It's why we love boxing, the theater of the unexpected. Shane Mosley had a megacluster of storm clouds, including steroids allegations, a split with his trainer/father Jack and a divorce from wife Jin, hanging over his head as he got ready to face off with the real life Terminator, Antonio Margarito. But Mosley, at age 37, stayed focused on his in-ring task, and scored the most monumental win of his career as he stopped Margarito in the ninth round at a jam-packed Staples Center in Los Angeles on Saturday evening. Mosley used his legs, and his brain, and his super-speedy right hand to dominate Margarito, who looked like the man who didn't have his head in the game. The end for Margarito came at 43 seconds of the ninth, and with it Mosley took the WBA weltwerweight crown.

Margarito, age 30, came in weighing 160, after hitting 146 Friday. The three-division ex champ Mosley , who needed a bathroom break to take off 2/10 of a pound and hit 147 Friday, weighed 160 on fight night. Both men reside in California.

Mosley landed 178-507, and Tony 108-485, which is testament to the masterful manner Mosley cramped his style. After, Mosley gave his cornerman credit for helping him excel. Margarito, in contrast to Miguel Cotto, said after that he wanted to go out on his shield, and go out for the ninth even though he was seriously diminished. He said that he will likely go through with his rematch with Miguel Cotto, though Mosley actually lays claim to that prize, without a doubt.

Mosley got the best of it in the first, but Tony got his jab untracked late. Mosley's body work spoke volumes. In the second, Tony looked a bit frustrated with Mosley's movement and grabbing. The ref told Mosley to watch his head in close. In the third, Tony whined about butts. Mosley slammed a few rights to his ear. His hand-speed edge stood out. As impressive was his slick work tying Tony up when in close. In the fourth, Mosley's legs still gave Tony fits. A flurry in the center of the ring did too with 30 seconds to go. You could've had it 4-0 Mosley on your card. "Your combinations, no one in this division has hands as fast as yours. Knock the grease off this dude, and sim and don't get wet" trainer Nazim Richardson told Mosley after. In the fifth, Mosley smothered Margarito; he didn't back off Tony, so Margarito couldn't elongate his arms effectively. In round six, Mosley looked fresh, as Tony backed up, and sagged into the ropes with 40 seconds to go. He then ate vicious rights that had the crowd getting raucous. "What's wrong, are you tired?" Margarito's trainer Javier Capetillo asked. In the seventh, Mosley again dictated the space in between the two. Mosley smashed a right to the chin with two seconds to go. In round eight, Tony looked like he knew he needed to get busy, right quick. He landed some ripping rights, but Mosley roared back, and staggered him down the stretch. He scored a knockdown, with a left hook and flurry, and Margarito got up wobbly at eight. The bell saved him, and he went to his corner, woozy. His corner almost stopped it, but Tony demanded to continue. In the ninth, Mosley pressed on the gas, caught him on the ropes, and the ref had to step in. It was over.

The combatants squared off in front of 20,820 fans, the most ever assembled for an event, any event, at the Staples Center. Off topic slightly, the crowd response when Margarito strolled to

the ring upped Margarito's asking price, in the event, by at least 30%. The American-Mexican fighter has been thoroughly embraced by a mad crush of fans.

Everyone quieted down for a 10 bell salute to Jose Torres, the former light heavyweight champion, who died last week.

There was controversy before the bout kicked off, as California commissioners found a pad in Margarito's handwraps, which they alleged was made of material much harder than tape or gauze, and could aid his punching power. They made Margarito re-wrap his hands, without the illegal pad. The commission referred to the object as a "hard plastic shell," according to Jim Lampley of HBO. What was this object, and was it something that he'd used before? If yes, why hadn't it been caught before?

SPEEDBAG Make of this what you will. Oscar De La Hoya, the chief of Golden Boy, wasn't present to watch his man Mosley's masterclass showing. Instead, he was watching Fedor Emelianenko's first round KO smashout of Andrei Arlovski on Affliction's MMA card in Anaheim. Golden Boy has entered into a partnership with Affliction, and is looking to hedge their bets, and grow into an MMA player. Maybe the wounds inflicted by Manny Pacquiao are still too fresh, and watching boxing up close would have been too rough on him.

Stay tuned for Avila's ringside report