Written by Phil Woolever
Saturday, 20 March 2010 17:00

DUSSELDORF - Wladimir Klitschko scored the most dramatic knockout of his career by creaming "Fast" Eddie Chambers with about 10 seconds left in a contest Klitschko controlled throughout. Chambers, 209 pounds, showed he was a class act throughout the promotion, even in various stages of a damaging defeat, while Klitschko, 244, offered more stinging evidence he has developed into an upper class champion.

Klitschko, now 54-3 (48), was in fantastic condition. He appeared to have reached a new peak, and if this level holds true, it's a whole new argument about his mauling merits.

A near sell out of around 50,000 would have been content to watch Klitschko pile up another typical one-sided decision or TKO, and that's what it looked like would happen before Klitschko scored a probable nomination for knockout of the year.

Referee Genaro Rodriguez waved it off with Chambers splattered across the lower strands in an unkind dreamland for an official time at 2:55 of the 12th, but in reality the fight was pretty much over when Klitschko almost dropped Chambers in the second round with a huge straight right.

Chambers, 35-2 (18), arrived in Dusseldorf ready to back up his claim as the best heavyweight who hailed from the United States. He backed up all right, but not at all how he, nor the many rational observers who felt Klitschko was in for a demanding defense, envisioned.

"I promised a knockout and I'm glad I could deliver it," said an unmarked Klitschko."But I had to take my time and not only try to stop him. Chambers was very fast. I had to work him down."

"The punch landed, that's what happened," said Chambers. "I don't remember much after that. He's a great fighter. A guy his size with his skill. His jab is hard to see coming, even for a guy with my kind of speed, head movement and defensive ability. It's hard to get away from. My corner was telling me I had to pick it up and try to mount some kind of offense instead of just watching him throw punches."

Klitschko couldn't pin Chambers down until the very end, but he controlled the challenger by staying busy with a jab that landed from various tricky distances or forced Chambers around the ring like a cattle prod.

Chambers tried to counter over Klitschko's extended arm or lead to the body, but he could never get past their size disparity.

Chambers immediately showed he planned on being a very physical aggressor when he picked the larger Klitschko up and dumped him on the canvas twice in the early going.

The festive crowd screamed at many Klitschko punches Chambers actually picked off, but even

if the whaps didn't get through cleanly, they blasted Chambers into a reeling defensive posture he couldn't escape all night. Chambers sustained a cut eyelid in the opening frame and things went downhill from there.

"I was surprised when he kept taking my punches on his arms," reflected Klitschko. "I thought that was a very funny way to fight me. Because I knew it was hurting him, and I was moving him then hitting him where I wanted to."

Chambers managed to stick around through enough boxing skills to keep him out of danger most of the fight but he never could break even, even for a moment.

By round eight, it was Klitschko who was up on his toes moving well, while Chambers had the look of a beaten fighter.

As the fight wound down, Klitschko actually went into a higher gear and looked like he could go twenty more rounds. The fight got to the point where Chambers' corner must have thought about stopping it.

They did, but not as expected, when Chambers got a few minutes time out to replace a torn glove before the tenth began. The assembled swarm whistled in protest as if Team Chambers was pulling a "fast" one. If so, welcome to Philly. At least they never gave up.

Klitschko had trouble pinning the ducking and dodging Chambers down again for a bit after that, but soon the Kman rights were thudding in again as a desperate Chambers was driven wildly around the ring.

Chambers finally scored with a decent punch but it was a needle in a punchstat haystack as Klitschko blinked it off. Klitschko's dominant performance would have been an impressive if unspectacular triumph anyway, but then the Ukrainian leather lightning struck for a highlight reel conk.

A beautiful, short left hook on the point of the chin draped Chambers into ostrich position across the ropes, out like a light. The crowd went electric then took a considerate breath and paused until Chambers came to before they streamed out into the booming midnight oil.

Chambers was dejected, but still showed good character and seems like the type that will return to top contention.

"I have to think about how I will try and come back and who I want to challenge next," mused Chambers before heading to the hospital for observation.

"I'm very happy with tonight's result and especially my performance," said Klitschko."As they say in this sport, speed kills, and my speed was good tonight. I had good anticipation and I disappeared. I hope Chambers isn't hurt and that he comes back soon. My official mandatory against Alexander Povetkin is due up next, but the only thing that might get in the way could be a unification against David Haye."

"Someone else always is out there. The challenges will exist as long as the sport exists. I'm still thirty three years old. I thought I reached my peak when I was thirty one, but I keep going up and up and up and I feel there is (still) a lot of potential to be proved, and a lot to be accomplished."

The slugging saga is still unfolding, but for now, it was time to savor victory.

After the bout, Klitschko was presented with a local "alt" beer, which he quaffed and poured over his head.

"It isn't Champagne, but it still tastes good," grinned Klitschko as he toasted the howling locals. Klitschko isn't the best heavyweight champion of modern times, but he took a nice step up the ladder tonight.

"I enjoy my time at the top right now," concluded Klitschko. "We'll see how long it will last. Hopefully as long as I want."

Tonight Klitschko proved he could out-maneuver an excellent boxer.
Maybe the most remarkable thing in ESPIRIT Arena was that a fighter criticized for being too mechanical put on a proverbial boxing clinic, Klitschko style.