

## It's KOs For Angulo, Gamboa and Martinez

Written by David A. Avila

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TEMECULA, CA.-In a brutal junior middleweight match between two guys known for no fooling around Alfredo "El Perro" Angulo out-powered Russia's Andrey Tsurkan for a technical knockout and Argentina's Sergio Martinez and Cuban Yuri Gamboa made impressive showings too on Saturday.

Also, a fighter was deducted a point for kissing and licking another fighter during a clinch. More on that later.

Most who attended the boxing card at the Pechanga Resort and Casino expected Angulo and Tsurkan (26-4, 17 KOs) to slug it out, but few expected the fight to last nearly 10 full rounds. But Angulo proved too strong and accurate for the granite chin of Tsurkan. The fight was a co-feature on HBO's Boxing After Dark program.

"That was the toughest fight of my career," said Angulo, 26, who suffered a cut over his right eye in the second round. "I got tougher in each round."

Both fighters entered the ring with reputations as sluggers who never back up. They stuck to the script and traded big blows against each other in a test of wills and chins.

From the third round on Angulo (14-0, 11 KOs) attacked the body and switched from a right-handed stance to a left-handed stance. Though his punches seemed to affect Tsurkan, the Russian boxer who lives in Brooklyn refused to wilt despite the drubbing.

Tsurkan fired combos throughout the match but just couldn't find the punch that could keep the Mexican fighter from attacking at will.

After repeated punches sustained by Tsurkan in the 10th round, his corner stepped on the apron with a white towel at 2:27 of the round to signal to referee Tony Crebs a halt to the brutal affair.

Angulo said he'd like a match with undefeated Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. next.

"We can have an all Mexican fight," Angulo said.

Cuba's Gamboa survived a first round knockdown against Kansas boxer Marcos Ramirez to hand the undefeated fighter his first loss. A left uppercut by Gamboa dropped Ramirez at 1:41 of the second round for a knockout. A television replay apparently showed that an elbow contributed to Gamboa's knockdown.

"I need to come out aggressive," said Gamboa, who headlined. "When I hit them hard, they can't continue."

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In a junior middleweight contest Martinez (44-1-1, 24 KOs) grabbed the WBC interim title (Vernon Forrest has the actual WBC title) with a one-sided walloping of Africa's Alex Bunema (30-6-2, 16 KOs).

Martinez, a southpaw with power, used a strong right jab to snap Bunema's head back repeatedly through the contest. A left hand dropped Bunema in the third round but the African contender survived the round. He didn't survive another drubbing in the seventh round. The ringside physician advised referee Raul Caiz to halt the fight at the end of the round.

"I want to fight Vernon Forrest for the title or he should vacate it," said Martinez, a quick power-punching 154-pound boxer from Buenos Aires. "I don't want excuses."

In a strange sequence, Nevada's Jesse Vargas (2-0) was kissed on the ear and licked on the face by the much taller Trenton Titsworth (2-3) as they grappled for space. Vargas took offense at the smooch and punched him as the referee broke up the hugging. Titsworth hit the canvas hard from the punch and referee David Denkin deducted one point from Vargas and two for Titsworth for holding behind the head and another for unsportsmanlike conduct. Vargas won by unanimous decision 39-34 in the junior welterweight bout.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Denkin, who's been refereeing for more than five years.

Argentina's Carlos Abregu (24-0, 21 KOs) stopped veteran Mexican boxer Robert Valenzuela (40-29, 4 KOs) at 54 seconds of the sixth and final round of a welterweight contest.

In a well-fought middleweight match, Arkansa's Jon Nelson (6-0) took a unanimous decision over Florida's Robert Campbell (2-1), but every round was fought closely. It was Nelson's speed and slight ring experience that made the difference. The judges scored it 60-54 for Nelson.

Azusa's Ariz Ambriz (6-0, 4 KOs) was the busier and more accurate fighter against Louisiana's Dion Nash (5-4) in a junior welterweight bout. The judges scored it 40-36 for Ambriz.

An exciting welterweight bout between Escondido's Dashon Johnson and Azusa's Alan Velasco ended in a majority draw. Despite two knockdowns scored by Johnson in the second round, Velasco rallied in the last four rounds to tighten up the fight. Judge Marty Denkin scored it 57-55 for Velasco and judges Tony Crebs and David Denkin scored it 56-56.