

Sugar Shane Mosley Shocks Antonio Margarito

Written by David A. Avila

Saturday, 24 January 2009 19:00

LOS ANGELES-Even bulletproof glass can be shattered as Sugar Shane Mosley proved against Antonio Margarito by battering and battering the once impregnable chin of the WBA welterweight titleholder until it cracked on Saturday.

Mosley is back at the top of the mountain.

A record 20,820 mostly pro-Margarito fans who packed the massive Staples Center saw the Pomona speedster overcome a hostile crowd, 3-1 odds and questionable hand wrapping charges and hand the Tijuana Tornado his first career knockout loss.

It wasn't supposed to be Margarito (37-6, 27 KOs) on the canvas and now Mosley holds the WBA title.

"You hear about the pressure and his chin but I used his pressure against him," said Mosley (46-5, 39 KOs). "We had a great game plan."

An entire boxing world predicted that Margarito would apply pressure on a galloping Mosley, but it never played out that way. Instead the extremely experienced Californian clinched, pushed, bullied and out-speeded his younger opponent with right hand wallops that had the Mexican fighters' head snapped back at least four times a round.

From the very first round it was evident that Margarito was not going to have his usual night. A big right hand counter to the body by Mosley stunned Margarito and put a look of surprise on the Tijuana brawler. Body shots by both fighters were fired but the Pomona fighter landed more effectively in the first round.

"I think something happened the first round. He was too slow. He kept getting caught with the overhand right," said Javier Capetillo, who trains Margarito.

Mosley effectively landed body shots then smothered Margarito's rushes in the second round. It was a scene that would replay throughout the fight. Several times Mosley's head collided with Margarito. Referee Raul Caiz warned them to beware of the head butts.

In the third round Margarito began landing more punches but still took more than he gave as Mosley countered with some blistering right hands to the body and head.

"He's very powerful but he couldn't resist my rhythm," said Mosley, who was rarely caught with any big punches in return. "The jab of Margarito was very hard, however, so I knew not to avoid the big punches."

Rounds four and five were instant replays of each other as Mosley continued to rock Margarito with right hands to the chin and left hooks to the body. The volume punching that Margarito is

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known for never took root.

“He (Mosley) did a lot of clinching and I couldn’t get a rhythm,” said Margarito.

Margarito dropped

Round six began slowly with Mosley looking to find a rest. But in the last 45 seconds the Pomona speedster landed some thunderous right hands that snapped Margarito’s head four times.

Margarito finally found a way to block that deadly right hand of Mosley, but still absorbed a lot of big shots from the challenger. Margarito landed more body punches but took harder shots in return in the seventh round.

To the shock of the Mexican fans that never stopped cheering for their fighter, Mosley dropped Margarito with a blistering array of power shots from all angles in the eighth. Margarito barely got up and luckily the bell rang to save the gutsy fighter.

“Maybe I was too light,” Margarito said of weighing only 145 pounds at the official weighing. “I couldn’t do anything.”

Mosley didn’t waste any time in the ninth, he jumped off his stool moved in and fired a left hook that wobbled Margarito. A flurry of more punches forced Margarito’s corner to throw in the towel as their fighter slumped to the floor at 43 seconds of the round for a Mosley knockout victory.

“I killed Margarito with my own pressure,” said Mosley.

Margarito looked stunned after the fight. He simply shook his head at the ending.

“I just kept getting caught over and over,” Margarito said. “I feel very bad for disappointing the fans.”

Mosley credited his team, especially trainer Nazim Richardson, who also directed Bernard Hopkins' upset over Kelly Pavlik.

It was Richardson who discovered the bizarre hand wrapping and notified California State Athletic officials. Three times Margarito was forced to wrap his hands. The CSAC is investigating the wraps.

Richardson is also the man who discovered the irregular wrappings of Felix Trinidad when he fought Hopkins in September 2001.

The mellow trainer refused to take credit for the victory.

“When you have a good game plan and a very good athlete it’s easy,” Richardson said. “He (Mosley) turned his (Margarito’s) pressure style against him.”

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After the fight Dr. Paul Wallace said that he sent Margarito to the local hospital for observation.

Mosley said that if Margarito wants a rematch he's absolutely willing, and is open to any and all big fights. Maybe a Manny Pacquiao match should he beat Ricky Hatton in May?

Before leaving for the hospital Margarito said that he did not want the fight stopped.

"I wanted to fight more," said Margarito. "I wanted to keep on going."

Then he thought about how he lost to Mosley.

"He's a great champion," Margarito said of Mosley. "He knows what he is doing."

Other bouts

Newly signed by Golden Boy Promotions, Robert "The Ghost" Guerrero showed why he was such a sought after fighter in quickly destroying veteran boxer Edel Ruiz with a 43-second knockout. A counter left hand by Guerrero to the body left Ruiz gasping for air for more than three minutes after the fight was stopped.

"I'm ready for a championship fight," said Guerrero who vacated his IBF featherweight title to move up four pounds and fight as a junior lightweight. "There's no need for another fight to get ready."

Guerrero barely broke a sweat at the higher weight and feels the added pounds makes him stronger and still faster than most fighters at the weight class.

"Sure I'd love to fight Jorge Linares or anybody," said Guerrero. "I feel great at this weight."

Preliminary bouts

Former Russian Olympian Matvey Korobov (3-0, 3 KOs) pounded Indiana's Jose Florentino (3-4) to the body and forced referee David Mendoza to stop the fight 2:23 of the first round.

A battle between Mexican lightweights ended with Mexico City's Juan Carlos Salgado (19-0-1, 13 KOs) taking a unanimous decision over Cristian Favela (15-17-6) of Los Mochis after six rounds. Judges scored it 59-55, 60-54, 58-56 for Salgado.

Junior lightweight prospect Jerry Belmontes (6-0) used his speed to out-point Riverside's Jesus Hernandez (2-4) but didn't have it easy. The judges scored it 40-36 and 39-37 twice for Belmontes.

Cincinnati's Adrien Broner (6-0, 5 KOs) arrived with a record for speed and power and discovered against Mexico's Jose Lugo (10-7-1, 5 KOs) that some guys can take his power. After a blistering first round of punches, a body shot by Lugo forced Broner to take to using his legs to get out of trouble. The judges scored it 59-55, 58-56, 60-54 for Broner in lightweight

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contest.

A junior middleweight bout between two Mexican middleweights ended in a unanimous decision for Saul Roman (30-5) over Jose Varela (23-5). The judges scored it 80-72, 79-73 twice for Roman.