

The Viper Is Back, Forrest Batters Baldomir

Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 27 July 2007 19:00

The scorecards were lopsided in favor of Vernon Forrest, but anyone in attendance at the Emerald Queen Casino in Tacoma, Washington on Saturday evening, or watching on HBO, got their money's worth. The cards said shutout, but didn't tell the tale. Forrest looked sharp, far more energized than some other elders we've seen in action lately.

His jab was acceptable, his head and foot movement were above average, and he was ripping lefts that would've put most men on the floor. His stock rose immensely with the win.

The judges saw it 118-109, 118-109, and 116-111 for Forrest, who picked up the WBC junior middleweight crown for his trouble.

Forrest and Baldy both weighed in at 150, and the Viper gained six pounds, while Carlos gained eight pounds from the weigh in. Forrest enjoyed a six inch height advantage on this occasion.

Forrest, the 36-year-old from Georgia, rises to 39-2-1 with the win. Baldomir, the 36-year-old from Argentina, now stands at 43-11-1.

Forrest had a 286 to 157 edge in punches landed. Both men threw at the same rate, with Forrest throwing 663, and Baldy 669 on the night.

The winner had great energy for the 11th round, proving himself to be in superior shape. The two men hugged to begin the 12th round. Forrest landed three vicious lefts in the span of the last round, and Baldy barely blinked. The crowd acted appreciative at the effort of the two men.

Forrest could have coasted in the tenth, but he was still ripping shots, giving the crowd a show. Imagine that, a fighter being a fighter, giving the people who paid good money a show! Shocking! He stubbornly still tried to solve Baldy's granite chin.

Forrest had a point deducted for a low hit to Baldy's leg in the ninth round, but Carlos had yanked his head down to help cause the infraction. The loser did land a sharp right that stunned Forrest but he quickly cleared his head. He ran some to waste time and Baldomir waved at him to engage.

Forrest committed to the body in the seventh, showing his wisdom. His jab snapped in the eighth, and Baldomir by now was flinching at feints.

Baldy bitched about a clash of heads in the fourth, and it looked like he was already in frustrated mode. In the fifth, he was eating shots, but that chin, my oh my. He could take heavyweight hits and stay up, I'd say.

Forrest's jab wasn't so snappy, though it actually got better later. In the third, he started mixing

The Viper Is Back, Forrest Batters Baldomir

Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 27 July 2007 19:00

in some right crosses. Baldy wanted to land the left hook but he was too slow.

Early on, it was apparent that Forrest's hands, and more importantly, his feet, were quicker than his foe's. The second round was a fan friendly round, maybe not the smartest for Forrest, who could've outboxed and outfoxed his man, but to his credit, he went for the kill.

Forrest would like another fight with Mayorga if the Nicaraguan beats Vargas. He told Larry Merchant that he was having Mayorga flashbacks during the bout. Forrest said he was in camp for five months, and he deserves a rest. He refused to call anyone out. Totally refreshing, I must say.

Baldy said this fight, compared to the Mayweather fight, he was stronger. "he was good, he boxed, he stood his ground," Baldomir said. He also said he might well retire, that this bout might be it for him.

With this win, Forrest puts himself in the mix for a fight with Floyd Mayweather. Time, and his injury history, make this possibility somewhere between remote and semi remote, but he certainly wouldn't look out of place against PBF.

SPEEDBAG Emanuel Steward, bless his frankness, said that Hopkins should do what he promised his mom, and retire. Same goes for Winky, Manny said, he should move on. Manny doesn't think either man can stand with the younger crew.

---Larry worked the show with Bob Papa, and Steward. He said he thinks Winky should've been given the win, as Hopkins ran and butted and held.

--HBO showed a clip from the Katsidis/Amonsot bout from last Saturday. They also showed a snippet from the Larios/Linares scrap. BTW, I asked HBO during the week if they'd consider showing the Katsidis win. Nope, was the answer.

--I'm waiting for Lederman to slip and say "JIM" instead of "BOB" when he sends the cue back to the lead play by play man. The scrip server didn't bungle.

--Small but telling tactice: Forrest reverses course, moving left, then right, very effectively. Too many fighters are too predictable and don't mix it up.