

Wed. Night Fights Recap: Henry Scores TKO

Written by Michael Woods
Tuesday, 08 July 2008 19:00

Rubin Williams said he desperately needed a win coming in to his headline bout against Chris Henry on the Wednesday Night Fights broadcast that unfolded at the Grand Plaza Hotel in Houston, Texas.

Williams was winless in his previous three outings, and looked less than scintillating in a TKO loss in his last start, against Andre Ward in March. But Williams' actions, starting with his weight, spoke more with more authority. The Michigan super middleweight weighed 181 pounds against Henry, and his body language, and effort, backed up the statement his weight made. In the sixth round of a scheduled tenner, William's corner did explicitly what their fighter had done implicitly...they threw in the towel.

The 27-year-old Henry, 21-1 coming in, weighed 183 pounds, while the 32-year-old Williams brought a 29-4-1 mark with him. The stoppage came after a cut opened up on Williams' lip, after he took a good heap of punishment from the Texan Henry, who scored his 18th KO win.

Henry was coming off a loss to Adrian Diaconu; he traveled to Romania in April, and he said he was jobbed after 12 rounds, after not being credited with several knockdowns.

In the first round, both men popped the jab, but Henry added in some other varieties. Henry, from the start, looked intent on closing the distance, getting in Williams' face, and trying to close the show early. Henry scored a knockdown as the round ended, off some combos and a right to the temple. The show went to commercial as Rubin hit the mat, so we sat through a Taco Bell commercial before we saw what happened. Back to the show, we heard that the knockdown was not ruled a knockdown.

In the second round, Henry went downstairs and upstairs, mixing his sports well. He consistently backed Williams to the ropes, and went to work. A crackerjack right drew gasps from the audience, and Williams didn't offer much in return but one-at-a-time jabs.

On to the third. Henry snaked in a right hook to kick off the period. His energy lagged a bit, as he hugged Williams a couple of times. In the fourth, a clubbing right hurt Williams, but he stayed aloft. Henry nailed him on the belt and the ref committed a no-no. He chastised Henry as the action was live, instead of stepping in between the fighters, and offering his warning. One boxer or the other could have stopped defending themselves to listen to the ref, and gotten tagged while defenseless. In the fifth round, Williams again laid back on the ropes, preferring to plant his feet rather than going mobile. He allowed Henry to wade in, ultra-confidently, and whale away, without fearing meaningful counters.

In the sixth round, Williams ate more from the Henry fistic buffet, and he didn't much like the flavor of the steaming leather. He actually landed a counter or two, but it was too little, too late. A cut formed on Williams' lip, and his corner threw in the towel when they got a good look at their guy. The end came at 2:15 of the sixth.

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Henry's record is built on a coalition of journeyman. He has plenty of holes in his game, but does have decent pop, and a willingness to work. But against real-deal top 5 and top 10 competition, he may well find it hard to get over the hump. I feel for Williams. He has fallen hard from those days, back in 2004, when he was undefeated, and the future promised title fights, solid paydays and acclaim. Today, he has hard questions to ask himself, like, should I continue on this seeming path to nowhere?