

FROWNS IN YOUNGSTOWN: Martinez Wins UD12 Over Pavlik In AC

Written by Michael Woods
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Sergio Martinez had his hand raised after getting the better of Kelly Pavlik in the main event at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, New Jersey on Saturday night in a fight shown on HBO.

But lets go out of our way to raise the hands of the judges, who did the right thing, and rewarded the pugilism of the slick, agile, energetic Martinez, who was able to get in, and get out on the more plodding Pavlik. Judge Metcalfe saw it 115-112 , judge Perez had it 115-111 , and judge Ramirez saw it 116-111. But Pavlik, after a cruddy start, had a decent middle of the fight, before Martinez got reinvigorated, so no one knew what the judges would say they saw. Bravo, all, you did good.

Martinez went 230-686, while Pavlik went 164-533 on the night.

The WBO-WBC middleweight champion Pavlik (36-1 entering; from Youngstwon, Ohio; age 28; 6-2; 159 1/2 pounds) rehydrated to 178, while the WBC junior middleweight tilist Martinez (44-2-2 entering; from Argentina, lived in Spain, now trains in CA; age 35; 5-10; 159 1/2) to 167.

In the first, the lefty Martinez looked quick. His agility stood out. We wondered if Pavliks weight edge would really be an edge, or if Martinez could use his movement to greater effect? Some blood formed on Pavliks left eye after two minutes, but the cut was tiny. In the second, Martinez scored with power lefts. His foe looked sharp, and cocky, in a good way. His feints consistently bothered Pavlik, made him flinch, kept him from throwing.

In the third, Martinez kept moving to his left, away from Pavliks main weapon, the straight right. The blood dripped from Kellys eye, and he showed a bit more urgency. In the fourth, Pavlik still couldnt catch Martinez. Never able to land more than one before Martinez scooted away, one wondered if and when Pavlik would simply get frustrated and reckless. In the fifth, Martinez barked at Pavlik after the Ohioan landed. Some swelling showed up on Martinez right eye. The distance between the men closed some. Was Martinez giving his legs a rest, or was he losing steam?

In the sixth, Martinez got in, got out, got the job done. But Pavlik was getting more accurate. Jack Loew told his man Pavlik after the round that he was piling up rounds. In the seventh, we noted that Martinez hadnt landed a straight left in a few rounds. Pavlik, with a right, scored a knockdown at the 1:23 mark. It looked like balance was the biggest reason for the extra point. In eight, we refer back to the fifth..Martinez steam was indeed lagging. In the ninth, blood dripped from Pavliks right cheek and right eyelid. The Argentine, now again winging straight lefts, looked like he had a double espresso before the round began. He put four punch combos together, and Pavliks face dripped mercilessly. The right eye looked bad. The cutman didnt stem it during the break, either.

In the tenth, Martinez looked like rounds 1-4 Martinez again. The ring doc asked the cutman if he was using Surgicell, and the cutman said thats what he was using. Was it past its sell-by

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date? In the 11th, Martinez targeted that right eye with his left. Pavlik tried to be aggressive, but he was a step behind. Youve gotta push like youve never pushed, Loew said after. We need to win this round. In the 12th, Martinez threw one-twos, kept moving to his left, stayed light on his feet. Pavlik didnt let it all hang out. Would he regret that? Wed go to the cards to see. Martinez celebrated as the bell rang, while Pavlik went to his corner to get the blood wiped off his face.

SPEEDBAG Pavlik after said hed exercise his rematch clause. He was all class, no whining or crying, even though the cutman work wasnt stellar. He said, yes, making 160 is hard, but he will stick there. Martinez said hes happy to give Pavlik another crack, and also would welcome a crack at Paul Williams.

---Phillys Mike Jones (21-0) got a TKO5 win over Hector Munoz on the undercard. The Philly fighter was in pretty easy, as the losers 18-3 mark was built up in New Mexico, his home base.

---Manny Steward said he thinks Pavlik should go to 168. What about you, TSS U?

---Have you seen many better examples of pacing oneself than Martinez wily conservation of energy?

---Does anyone hold blame for Team Pavlik for signing on to fight such a mobile man?