

Mikkel Kessler Starts Slow, But Finshes Perdomo Fast In Super Six Warmup

Written by Michael Woods

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For two rounds at the MCH MesseCenter in Herning, Denmark anyone watching the Mikkel Kessler-Gusmyr Perdomo main event had to ask themselves why in God's name did Team Kessler accept the mandatory challenge from an active, sometimes awkward lefthander, with Kessler the favorite to win the Showtime super middleweight tournament which kicks off next month. But then the third round kicked in, and WBA champion Kessler kicked some tail. He fought with urgency, and with a clear power edge, which he imposed on Perdomo with a knockdown in the third. Then, a right hand behind a jab hurt Perdomo badly, and Kessler wasted zero time fast forwarding in for the kill. The ref stepped in and pulled Kessler, in his second title defense, off a woogy challenger at :56 of the fourth round.

Kessler (age 30; 41-1; 167 ½; from Denmark) got off to a sharp start against Perdomo (age 33; 18-2; 167 ½; from Venezuela) in the first round, which was seen on tape delay in the US on Showtime.

The Kessler-Perdomo fight functioned as an appetizer of sorts, along with the Ward-Pudwill scrap, to the Super Six World Boxing Classic. Kessler took this risky bout because he's been off 11 months and wanted work, and he also is a fan of his WBA belt, which was on the line against the mandatory challenger.

Perdomo, a lefty, kept his right low. He tried to land straight lefts, and was active, sending note to anyone thinking that he was there just for a payday, and to give Kessler work. The Dane scored with a snappy combo with ten seconds to go, and impressed with his careful, concise style in the first. In the second, Perdomo showed persistent head movement, and his feet weren't cemented to the mat. He worked the Dane's body, and both had success with their jabbing. Perdomo opened eyes as he mixed up his shots, high and low. Were the Kessler people kicking themselves for choosing an active lefty for this "warmup" bout? In the third, Kessler stepped it up, with the lead right. He brought it to Perdomo, a wise idea as the Venezuelan was dictating pace. This was wholly different Kessler. A right hand sent Perdomo to the mat, and he took a mandatory eight, with a few seconds left in the round. Upon replay, viewers saw that a right hand landed on Perdomo's left shoulder. He was off balance, and the knockdown was legit. In the fourth, Kessler hurt Perdomo with a right, sent him back into the ropes, and looked to close the show. He fired about seven unanswered shots, some landing some not, but Perdomo was clearly dazed, and didn't protest when the ref stepped in and halted the proceedings.

Al Bernstein sat in Nick Charles' seat and hearing his voice brought forth a wave of sadness. Charles is on hiatus, battling cancer. Bernstein was joined by Antonio Tarver, who noted that Kessler and Ward would likely have their eyes on the task at hand, and wouldn't be looking past Perdomo and Pudwill.

Come back to TSS for David Avila's ringside report on the Andre Ward-Shelby Pudwill main event. Ward blasted mega-underdog Pudwill, who at least got himself into ripped condition, in

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the third, and he hit the deck midway through the round, off a left hook. Cut under his left eye, he wasn't answering, and the ref Pat Russell stopped the mismatch at 2:16 after Ward indicated he should do so. Russell should've done it without being prodded, for the record.