

## Hernandez, Fonseca Post Wins On ShoBox

Written by Michael Woods  
Friday, 23 October 2009 19:00

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Freddy Hernandez didn't blow anyone away in the ShoBox main event at the Laredo Event Center in Laredo, Texas on Saturday night, but he did everything pretty well as he earned a unanimous decision win over Damian Frias. Not particularly flashy, or powerful, or graceful was Hernandez, and he's not someone TSS is putting on a short list--or even, to be frank, a long list--of welters to watch, but if he keeps chugging away and winning, he could someday in the not too distant future find himself in some sort of a meaningful title fight.

The judges scored it 98-92, 98-92, 98-92 for the victor, in a fight that was pretty drama free, save for a tenth round flurry by Frias, who surprised and buzzed Hernandez with a burst of intensity and power. With the win, Hernandez was awarded the WBC Latino welterweight champion. The fans in attendance were underwhelming in their response to the victory announcement, and were generally placid during the ten rounds of action.

TSS readers know that the last time most of us watched boxing taking place in Texas, there was some controversy. In August, Juan Diaz clashed with Paul Malignaggi in Houston. The Texan Diaz won a decision, a much disputed decision, over the New Yorker Malignaggi, who complained bitterly in the ring after the outing. There was nothing resembling that drama on Saturday.

Hernandez (from Mexico, living in California; age 30; now 26-1-1 ND with 18 KOs) weighed 146 1/4 pounds, while Frias (from Cuba, living in Florida; age 33; 16-2) was 146 1/4 pounds.

The men had to wait for paramedics, as the medics were busy making sure Al Seeger was OK, so both were starting off somewhat cold after a three minute wait.

In the first, Hernandez showed that he wasn't put off by taking on a lefty. He went to the body, and was the busier boxer, as Frias started off flat. In round two, viewers saw Hernandez put together combos, and then move to his left. Frias didn't show a hook, so Hernandez had the right idea. In the third, Frias' lack of power again stood out. He looked like he was getting some work in on a heavy bag, instead of ripping shots with meaning. Frias had Hernandez knowing he was in a fight with a few body shots, but he took more severe punishment to his own torso. Hernandez doesn't blow you away with flash or pop, but he is a steady worker.

Frias' left got through in the seventh, a few times. Could he get back into the fight late? In the tenth, Frias landed a straight left and Hernandez spit his mouthpiece out to buy time. It was reinserted at a break, with two minutes to go. Didn't see that coming...But it turned out to be an aberration; Frias couldn't sustain it or repeat it.

We'd go to the cards...

In the TV opener, Victor Fonseca (age 28; from Puerto Rico; 16-0 coming in; 122 pounds) took on the NABF super bantamweight champion Al Seeger (age 29; 28-4 entering; from Georgia;

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122 pounds). In Seeger's last bout, in Dallas in April, he beat 24-year old Mexican-born Texas resident Benjamin Flores, and Flores tragically succumbed to a brain injury five days after the fight. Viewers, and Seeger, wondered if he'd be able to compete with as much zeal as he did before the tragedy.

In the first, he looked to be in solid form. He wasn't noticeably pulling his punches, for instance. The lefty Fonseca is a slick boxer, but he lost round one to the more aggressive Seeger. A left uppercut in the round two buzzed the champ, but he collected his wits. A butt opened a nick under Seeger's right eye. In the third, Seeger's porous defense, not helped by his propensity to keep his hands low, was on display. His right counters were working for him, but too often Fonseca's quicker hands would find the mark too easily.

Seeger had a decent sixth, none too soon, because things looked like they were slipping away. Fonseca looked a little gassed and his hand speed diminished in the seventh. Perhaps his will had dipped a bit, as Seeger kept on chugging, even after he was eating a steady diet of Fonseca's launches. But then the momentum shifted again; Fonseca got a second wind, in the ninth. A straight left put Seeger on the mat, after he'd turned away following a period of absorption, and the ref smartly stopped the match. The TKO came at 1:41, after the winner got busy inside and ripped the last bit of energy from Seeger, who was ahead on two of three cards after eight.

NOTE: A visit to the hospital showed a slight brain bleed in Seeger. He was in stable condition, but was scheduled to have a plate implanted to fix a fracture of his skull.

Regarding Fonseca's "dirty" tactics, I just rewatched two random rounds, the fourth and the seventh, and didn't see one egregious Fonseca foul. Can a reader with some time on their hands alert me to which rounds Fonseca was at his worst, please? Because I saw him landing crisp, clean punches, plenty of them.