

Cayo Stays Unbeaten, Gets UD Win Over Julio Diaz On FNF

Written by Michael Woods
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Coming off a TKO5 loss to Rolando Reyes in April, two fights removed from a TKO9 loss to Juan Diaz, Julio Diaz needed to prove to the powers that be, and to himself, that this unforgiving sport is still his calling. The two-time lightweight champion hopped from 135 to 140 for the main event of Friday Night Fights at the Seminole Hard Rock in Hollywood, Florida, hoping the extra meat would give him strength, but opponent Victor Cayo dashed his hopes. Cayo was the faster, busier boxer in the ten round clash, handing Diaz his second defeat in a row, and perhaps, a reason to call it a career.

Diaz, prior to the bout, had said that if he couldn't beat Cayo, maybe he should exit the scene. TSS thinks, though, that the manner in which Diaz lost was no disgrace. He didn't look in over his head, or shot, or bored. Cayo is simply a confident hitter who is elusive for a fighter with Diaz' style.

Diaz (139 ³/₄; age 29; living in California) came in at 36-5; Cayo (139 ³/₄; age 23; from the Dominican Republic) entered at 22-0 .

Cayo said coming in he'd look to counter Diaz, look for mistakes and openings, and capitalize. In the first round, Cayo, a pro for four years with over 300 amateur bouts to his credit, countered, but also got off first. He drops his hands, and starts his launches from his waist quite often. At the end of the second, Diaz turned lefty and whammo, got smacked with a right that tested his chin.

Cayo turned lefty in the third, too. His confidence level was sky-high. Diaz ' jab wasn't on, not with Cayo maintaining a safe space. But he landed two leaping left hooks, so maybe the vet would find other tactics to carry the night. He closed the distance, aided by Cayo getting more winded, late in the fifth. The long-armed Cayo did better in close than you might think he would, however. And he wasn't scared by the bigger stage, sadly for Diaz. His stamina was solid in the seventh, and the eighth, and the ninth. Could Diaz ramp it up in the home stretch, because it looked to TSS like he was down considerably. He did, in fact, catch Cayo with a couple cracks in the last 20 seconds, but the stats (289-702 to 233/623 for Cayo) were against him. What about the judges? They concurred, seeing it 97-93, 96-94, 98-92 for Cayo.

As usual, Joe Tessitore called the play by play action, with Teddy Atlas chiming in for analysis. Brian Kenny presided over the studio. He was joined by the newly sleek "Fast, NOT Fat" Eddie Chambers, who checked out video of himself facing Derric Rossy in 2007, and when Kenny commented that he was much slimmer now, Chambers said that was a "disgusting version of me." Like to hear that level of self loathing, if it keeps him from puffing up again...

In the TV opener, Carl Davis Drumond (25-1 coming in; age 34; from Costa Rica; 237 pounds; coming off a loss to Ruslan Chagaev) met Rossy (21-2 entering; ex Boston College football player; age 29; 240 ¹/₂; 6-3; from Long Island, NY) in a heavyweight clash scheduled for 10 rounds or less. Chazz Witherspoon dropped out, giving Rossy the chance. The ex footballer

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mixed up his shots pretty well early. The pace wasn't of the barnburner variety, but Rossy looked to be first most of the time.

Atlas didn't take a shine to Rossy; he hammered him pretty good, considering Rossy was the far busier and effective pugilist. That said, Teddy was right in that Drumond looked uninspired. Maybe he was distracted by a recent allegation of rape lodged by his housekeeper, which was dismissed by authorities. He'd served time for the same in 1996, and in 2008 was accused by a prostitute of a sexual assault, which the announce team referenced. Rossy fought at a measured pace, easy to do since Drumond coasted for most of each round. Rossy got smacked low in the ninth, and got an extra breather. He'd eaten a few left hooks in the eighth, too. But an uppercut nailed Drumond, and sent him crashing into the corner. In the tenth, Drumond missed or ignored the memo that he needed a KO to win. Rossy had a 172-479 to 73-265 punch/stat edge, and the judges all agreed: 99-91 across the board, Rossi.

SPEEDBAG Atlas eulogized Vernon Forrest. Teddy said Vernon's character will be his lasting legacy. "Vernon, you're up there, watch over us, we love you," he finished, gravely.

---Shane Mosley phoned in to Kenny, and recalled his fights with Forrest, and expressed shock at the murder of the ex champion. In the ring, Mosley said, he had difficulty with Forrests' reach.

---At the Seminole, they offered a ten count salute to Forrest and trainer Rudy Pena, who died after a heart attack Thursday. Pena had been a member of the Cayo team, and was due to fly in for the fight Friday.