upsets Harris on ShoBox

Written by Alex Stone  
Friday, 20 January 2006 19:00

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There was indeed no better way to kick off this weekend's highly anticipated HBO slugfest between Erik Morales and Manny Pacquiao than to take a seat and enjoy the action last night on Showtime's "ShoBox."

For those of you who are not familiar with the rising series, it focuses purely on new, hot, up-and-coming superstars. Last night's show was definitely worth the time. If you missed it, check out a replay.

The evening opened with an exhilarating junior lightweight bout between two very green yet very exciting prospects.

American southpaw Tyrone "Fists of Fury" Harris came into the bout the favorite, sporting a then-perfect 14-0 record (12 KOs).

Harris was matched against Mexican Israel Hernandez, who with a then-11-1-1 record (11 KOs) was making his debut outside of Mexico for the first time.

With a combined 23 knockouts in 25 victories between the two, you were only led to believe one thing... someone is going to get rocked.

Round one opened with Harris coming on strong, using his right jab poetically to set up vicious lefts and blistering combinations. A beautiful left caught Hernandez flush and opened up a nasty cut over his left eye just one minute into the round. Harris continued his assault landing basically at will. Harris seemingly set the tone for the fight in the first round.

Round two was more domination by Harris. Hernandez came out trying to counter with lead rights but to no effect; Harris continued to slip all of his punches and went on picking and choosing his punches. As blood continued to pour down the left eye of Hernandez, he appeared sluggish, throwing slow and wide punches. As Harris dodged almost all of Hernandez's attacks, he punctuated the end of another perfect round with a nice left to the chin.

Round three proved to be the pivotal turning point of the fight. At first the round appeared to be more of the same – Harris landing a barrage of lefts behind a sweet right jab. Hernandez continued to throw wide, predictable punches, having more of a punch-out with the air than with Harris. As blood continually ran from Hernandez's eye, it seemed all but over for him. Suddenly, a wild left hook apparently thrown from Tokyo badly hurt Harris. Harris clinched, and barely escaped the third.

In the fourth, Harris put the pressure on harder than ever. The two fighters traded punches in the center of the ring, with Hernandez landing the harder punches. A right uppercut landed flush on the chin and floored Harris. He was up at the count of nine, but referee David Mendoza deemed him unable to continue and called a halt to the action.

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Harris is now 14-1 (12 KOs) and apparently has some work to do. Hernandez, 12-1-1 (12 KOs) made the best of his US debut and will hopefully be featured in some meaningful fights in the near future.

Next was the main event of the evening, an exciting bout for the vacant NABF super flyweight title.

Former World Junior Olympic Champion and *The RING* magazine's prospect of the month Nonito Donaire (14-1, 8 KOs) seemed to be the favorite in this fight. However, it was harder to count out Kahren Harutyunyan 13-3-3 (0 KOs) than it was to pronounce his last name, seeing as he and Donaire have sparred with each other several times in the past. This factor usually makes for a boring chess match... this bout, however, was quite the opposite.

Round one started off with Donaire landing a nice right. Harutyunyan refused to back down and returned a stinging right of his own. From that point on, the action seemed to never stop. Harutyunyan displayed his ability of good timing and placement with his punches, while Donaire showed his superb counterpunching ability in an even first round.

Round two opened with Harutyunyan as the aggressor while Donaire continued to slip and counter. A counter left jab caught Harutyunyan dead on the chin and floored him for only the second time in his career. Harutyunyan was up quickly but continued to get hit with power shots. Round three went to Harutyunyan. As the warriors traded punches in the center of the ring, Harutyunyan began to press forward while landing super fast combinations. The round continued with Donaire missing most of his shots, and losing all of the exchanges. Harutyunyan reversed the roles and now became the counterpuncher.

Round four began with Donaire coming out fast, picking and choosing, landing at will as his five inch reach advantage proved to be too much for the shorter Harutyunyan. Round five was pretty much even, but Harutyunyan was landing the slightly sharper punches.

Round six went back to Donaire as he displayed amazing elusiveness, slipping and countering every punch that Harutyunyan threw; Donaire won the round strictly on defensive skills. The seventh was hard to score but appeared to once again go to the evasive, counterpunching Donaire. The eighth was pretty much even, with neither fighter doing anything spectacular.

In round nine, Harutyunyan picked up the pace, winning most of the exchanges. At the end of the round, the two corners had very different advice to give their warriors. Donaire's trainer told him to back off, and not to take any chances. Harutyunyan's trainer simply said, "Har, I need this guy on the floor."

The tenth was exactly what the trainers asked for. Donaire backed off and Harutyunyan put the pressure on landing combinations in great numbers. In the end, however, Harutyunyan's lack of knockout power proved to be the deciding factor.

The fight went to Nonito Donaire on a close split decision. One judge scored the fight 95-94 for Harutyunyan, the other judges both scored the bout 97-92 in favor of Donaire. *The Sweet*

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*Science*

scored

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Friday was truly a great night for the future of the sport.