

Scotland's Craig McEwan Gets By Dangerous Danny Perez

Written by David A. Avila
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TEMECULA-The sold out crowd let out a display of shock when Craig McEwan was called the winner over Danny Perez after 10 rounds of a very close middleweight battle at Pechanga Casino on Friday.

Although Scotland's McEwan (19-0, 10 KOs) brought along a large support group including Golden Boy Promotion's Oscar De La Hoya, most were surprised that he was given the victory after getting periodically bludgeoned by San Diego's Perez (34-8, 17 KOs). But he fought back.

McEwan had his jaw to thank for surviving numerous big blows early in the fight. That and his legs gave him the opportunity to take it to the score cards.

"I feel like crap, I let down Freddy (Roach) my best friend," said McEwan. "I didn't turn up properly today."

Perez turned up the heat early with some wide left hooks that had McEwan a little wobbled in the opening rounds. But the big Scotsman survived.

A clash of heads opened up a cut over McEwan's right eye and then he was flung to the ground by the gritty veteran Perez. It seemed to shake up the Hollywood-based fighter.

"The cut put me off and I hurt my ankle," McEwan said.

In the third round McEwan began to do his own thing that included letting loose light-hitting combinations to the body and head. Tap, tap tap McEwan let loose then would proceed to move out of range. Tap, tap tap he did it round after round.

Perez seemed to get his rhythm in the fifth, sixth and seventh rounds and began landing solid right hands that echoed inside the sold out arena. McEwan took the blows and resumed to his tap, tap tap. For every howitzer there was that submachine gun return fire.

The San Diego fighter began rough housing McEwan and using his veteran tricks to offset the Scottish fighters attempts to escape the inside fighting. Perez slipped when he had to slip and let the light taps land until he found an opening and countered with a booming right or left.

The judges were not impressed by Perez but the crowd was. Judge Lou Moret scored it 95-95 but judges Fritz Werner and Zac Young had it 96-93 for McEwan and a majority decision.

"I still feel disappointed in my performance. He is a tough guy and a win is a win. I was only at Wild Card (boxing gym) for a week I was in Scotland for my second child," said McEwan.

Freddie Roach felt the decision was satisfactory.

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'Danny was a strong kid and Craig let him get off on too many power shots. Craig outscored with more punches,' said Roach.

Perez understood that he was not the favorite to win the fight but felt he did more than enough to win.

'I feel good. I thought I pulled it off,' said Perez who lives in nearby San Diego. 'This is boxing. I thought they could of at least given me a draw. I'm a little disappointed.'

In the co-main event Charles Huerta dropped Jonathan Arias in the first round with a right to the head and left hook to the body at the end of the first round. He let him off the hook and ended up going nearly six rounds. Another left hook in the body in the sixth round dropped Arias who beat the count. Huerta charged Arias and fired some combinations to the head and then lowered the boom with yet another left hook to the body. Referee Tony Crebs stopped the fight for a knockout at 1:40 of the sixth round.

'It was a tough fight. In the third round I got a second wind and I started landing body shots,' said Huerta. 'This is my first win with a body shot.'

Arias blamed his eating habits for the loss.

'I ate late and that body shot hurt me. I thought I was going to throw up,' said Arias.

Other bouts

Las Vegas welterweight Anthony Martinez (4-0, 4 KOs) scored his fourth knockout in four fights with a crushing body shot to Nick Brannies (1-6) in 37 seconds of the first round. A left hook to the body did the job.

Junior middleweight Keith Thurman (13-0, 12 KOs) knocked down Stalinn Lopez (7-1) in the first round with a left hook then knocked him out at 1:17 of the second round with a pretty counter left hook.

'I caught him with a left hook on the top of the head,' said Thurman.

In a super middleweight showdown Cerresso Fort (10-0, 8 KOs) won by unanimous decision over Steven Macomber (3-9-1) after four rounds.

Michigan's Dion Savage (9-0, 5 KOs) won by unanimous decision over D.C.'s Demetrius Davis (20-23-5) in a six round super middleweight bout. Davis never allowed Savage to catch him with anything flush. The scores were all 59-54 for Savage who now fights out of Las Vegas.