

Melinda Cooper Dominates In Mexico

Written by David A. Avila
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Mexico got a second glimpse of Melinda "La Maravilla" Cooper and a second look at what she can do.

Cooper (21-0, 11 KOs) battered Miriam Avila (20-4) for a second time but this time in a different locale as she won convincingly on Saturday by unanimous decision in Guasave, Mexico amid the heat and humidity of Jalisco.

"It was really hot," said Cooper, 25, who fought Avila a year ago in Mexico City. "We had to warm up outside where it was cooler."

Once inside the arena, Cooper let the punches fly and immediately established that the second time around was going to be more dominating.

"I was hitting her and hitting her but I couldn't knock her out," said Cooper adding that this fight was easier because of their earlier encounter. "She was like a punching bag the last two rounds. I hit her whenever I wanted. I really didn't get hit."

James Pena, who manages and trains Cooper, said one judge gave Cooper a pair of 10-8 rounds.

"If that fight was in the U.S. they definitely would have stopped it," said Pena. "The Mexican fighter did enough to keep the referee from ruling it a knock out."

The speedy knockout puncher Cooper was intent on stopping her Mexican opponent. But at the end had admiration for Avila whose (3-4) record on Boxrec is incorrect..

"She was really tough," said Cooper. "Any other girl would have quit. She is the toughest girl I ever fought before."

Unlike the first time Cooper fought in Mexico City, this crowd was appreciative of the fistic talents of the Las Vegas prizefighter. They cheered her going in and leaving the ring.

"It was really nice," Cooper says of the reception by the Mexican crowd. "The people were real open and warm."

Speaking of warm, because of the intense heat Pena hired a man to fan Cooper and Mexico's Mariana Juarez before entering the blistering hot arena.

"He had this piece of cardboard," said Pena of the male wind machine.

Cooper is tentatively scheduled to fight on Sept. 15 in Las Vegas said her manager.

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'She needs to get back in the ring,' Pena said of Cooper. 'Melinda hadn't fought in 14 months. That's way too long.'

A world title fight possibly awaits in late October or November in Costa Rica.

Meanwhile, it's back to working two jobs for Cooper.

'I'm already working today,' said Cooper on Tuesday. 'I get a week off from training then it's back to the gym.'

Other boxing chatter

Antonio Margarito is expected to seek reinstatement by the California State Athletic Commission on Wednesday in Los Angeles. He was suspended for attempting to use illegal hand wraps prior to his fight with Shane Mosley in January 2009. Margarito lost that fight. Top Rank has already signed a contract with Margarito to face Manny Pacquiao on Nov. 13. The preferred venue is Las Vegas, but Nevada will not license the Mexican fighter unless CSAC approves it first.

Riverside's Mauricio 'El Maestro' Herrera (14-1, 7 KOs) fights Hector Alatorre (16-10) of Tulare at Omega Products International on Friday Aug. 20 in Corona. Also on the card Rancho Cucamonga's Malcolm Franklin (2-0) battles Indio's Javier Barragan (1-0) in a flyweight bout. More information (714) 935-0900.

Dominick Cruz (15-1) faces Joseph Benavidez (12-1) once again but this time for the World Extreme Cagefighting bantamweight title on Wednesday Aug. 18, at the Pearl inside the Palms Casino in Las Vegas. Cruz, the champion, is the only fighter to beat Benavidez. For more information (800) 745-3000.

Former light heavyweight and cruiserweight champion Tomasz Adamek (41-1, 27 KOs) of Poland fights Michael Grant (46-3, 34 KOs) in a heavyweight battle on Saturday Aug. 21, in Newark, New Jersey. Adamek's last fight was a victory over Chris Arreola.

Norwalk's Carlos Molina (13-0, 7 KOs) won by fifth round technical knockout over Philippine southpaw Gerry Gonzalez (8-2-1, 4 KOs) in a junior welterweight battle on Friday. The fight took place in Pico Rivera Sports Arena. Also winning was Eloy Perez (18-0-2, 5 KOs) by unanimous decision over Derrick Campos (20-9, 11 KOs) in a junior lightweight bout.

Riverside Convention Center will be the site of a boxing and mixed martial arts fight card featuring a main event between heavyweights Damon 'Bolo' Wills (28-2-1, 21 KOs) and Javier 'Monster' Mora (22-6-1, 18 KOs) on Saturday Sept. 11. For ticket information call MEZ Sports (888) 222-3183.

Mexico's Mariana 'Mexican Barbie' Juarez (26-2-3, 12 KOs) knocked out Diana Gonzalez (5-3) in the fifth round of their flyweight fight on Saturday in Guasave, Mexico.

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Felix Cora Jr. (21-3-2, 11 KOs) faces Rubin Williams (29-11-1, 16 KOs) in a 10-round cruiserweight bout on Thursday in Texas City, Texas. The even is promoted by former heavyweight contender Lou Savarese.

Marcela "La Tigresa" Acuna (34-5, 16 KOs) defends the WBC junior featherweight title against Brazil's Rosilette Dos Santos (21-4, 13 KOs) in Formosa, Argentina on Friday Aug. 20. Acuna, 33, also holds the WBA version of the title.

Jorge Paez Jr. (25-3, 17 KOs) meets Javier Hernandez (6-9-1, 5 KOs) in a welterweight fight on Friday Aug. 20, in Mexicali, Mexico. Paez is the son of Jorge "Maromero" Paez a former world champion.

Junior lightweight slugger Joksan Hernandez (20-2, 13 KOs) clashes with Marlon Aguilar (24-9-1, 17 KOs) in the main event Saturday Aug. 21, in Tijuana, Mexico. Also, junior featherweight top contender Jackie Nava (21-3-2, 10 KOs) faces Maria Miranda (13-4, 8 KOs) in a 10-round bout.

Middleweight contenders Marco Antonio Rubio (47-5-1, 40 KOs) and Jose Luis Zertuche (21-6-3, 16 KOs) battle it out in Guanajuato, Mexico on Saturday Aug. 21, to decide who remains a contender. Both Rubio and Zertuche lost to former middleweight champion Kelly Pavlik.

Argentina's female fighter Yesica Bopp (13-0, 5 KOs) successfully defended the WBO and WBA junior flyweight titles against Ana Arrazola (17-5-3, 15 KOs) on Saturday in Santa Fe, Argentina.

Mexico's Miguel Vazquez (26-3, 12 KOs) grabbed the vacant IBF featherweight world title with a unanimous decision over South Korea's Ji Hoon Kim (21-6, 15 KOs) on Saturday in Texas.

Riverside's undefeated Miguel Garcia (23-0, 19 KOs) knocked out southpaw Cornelius Lock (19-6-1, 12 KOs) in the 11th round to win the IBF featherweight eliminator on Saturday in Texas. Garcia formerly lived in Oxnard, but now lives and trains in Riverside under his father Eduardo Garcia.

WBA bantamweight world titleholder Anselmo Moreno (30-1-1, 10 KOs) kept his title and won the rematch over Venezuela's Nehomar Cermeno (19-2, 11 KOs) by split decision on Saturday in Panama.

Florida's Jenna Shiver (12-4-1) beat Colorado's Brittany Cruz (7-4-1) by unanimous decision after eight rounds in a junior featherweight bout on Friday in Tampa, Florida.

New York City's Melissa "Huracan" Hernandez (13-2-2) won a wide decision against New Mexico's Victoria Cisneros (5-10-2) on Saturday in Bernalillo, New Mexico. Hernandez, a lightweight, is considered one of the top fighters in the world.