There are two Joe Calzaghes. There's the Prince of Wales, who possesses majestic hand speed and a superior level of fitness. Then there's Average Joe, who sometimes loses focus as he gets bored against inferior competition. On Saturday in Cardiff, Wales, the Prince ruled, as he stopped Contender alumnus Peter Manfredo in the third round of a WBO 168 pound title fight.

From the opening bell, Calzaghe looked have the physical advantage, as Manfredo had the frame of a 154 pounder. Calzaghe's hand speed was of a different caliber as well, and the Rhode Islander Manfredo wasn't able to get out of feeling out mode. in front of 35,000 fans at Millenium Stadium.

In the third, Calzaghe, the southpaw who racked up the 20th defense of his crown, trapped Manfredo on the ropes. He tossed seven unanswered blows, none lethal, before Manfredo answered.

The 35-year-old Calzaghe then threw 29 straight punches, some solid, but most landing on Manfredo's gloves. Referee Terry O'Connor, an Englishman, stepped in and stopped the contest at the 1:30 mark, though Manfredo was by no means out on his feet.

Manfredo, age 26, protested the stop, and the crowd didn't like O'Connor's move either.

The ref erred on the side of caution, and it was a premature stop. But in boxing, that is preferable to letting a fighter absorb one shot too many, it must be said.

The Welshman Calzaghe upped his record to 43-0 with the win, while Manfredo dropped down to 26-5.

Manfredo surely could have used trainer Freddie Roach, who is in Puerto Rico working with Oscar De La Hoya. The loser's dad, Peter Senior, worked his corner. Sugar Ray Leonard, who was working with Manfredo and was assumedly at one point going to be working his corner, was nowhere to be seen. Would the presence of Roach have changed the outcome? Not bloody likely, as Calzaghe's attributes were overwhelming for the New Englander, who could've had Dundee, Futch and D'Amato overseeing him, and still been outclassed.

Calzaghe afterwards said he'll fight WBA/WBC super middle champ, the Dane Mikkel Kessler at some point.

In the opener, lightweight Amir Khan (12-0, 9 KOs) did away with Steffy Bull (24-5-1) with a TKO3.

SPEEDBAG Props go to the anthem singer, who brought a lyrics cheat sheet into the ring with him, so he wouldn't muff the words to the Star Spangled Banner. Simon Cowell would have

eviscerated him, and the crowd let loose boos after he finished, but I strongly suspect it was more of a political statement to our nation than anything else. Or, just as likely, probably a Pro-Joe, anti 'Fredo statement.