

The Last Gasp For Jose Luis Castillo?

Written by Ralph Gonzalez
Wednesday, 30 July 2008 19:00

Former world title contender Sebastian Lujan made a strong case for Jose Luis Castillo's retirement after completely dominating the former multi divisional champ over ten rounds at The Sycuan Casino located just outside of San Diego, California.

The fights were televised on ESPN2's Wednesday night fights and promoted by Sycuan Ringside along with Zanfer promotions. An estimated crowd of about 1500 took in the action outdoors in perfect southern California weather.

The first round was quite active as Lujan came forward and gladly engaged his opponent. Castillo (56-9, 48 KO's) looked somewhat listless as Lujan (30-5, 20 KO's) initiated most of the action. In the second, a left hand from Castillo came out of nowhere and momentarily stunned Lujan. Lujan recovered and ended the round strong as he landed some straights that forced the former champion backwards.

Lujan came out even more confident in the third as he stood in front of Castillo and teed off with a variation of punches. The fourth was a continuation of the third as Lujan came forward and met Castillo with some back and forth action. Lujan wouldn't give an inch as Castillo tried to match the iron chinned Argentinean punch for punch. Castillo tried to push the action in the fifth and was met with more hard counterpunches. Castillo ended the round bloodied and seemingly gassed. The sixth began and nice exchanges ensued with Lujan getting the better of them as the crowd urged "El Temible" to fight on. The seventh round came and Lujan kept the non stop punching going. It was more of Lujan moving forward and landing almost at will.

More punishment dished out by Lujan in the eighth as he trapped Castillo on the ropes and landed some nice rights and lefts. During the final round, Lujan continued to lay a systematic beating on the Mexican who spent way too much time on the ropes completely out of gas. Lujan's left jab was an effective tool which he used throughout the fight and helped him set up some left hooks that hurt Castillo repeatedly to the very end. The unanimous decision was announced by ring announcer Jimmy Lennon Jr. with scores of 98-92, 99-91 (twice).

"I respect Castillo. He's a great fighter. Tonight was my night," said Lujan after the fight.

Lujan was brought in as welterweight champion Antonio Margarito's sparring partner to mimic Miguel Cotto before Margarito's tremendous victory over the Puerto Rican star.

Lightweight Luis Ramos (4-0, 4 KO's) of Santa Ana, California faced off against Aaron Dominguez (5-2, 4 KO's) of Hermosillo, Mexico in a six round bout. It was a good first round for Ramos as he displayed some quick hands and movement that befuddled Dominguez. Ramos put his combinations together in the second and landed well to the body. The third round came and Ramos's speedy combinations kept landing. Dominguez had no answers for Ramos in the fourth as the Orange County based fighter took complete control. In the fifth, a beauty of a left hand dropped Dominguez, Ramos went for the kill and dropped his opponent one last time

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before the bell sounded. It was between rounds that Dominguez's corner felt their man had enough and waved off the confrontation. The fight was called as a stoppage at the end of round five. Put Ramos on your "someone to watch" list.

Luis Carlos Abregu (23-0, 20 KO's) of Salta, Argentina stopped Thomas Davis (12-7-2, 7 KO's) of Knoxville, Tennessee in the second round of a welterweight clash. Abregu, who is one of Sycuan's latest signees, landed several hard straight lefts in the first round that dropped Davis a few seconds before the round ended.

A brutal left hook to the head in round number two dropped and seemed to finish off Davis but referee Tony Crebs let matters continue (ED. NOTE: this ref was waaaay "too brave" for my liking...Davis was cooked) until Davis' corner took pity on their man and stopped the action. The stoppage came at 58 seconds of the second stanza. Though still untested, Abregu offered an impressive display of raw power and aggression.

Carlos Molina (4-0, 1 KO) of Commerce, California stopped Ramon Flores (2-1-1) in the second round of a junior welterweight battle. Flores came out swinging wildly but Molina countered effectively in the first. More excellent countering by Molina in the second as he landed to the body and the head with the cool demeanor of a seasoned pro. A hard left hand to the head of Flores dropped him for a long count. He got up but his corner wisely threw in the towel. The end was announced as 2:47 of the second.

Manny "Suavecito" Roman (12, 5 KO's) won a unanimous decision over Javier Lagos (15-11-2, 4 KO's) in an eight round flyweight bout. The scores were 80-72 (three times).

A ten count and a moment of silence were given for Walter Woodworth who passed away at the age of 82 on Saturday July 26th. Mr. Woodworth served his country honorably in World War II and The Korean war. He boxed for the Navy, was married for 62 years and was also the father of Sycuan Ringside Promotions Vice President, Scott Woodworth. Our condolences to the Woodworth family.

In the crowd: former world champion Joan Guzman, former lightweight champion Julio Diaz, contender Alfredo "Perro" Angulo and Junior Welterweight prospect Jorge Paez Jr.