

Shawn Porter Gets UD Over Russell Jordan On FNF

Written by Michael Woods
Friday, 19 February 2010 18:00

With a gaggle of hometown fans cheering on his every movement, and a foe with two stoppage losses in his last three outings standing in front of him, a quickie KO from Shawn Porter was almost a foregone conclusion entering the main event of ESPN's Friday Night Fights at the Wolstein Center in Cleveland, Ohio. But that foe, Russell Jordan, was supremely uncooperative. He made Porter work hard for every round of the ten round scrap.

The favored Ohioan did indeed get the W, by scores of 97-2, 97-92, 100-89, but will likely cause some prospectors, fight fans on the lookout for next generation stars, to drop Porter down a notch or so. It looks like those ten kayoes he notched on the ride to here have to be taken with a grain of Southern salt, seeing as how they came against lesser light hitters from softer states.

As he looks back on the night, however, I'm guessing Porter will see this event as a potent learned lesson; he had to contend with a wily, long limbed opponent who trained his tail off, and wasn't going with the script. So he had to improvise, and he didn't to too badly. Thing is, he has some mileage on him, after fighting over 250 amateur fights, so it will be interesting to see if the 22-year-old can sand off some bad habits, and make some noise in the next couple of years at 154.

Porter (12-0 entering, with 10 KOs) weighed 152, while Jordan (15-6 entering; from Rochester, NY; age 27) weighed the same.

In the first, Porter had trouble with the long, tall Jordan's reach a little bit. The underdog wrapped up Porter when he came in close, and the first saw bountiful clinches. In round two, Porter got into a rhythm. Then he ate a right hook, which staggered him with 40 seconds to go. Bounce, bounce, bounce--Porter seems to use quite a bit of energy hopping up and down. Wonder if he'll stick with that or calm it down? In the third, the round Teddy Atlas said Porter could well end the show, he didn't end things. Jordan hung around in the fourth too, scoring a couple of points with his right hook and some body blows. For such a long limbed guy, not sure why the 6-2 Jordan doesn't go jab happy...The left eye of Porter showed a slice in the fifth, but it didn't look like anything severe. The shorter man, Porter, chose to work from the outside, mostly, by the midpoint. Jordan's confidence grew as he figured he'd seen Porter's hardest shots. By the eighth, he's shoot the jab, knowing he wouldn't get countered by a quickie/nasty. In the ninth, the ref Randy Jarvis took a point from Jordan for spitting the mouthpiece, which came out after he got hit by a hook. Wrong call, Jarvis...hope you get a talking to from the commish out there. In the tenth round, Porter kept hammering away, looking to score and finish it; give him points for not getting bummed out, and losing steam after he didn't get an early KO. We'd go to the cards...

Shaq presented the lowdown on the main event. "Clevelaaand," he bellowed, after picking the hometowner to get the nod. Browns coach Eric Mangini did a stint ringside during the TV opener; he's pals with Atlas, back from when he coached the Jets.

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Bernard Hopkins joined Brian Kenny in studio. BHop talked up his April 3 rematch with Roy Jones. He said he and Jones had negotiated for this redo more than 10 times over the years since they first tangled in 1993. Kenny asked Hopkins why not fight a young gun, like Chad Dawson. The fighter said that's coming, down the line. "That'll be a good way to exit out," he said. "That'll be a goal for me, clean out the light heavyweight division." Bless Kenny, he's no softball tosser. He asked Hopkins how they can sell the fight after Roy got kayoed by Danny Green in round one. He followed up asking how they'll get people to pony up PPV dollars for it. "People respect our legacy," answered Hopkins. Again...Kenny rocks, straight up. "I think it's gonna be one of the historic fights of all times." Kenny chuckled at that bit of hyperbole.

Lanard Lane (11-0; from Texas; trained by Ronnie Shield) beat Martin Tucker (7-5; from Toledo, Ohio) via UD8 in a junior welter beef. Lane is a righthander with a super snappy jab, which he has a tendency to not double up on. Still a work in progress, he sometimes sticks around, waiting for a receipt, as Atlas might say, instead of scooting out of range after firing. Let's not be overly negative, though; the full-time firefighter has an eye of the tiger style, and we saw that when he raked Tucker on the ropes for 30 seconds in the second. The distance closed midway through, and it became a phonebooth fight. Tucker proved to be an A grade litmus test type; he didn't back up, and quite obviously came to the show in superior shape. He had Lane backing up midway through, at times. Tucker ate mad shots in the seventh, and a stoppage loomed. Lane ripped high and low; would he let Tucker go the distance? Yes he would, only because Tucker is a pro's pro. His face screamed loser, but his conduct said the opposite.