Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 23 July 2010 19:00

There was nothing but winners in the main event, and on the undercard of ESPNs Friday Night Fights, which took place at the Tachi Palace in, Lemoore, California. Thats because nobody melted during the night of fights, somewhat amazing considering that the temp ringside at the start of the card was around 112 degrees.

But if we had to pick one standout, the gold star goes to WBA light heavyweight champion Beibut Shumenov, who outclassed too-cool Viacheslov Uzelkov enroute to a unanimous decision. Shumie, in just his tenth pro fight, was the harder worker, and stayed composed after he got knocked down in the first. He was awarded with scores of 117-109, 118-108, 118-108.

Shumenov (from Kazakhstan; age 26) was 175 pounds, while Uzelkov (from the Ukraine; age 31) was 172. He opened some eyes, after closing a few with a loss, and a controversial SD win in a rematch, with Gabriel Campillo.

Shumie banged with the left hook in the first. But he went down, off a lead left hook, two minutes in. Uzie is a calm guy, who looks for spots. Shumie is a busybody, who loads up on his shots, sending a message to judges that hes in it to win it. At the end of the third, a long right sent Uzie to the mat. One knockdown apiece through three. Uzie wears earmuffs, and Shumie, who used his legs to both get angles and get out of return-fire-range, smartly placed punches around, under and through that guard in the fourth. Uzie just didnt come off with the desire his foe did. Could he bring it on late, after falling behind through six? Uzies insistence on ignoring the jab certainly stood out. Teddy Atlas had it 88-81 after nine, so it looked like Uzie would need a late charge to even it up or win. Shumie kept pressing, being the aggressor, looking to score and hurt his foe, in the 11th. He didnt go into a shell, or start to move simply to avoid contact, to play out the string, and hold his lead. After 12, wed go to the cards.

Super bantamweight Rico Ramos got the nod, and went to 17-0, scored a UD over Cuahtemoc Vargas (15-3-1) in an eight rounder. The judges spoke, seeing it 80-72, 79-73, 80-72.

Brian Kenny presided over the studio, with Dan Rafael, and then Delvin Rodriguez, by his side. Kenny talked about the switch for Wladimir Klitschko, from Alexander Povetkin to Samuel Peter. Youll recall that Wlad went down twice against Peter in 2005, but got the decision. Rafael said he thinks both men are better now. I tend to think Wlad is, but Peter peaked a few years ago.

Teddy Atlas admitted that his guy Povetkin could use more seasoning before he fights a Klitschko. The analyst/trainer said that Povetkin told him he trusted him, that if Atlas wanted to get him more experience, then hed go along with that.

Rafael then weighed in on the Manny-Money blowup. He said hes known Leonard Ellerbe for awhile, and hasnt known him to be a liar, so hes not sure why Ellerbe said no negotiations had taken place. He mentioned that a Andre Berto-Miguel Cotto fight could be in the works for the fall. Me, Id be surprised if Cotto takes that.....