

Amir Khan Is The Goods; Stops Malignaggi In 11th

Written by Michael Woods
Saturday, 15 May 2010 15:00

Amir Khan sent notice that he isn't some resume-padded pretender in the main event at The Theater at Madison Square Garden on Saturday night. He ate up Paulie Malignaggi, who truth be told looked a bit flat from the start, and snagged a TKO11 with ref Steve Smoger stepping in to save the New Yorker from any more pounding.

Malignaggi (age 29; now 27-4) weighed 139 pounds, while the WBA junior welterweight champion Khan (age 23; from Bolton, England; 23-1) was 138 1/2 pounds. The victor showed that he is the total package, as he lead, and countered, and showed superior ring intelligence all the way through. He should be hard to handle for anyone at 140, though Tim Bradley could still be a bridge too far.

Ref Smoger had docs look at Paulie late in the game, but the New Yorker pleaded for more time after the tenth. After, Khan gave Paulie props. The loser said he'd have to think about continuing, that he doesn't want to be a steppingstone.

Appetites were whetted for the scrap after the weigh in brawl on Friday. Khan shoved Malignaggi as the two men did a post weigh in staredown at the Essex House hotel. Some reports blamed the New York State Athletic Commission, but I asked around, from those in attendance, and it appears that the party was crashed, essentially, by Khan fans and/or posse-members who had their soccer hooligan gameface on. There were shouts of Allahu Akbar (Allah is the greatest!), an extremely incendiary war-cry in NYC, site of the Sept. 11, 2001 World Trade Center attack by Muslim extremists, by people associated with Khan, one person present said. Also, one pro-Khan knucklehead shouted an anti-Semitic slur at Joe Antonacci, the ring announcer.

All in all, as far as I could discern, ample security was on hand, and it was a bushel of bad apples from the UK who were intent on causing a ruckus.

In the co-feature, junior welter Nate Campbell (age 38; from Florida) waited patiently for Victor Ortiz (age 23; from Kansas, living in CA) to self destruct. Too patiently; the kid didn't come apart. He cracked, and moved, and stayed on message while Campbell followed, but without enough pressure or pop to really matter. Nate went down, from a push, in the first. Nate knew he needed to do something big late; he aimed to drop a hammer right, but Ortiz saw them coming. We'd go to the cards, without any drama in the air: 100-89, 100-89, 99-90, Ortiz. Good resume builder for Vic. Is Campbell that old, or is Ortiz that good?

The kid, to me, wastes too much motion, like Cotto late in fights, but it worked on this night. What's your take, TSS U?

Check back for George Kimball's detailed ringside report.