

Late Bloomer Huerta Gets Win, Diaz Next?

Written by Ralph Gonzalez

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Miguel Huerta (25-8-1, 17 KOs) came in from one controversial fight against "Kid Diamond" and almost stepped into another one as referee Laurence Cole fumbled his duties in Huerta's NABF title win against Efren Hinojosa (29-4-1, 17 KOs).

Huerta looked to be warming up in the second round when he landed a brutal left on Hinojosa's chin that put him on the canvas. Hinojosa got up and was met with more lefts that again dumped him on the floor in bad condition. Cole waved off the fight but then proceeded to reverse his decision and called the knockdown a slip. After Hinojosa survived the end of the round, he clearly caught Huerta flush on the chin after the bell. Cole failed to penalize the foul.

The third round was all Huerta as he landed some hard overhand rights along with powerful sweeping left hooks. Hinojosa held on, made it to the last second and again landed on Huerta at the end of the round with no warning from Cole.

Huerta came out in the fifth and landed several hard lefts that eventually cut Hinojosa over the right eye. Huerta was bullying ahead and dictating the fight at this point.

The Mexico City native came out with fight ending intentions in the sixth as he opened up Hinojosa's cut again within the first twenty seconds. Some body shots hit their mark and softened up his bleeding opponent. Referee Cole called for Hinojosa's worsening cut to be examined by the ring doctor at the end of the round. Hinojosa was ruled in condition to continue.

The lefts kept landing for Huerta and Hinojosa's cut opened up more. The doctor was again called to examine Hinojosa. Hinojosa would continue to the eighth round. Hinojosa had a decent couple of minutes as he landed some quick combinations on his tiring foe.

The tenth was a good round for Huerta as he continuously landed the left and opened up Hinojosa's bothersome cut again. It would be the same story in the eleventh as Huerta's left kept doing damage.

Huerta took the final round with some effective aggression as he landed and tried to close the show. Huerta's unanimous decision win was announced with scores of 120-106, 119-108 and 118-112. Huerta wins the N.A.B.F. crown and awaits a title shot against WBC Champion David Diaz.

Ortiz stops Clotney in final seconds

Rising 20 year old prospect, Victor Ortiz (18-1-1, 13 KO's), faced the biggest challenge of his career in the tough Ghana native Emmanuel Clotney (24-7, 14 KO's) who is thirty three years old and has always been known to provide his opponents with a stiff test.

The first round was used by both men to measure their distance. Ortiz was the most active

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during the first stanza that saw little action. He effectively set the pace for the second round as he landed some shots to the body of the usually durable African. The boxer out of La Colonia Boxing gym in Oxnard was coming forward as Clotney defended by bobbing and weaving efficiently.

The difference in work output was considerable after the second round as Ortiz out punched Clotney by landing 25 punches next to Clotney's four. The third round heated up as Ortiz kept coming forward, trying to tag the elusive Clotney. Ortiz landed some nice shots to the middle and attempted several flurries of punches that did minimal damage.

Ortiz controlled the fourth with intelligent aggression as he moved forward and employed some effective body shots that drove Clotney into the ropes. Clotney was more effective in the fifth as he tried to out slick Ortiz using good head movement. Ortiz found a target on Clotney's body where he landed repeatedly.

At the start of the sixth round, it was obvious that Clotney was far behind and would need at least a knock down if not a knock out to win. Clotney came in with more urgency and pushed the fight to the Oxnard native. Ortiz was experiencing some frustration after failing to land his well regarded left hooks flush. He eventually caught Clotney with a left that made Clotney do a stutter step. It was the most effective punch landed all night by Ortiz. Clotney was hurt but made it out of the round that was about to end.

Before the seventh round started, Ortiz had thrown 309 punches with 104 landed compared to Clotney's 221 thrown and 37 hitting the mark. Ortiz came out more aggressive in the seventh and his body shots paid off as they opened up Clotney's guard and Ortiz was able to land his left hands to the body and head. Clotney was deducted two points in the eighth round as both men tangled up their legs and Ortiz landed on the canvas in what seemed to be an accident.

Clotney was in survival mode in the ninth round as he came out and proceeded to box and run. Ortiz was obviously frustrated but tried to end strong. The problem is that hitting Clotney flush is next to impossible due to his peculiar style. It looked like the fight was going the distance when Ortiz landed a counter right hand that sent Clotney down for the first time of the fight. With less than twenty seconds left in the fight, Ortiz attacked and eventually landed a left hand that sent him to the canvas again.

The referee stopped the fight with four seconds left. The official time of the stoppage was announced by Michael Buffer as 2:59 of round number 10.

The fights were televised from Houston, Texas by the Versus Television Network and promoted by Top Rank.