

Dimitriy Salita Beats Raul Munoz In Desert

Written by David A. Avila
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PRIMM, NEVADA-New York's Dimitriy "Star of David" Salita shook out the dust of inactivity and found himself staring at the physically bigger Kansas steak sized Raul Munoz who had designs of an upset on his plate on Sunday.

Rusty or not it was Salita's night.

Ranked number one junior welterweight in the world by the WBA, though anxious to get back in the ring, Salita didn't let anxiety overcome intelligence when fighting Munoz (20-12-1, 15 KOs) at Buffalo Bills Casino and Resort in the boxing and mixed martial arts promotion staged by Roy Jones Jr's company Square Ring Promotions and Primm Valley Casino Resorts.

Despite some jaw chattering punches that seemed to wobble the bigger Munoz, the ever thinking Salita never succumbed to wildness and charted out a convincing 10-round victory.

"He came to fight," Salita (30-0-1, 16 KOs) said of Munoz. "I could feel his size."

The New York boxer was the quicker fighter using combinations and moving from side to side. He was very aggressive despite fighting a much bigger opponent. Some stiff left jabs and right hands by Munoz caused a welt on the side of Salita's left eye in the very first round but it didn't stop the aggressiveness.

Salita opened up with some stinging body punches in the second round but a counter left hook and right hand by Munoz snapped the New York fighter's head back. Once more Salita returned to the body and seemed to hurt Munoz. Several quick combinations and uppercuts scored for Salita.

Munoz scored with a big left hook in the third round but Salita's jaw withstood the challenge. More and more combinations by Salita mixed with plenty of body shots scored heavy for him. Munoz was able to land more than one blow at a time.

In the fourth round after referee Jay Nady warned Salita about low blows, the tide turned as Munoz scored more and more with combinations. Salita seemed a little confused about not being allowed to go downstairs and took some blows in the round. It was still a close round.

"I was worried the referee would take a point away," said Salita, 27. "He had warned me in the locker room."

Salita returned to his body attack in the fifth round and returned to dominating the fight. But the stiff left jabs by Munoz snapped Salita's head back three times. Salita returned with combinations including a big right uppercut toward the end of the round.

The sixth round was the easiest round for Salita. He moved and fired combinations that

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snapped Munoz' head back repeatedly. The Kansas fighter tried returning to the jab but Salita was able to avoid all of the blows.

“Everything started to flow,” Salita said.

The New York junior welterweight dominated the eighth round with precise combinations. Munoz landed a few stiff left jabs but couldn't manage to evade Salita's left hooks and slices to the body.

A pained look came over Munoz's face as Salita fired combo after combo. A left hook buckled the Kansas fighter's legs and Salita dropped a few more bombs on the bigger fighter, but he avoided any more punishing shots in the ninth round.

“I thought I hurt him but I didn't want to get wild,” Salita said. “I was worried he was playing possum.”

Munoz came out in the 10th and final round slowly and allowed the quicker Salita to fire some shots. Then he attempted to land some of those stiff left jabs that had scored earlier in the fight, but Salita was ready for it. Instead, it was the New York fighter cruising into control and sidestepping the big lefts and uppercuts.

Two judges scored it 100-90 and a third 99-91 all for Salita.

“I give myself a B-minus,” Salita said, adding that he would like to be part of the WBA title clash between champion Andriy Kotelnik and Amir Khan on June 27 in London. “It makes sense for me to be on that card.”

Other bouts

California's Jose Pacheco (2-5-6) out-slugged Las Vegas boxer Mario Gonzalez (0-2) in a junior featherweight bout. The taller boxer was the stronger puncher though both threw about the same amount of blows. One judge scored it 39-37 the other two 40-36 all for Pacheco.

MMA

Long Island, New York's Eric Uresk (3-3) took matters to the ground to keep Reno's Leland Ridley (2-6) from using his longer reach. All three judges scored it 30-27 for Uresk in the featherweight MMA fight.

In a middleweight MMA battle Patrick Dickson (2-2) of Reno ended his fight with Josh Downing (1-1) of Las Vegas with a flying right knee to the jaw. The connection between bone to bone could be heard throughout the arena as Downing slumped to the floor. Dickson immediately attacked with a ground and pound pummeling that forced referee Herb Dean to stop the fight at 3:13 of the first round.