

There will be some serious discussions in the McGirt household in the coming days. James McGirt Jr. suffered a loss to Angel Hernandez on ESPN's Friday Night Fights, and though the defeat couldn't be termed shocking, because McGirt had a draw and loss coming in, McGirt's showing has to force he and his pop Buddy to sit down and ask some hard questions.

Am I cut out for this game?

Are there things I'm not doing in training that I could do to improve?

Am I simply not the right type of athlete for this sport?

Do I like the sport enough to continue, or am I in boxing out of a sense of duty or obligation?

The look on the 26-year-old McGirt's face when the judges' tallies at Mallory Square, in Key West, Florida were read spoke loudly. How did this happen? How did this blown up 147 pounder six inches shorter than me even stay close in this fight, let alone steal a decision?

McGirt's first loss came in April 2008 against Carlos DeLeon. And his second came in November. Technically, that was a draw, against Marcus Upshaw, but the tie cost him an HBO showcase gig. Now, McGirt drops further back in the mix, and he will have to decide if this is all for him. Hernandez was in his face throughout, throwing pesky shots. McGirt didn't use his length advantage at all, and instead let the 33-year-old Hernandez get in his grill and convince the judges that he wanted it more. McGirt isn't a mover, and he fights tight, and doesn't stay in the pocket and dissect a guy either. His defense doesn't flow, and he moves his head 12 inches when he three inches would do. McGirt, if he was the prospect some peg him to be, should handle Hernandez, 5-5 in his last ten. That said...good for Angel. He lost a title crack to Winky Wright in 2003, and one would've figured this gig was intended as a steppingstone loss.

Eromosele Albert (22-2-1), age 34, took down Germaine Sanders (27-7), age 38, in a junior middleweight ten. He won a UD10. Carlos Quintana was supposed to fight Albert, but Carlos pulled out a week ago. Sanders is a survivor, a crafty mover who knows how not to get hurt. Too bad—a Quintana/Albert fight would've been something of a legitimate eliminator matchup. Albert needed this. His 2008 stunk. He suffered a loss to James Kirkland and then a draw to Ossie Duran. However, Sanders has lost four straight and this win doesn't prove all that much.

### **SHOBOX ACTION**

In action taking place at the Million Dollar Elm Casino in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Leonilo Miranda (30-1, 28 KOs), a Mexican making his US debut, took on Orlando Cruz, a Puerto Rican (16-0-1). The lefty Miranda tried to work off his jab and land a thudding left. The super feather scored well in the third, but hey, why was Cruz still there? Cruz moves quite well but lacked the pop to keep Miranda honest, or so we thought. In the fifth, Cruz landed naaasty left hand, which put the "slugger" on his tush. He tried to get up, and was up before ten, but was leaning on the

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ropes, dazed. The time of the left counter, thrown after a slow jab, was :39 seconds of the fifth.

We probably saw the career ender for junior lightweight Nick Casal (18-4-1), formerly a highly touted prospect who has battled injuries and substance abuse woes. He took punishment from Mexican Marvin Quintero (15-1) for two rounds, then sat on his stool, said he didn't have any legs and called No Mas. Trainer Sam Colonna was surprised, to say the least.

Gary Russell (age 20) proved himself to be one to watch. The amateur stud thought he'd take gold in Beijing at the Olympics but instead couldn't make weight and was bounced before fighting. He showed what he's capable of when he destroyed the gutsy Antonio Reyes (3-3). Ref Steve Smoger halted the scrap at 23 seconds elapsed of the third. Russell, out of DC, has super fast hands, and importantly, he has transitioned out of the pitty-pat am style. He looks to lay some hurt on a foe. Again, one to watch.