

Valero Makes DeMarco Corner Throw In The Towel

Written by Michael Woods

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Edwin Valero's reputation hasn't blossomed quite like many thought it would as he amassed KO1s in the first part of his career and even after he won super feather and lightweight crowns. Much of that falls in his lap, as he fought away from the US, and took on subpar and faded foes in his defenses. But Valero went a ways towards bolstering his buzz with a Technical KO win over Antonio DeMarco at the Monterrey Arena in Monterrey, Mexico on Saturday night.

The WBC lightweight champion destroyed the will of the 24-year old DeMarco, who figured he'd weather an early Valero storm and then click into gear. It never clicked for DeMarco, though it looked like it might when an errant elbow opened up a vicious gash on Valero. But the champ shrugged that off, and showed a knack for pugilism that many thought he didn't possess. After nine rounds in the main event of a Showtime broadcast, the DeMarco corner knew it was a matter of time before their kid was going to get dropped and stopped, so they waved the white flag of surrender.

Valero (now 27-0; from Venezuela, lives in Vegas) weighed 135 pounds , while DeMarco (from Mexico) was 135 as well.

DeMarco's jab opened a cut in the first, and a mega slice gushed in round two. The ref had the doc look at the wound, which looked like it had been caused by a mini machete. An accidental elbow, like something Kenny Florian might've thrown on purpose, actually did the damage. If the doc had halted the clash no one would've been surprised, as you could see the serial number on Valero's skull. Valero didn't shrink--he fought more furiously, but DeMarco, who did get a point deducted for the infraction, stayed pretty cool and dialed in. Maybe he'd get into those middle rounds, maybe Valero would get frustrated if he didn't get his way...

In the third, DeMarco backed up, but made sure he didn't get hung up on the ropes or in a corner. But Valero, with the cut on his right eye dripping as well, did score with his power left, and the challenger seemed to shrug them off with relative ease. Would that continue? Not so much..he buckled a bit in the fourth.

We saw the judges' scores, as per WBC rules, so viewers and those in the arena knew that the arbiters had Valero ahead through four. The score was piped over the PA with a minute left in the fifth, and DeMarco dialed it up in the remaining time. In the sixth, Valero ate a right hook, as DeMarco realized that he didn't have all night to make an impression. But that wasn't enough to take the round. In the seventh, Valero was in control. He isn't just a wildman banger; yes, he keeps his hands low, but he has better footwork than he's given credit for. In the eighth, Valero put together punches in bunches, got in, got off and got going smartly. The DeMarco corner contemplated pulling the plug after the eighth. He looked gassed, and after the ninth, he didn't protest when his corner said No Mas. To be really honest, DeMarco getting this shot was the product of skillful management, but he needs more seasoning before he gets such an opportunity again. His lack of experience is the only thing that detracts slightly from the impressiveness of the winner's outing.

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In the TV opener pitting two free swingers, Argentine Luis Carlos Abregu (now 28-0; age 27) took the decision from Richard Gutierrez (24-4-1) in a welterweight tenner. Ab was down in the second, Gutierrez in the third, and it looked like this thing would never reach ten. Abregu is a rough diamond who has been brought along smartly; he's No. 6 in the WBC.