LOS ANGELES-A night filled with catch weight fights sizzled led by the main event that saw Renato “Babalu” Sobral shrink to 195 pounds to meet “Ruthless” Robbie Lawler and win by decision on Wednesday.

A crowd of more than 5,000 at Nokia Theater saw Sobral and other fighters shrink or add weight to clash in Strikeforce’s fight card in Los Angeles. The fight card was televised by Showtime.

On this night Sobral perhaps salvaged his career and a possible showdown with local MMA legend Dan Henderson in the near future. But it wasn’t easy.

Sobral (36-8) used his height and size to offset Lawler’s left-handed power. A mixture of kicks and punches from the Brazilian kept the smaller left handed power puncher Lawler from getting off.

Lawler (17-6) stepped up the pace in the second round but ran into some Sobral right hand kicks that seemed to hurt. Lawler feigned injury to lure Babalu but the Brazilian could not be enticed.

Sobral was bleeding profusely over the left eye and it got worse with Lawler’s jabs. The Brazilian slipped into survival mode but never stopped punching as Lawler worked to set up the knockout punch. It never landed.

All three judges scored the fight 29-28 for Babalu.

“I didn’t do what I wanted to,” said Sobral who was a slight under dog. “Rob Lawler is a good puncher.”

Lawler displayed a good chin but never could land that big blow to turn the fight around.

“I was disappointed,” Lawler said after the fight. “I took too many shots.”

Sobral needed the win to take him back on top with a possible world title match at the light heavyweight division. But he prefers to fight Temecula’s Henderson.

“I would rather fight him,” Sobral said of Henderson who was present at the fight.

Cyborg KOs Zaromskis

Evangelista Cyborg (18-13) erupted in the first round with punches and kicks against San Jose’s Marius Zaromskis (13-5). Immediately the Brazilian hurt the transplanted Lithuanian who tried to rally with his own combinations but kept getting hurt with counters. When Zaromskis attempted a leaping knee he ran into a Cyborg short right hand and was knocked cold at 2:38 of

the first round of a welterweight bout.

Kennedy wins

Tim Kennedy (12-2) worked his ground game and jumped on Trevor Prangley's back where he worked a rear naked choke. After a few seconds Prangley (22-6-1) tapped out at 3:35 while on his feet and Kennedy wrapped around him like a boa constrictor.

Noons gets split

San Diego's KJ Noons (9-2) survived a rocky first round against L.A.'s Conor Heun (8-4) in a bout fought at 160 to win a split decision in an entertaining three round clash.

Heun managed to survive some big punches from Noons in the first round before taking down the San Diego lightweight and winning a ground and pound battle in the opening round.

Noons found his rhythm and learned a lesson from that first round. In the second he kept his distance and refrained from firing too many punches before scooting out of range of the clinches. A right hand wobbled and bloodied Heun but Noons was too fatigued to follow it up.

In the third round both fighters were pretty spent and the action was subdued. But the last 30 seconds saw Noons land two left hooks and a right knee that sent Heun backwards on the cage but he survived the round.

One judge saw it 30-27 for Heun, the other two saw it 29-28 for Noons.

Prelims

In a catch weight battle Jeremy Umphries (5-1) submitted RJ Clifford (3-2) with a rear naked choke at 2:27 of the second round. Both MMA fighters work out of Los Angeles.

Riverside's Hugo Sandoval (2-2) was deducted a point for kicking someone on the floor but rallied in the next round to pummel L.A.'s Marcus Kowal (2-1) for a knockout at 43 seconds of the second round in a lightweight bout.