

Andre Berto Blasts Out Quintana, Caballero Wins Too

Written by George Kimball
Saturday, 10 April 2010 17:00



SUNRISE, Fla. --- Andre Berto was Fighting for Haiti.

Riding the crest of that emotion, the 26-year old welterweight champion was able to overcome an 11-month accumulation of ring rust and a debilitating biceps injury incurred in the opening minutes to score an explosive eighth-round TKO over former 140-pound champion Carlos Quintana Saturday night at the Bank Atlantic Center.

Berto said that the injury to his left biceps – “it’s either torn or pulled” – significantly impacted the course of the title fight for at least two reasons. One that by restricting the full extension of his arm, it took away the hook to the body that he had counted upon as a major weapon in the game plan against Quintana. The other was that when the Puerto Rican saw Berto wince in pain in the second round he was almost immediately emboldened, and hence opted to turn the fight into an inelegant back-alley brawl.

Of course, Quintana might have pursued that course of action even against a Berto with two healthy biceps, but for a while there it did become incontestably ugly. After Berto had out-boxed him over the first stanza, Quintana opened the second by stinging the champion with a straight left that appeared to wobble him. Berto did manage to hold on until his head cleared – though in doing so he brought himself into range of Quintana’s repertoire of elbows, forearms, and laces.

Then, before the third round was over, ‘Q’ had reverted to form: He spun his way out of a clinch and, winding up directly behind Berto, thumped him in the back of the head, an infraction that cost him a point deduction from referee Tommy Kimmons.

He never hurt me except when he hit me in the back of the head,” insisted Berto afterward.

Quintana elected to keep brawling and mauling, even when he seemed to be getting the worst of it. Before the fourth was over he was bleeding from a cut beneath his left eye, and by the time the end came four rounds later he was bleeding from cuts around both eyes.

Berto interrupted what had become a decidedly inelegant a fight, in the eighth. Early in the round he had send Quintana skip-stepping all the way across the ring with a glancing right, and it wasn’t much later that he landed the overhand right that proved the beginning of the end. Driving Quintana to the ropes he seized command to land 32 of 46 power punches, according to CompuBox, in the process of landing two dozen unanswered blows as he battered Quintana from pillar to post.

The attack was punctuated by a *coup de grace* of sorts – when a Berto right caught Quintana flush on his unprotected face, he pitched forward but somehow remained erect, but Kimmons,

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who could probably have stopped it any time over the final minute, at that point rescued Quintana at 2:16.

At the time of the stoppage Berto led 68-64 on the cards of all three ringside judges (Mike Pernick, Alejandro Rochin, and Jack Woodruff), and by the same score on The Sweet Science scorecard.

Berto remained undefeated at 26-0. Quintana, who had previously lost only to Miguel Cotto and Paul Williams, is now 27-3.

Lou DiBella's eight-bout "Fighting For Haiti" card at the BAC had been stitched together after Berto, beset by concerns over his ancestral homeland, withdrew from a scheduled unification fight against Shane Mosley. Even though the proceeds from Saturday's show were ticketed for two Haitian relief funds, tickets moved slowly, in part as a result of Don King having enthusiastically papered the house for a couple of previous boxing cards at the Sunrise venue. Not only were the locals slow to buy tickets for Berto-Quintana, many of them angrily demanded know why they weren't getting free ticket "vouchers" for this one, too.

If it seemed unclear that there would be substantial proceeds to forward to the relief effort, Berto remained resolute. "Just standing there in the ring with the [Haitian] flag made a statement," said Berto, who has quietly made several unpublicized trips back to Haiti over the past five months. "It showed them that we care."

DiBella, noting that the effects of the 11-month layoff were evident in Berto's performance, said later that he'd like to get his fighter back in action sooner rather than later, though that timetable may be dependent on a diagnosis and the rehabilitation period required for the biceps injury to heal.

In the co-feature, Panamanian Celestino Caballero (34-2), who holds the WBA 'super' championship at 122 pounds, moved up to featherweight and won a lopsided decision over an outclassed (and seemingly undersized, although the actual weight differential was but a quarter of a pound) Daud Cino Yordan to hand the 22 year-old Indonesian his first career loss.

The initial plan had been to match the two for an "interim" WBA title at 126, but when the WBA declined to approve that arrangement it went ahead, and was described on the bout sheet as a "featherweight championship" fight, even though no championship of any description was at stake.

The 12-rounder was a testament both to Caballero's amazing work rate and Yordan's incredible capacity for absorbing punishment. Although he only went down once – and then, at the end of the second, when he left his feet to lunge at Caballero with a left only to walk into a right uppercut that dropped him in a neutral corner – the Indonesian was pounded for most of the evening, as Caballero hammered his body, his face, and when he couldn't find either, his back.

In all Caballero was credited with throwing more than a hundred punches a round – his 1248 total represented the third-highest total in CompuBox history – while Yordan offered at a more

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modest rate of approximately ten per minute. (Caballero also out-landed Yordan, 379-105. Yordan, though on the defensive for most of the evening, did have his moments, and was able to catch Caballero with some stinging left hooks.

Caballero came close to going down in the final round, when Yordan landed a left that caught him off-balance. Thinking he had the veteran champion hurt, Yordan chased Caballero to the ropes and tried to follow up on his perceived advantage. Caballero, who was playing possum as he covered up, emerged from his shell to blow Yordan a kiss and then resumed his inexorable attack.

On judge, Ged O'Connor, scored it a whitewash for Caballero. Rocky Young returned a 119-107 card, while Tom Nardone had it 118-108. TSS was slightly more generous at 117-110.

Miami middleweight Antwone Smith scored a devastating knockout, delivering a third-round body shot that left his Dominican opponent Frankie Gonzalez writhing on the floor. Gonzalez writhed right through Kimmons' 10-count, which came at 2:40 of the round, and was still writhing several minutes later. Attended by ringside physicians Robert Bolluch and Allan Fields, he eventually revived and departed the ring under his own steam. Smith is now 18-1, Gonzalez 13-5.

Although 122-pounder Guillermo Rigondeaux (who both withdrew from the Florida card and split with trainer Freddie Roach after reportedly absorbing a pummeling in a sparring session at the Wild Card Gym) was scratched earlier in the week, two other members of the latest class of Cuban prospects to turn pro appeared, if briefly, on the bill. Middleweight Yudel Johnson, having floored Chris Grays for the second time, was awarded a KO when the Michigan opponent failed to beat referee Telis Assimenios' count at 2:04 of the first. (Just two weeks earlier Grays had gone the distance in dropping a split decision on the Dirrell-Abraham card in a fight that many ringsiders – including one judge – felt he had won.)

Johnson's former Cuban National teammate, heavyweight Yunier Dorticos (4-0), made even shorter work of his previously unbeaten foe Zach Ziegler (3-1). Dorticos had rained blows almost at will on the South Dakotan even before the body shot that caused Ziegler to drop to the floor, where he took Assimenios' count on his hands and knees at 1:24 of the round.

West Palm Beach middleweight Jonathan Cepeda (8-0) knocked out Shadrack Kiprotto in two, flooring the Kenyan with a left hook from which he could not recover before Assimenios counted him out at 2:31 of the round. Kiprotto (18-16-2) had been stopped in five by Ronald Hearn on the Malignaggi-Diaz II card in Chicago last December.

The son and namesake of another accomplished middleweight of yesteryear, Willie Monroe Jr., posed 60-54 scores on the cards of all three judges (Pernick, O'Connor, Nardone) in his unanimous decision over a game Ibrahim King (7-2). Monroe remained unbeaten at 8-0.

In another prelim, Joe Elegele, an unbeaten (6-0) welterweight from Berto's hometown of Winter Haven, scored a third round TKO over Mario Hayes (4-6). Elegele knocked Hayes down twice in the third, including the left hand that left him for dead. Hayes, still had his head planted in the

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canvas when Kimmons rescued him at 2:51 of the round.

“Fighting for Haiti”

BANK ATLANTIC CENTER

Sunrise, Fla.

April 10, 2010

WELTERWEIGHTS: Andre Berto, 146 $\frac{1}{4}$, Winter Haven, Fla. TKO'd Carlos Quintana, 146 $\frac{1}{4}$, Moca, Puerto Rico (8) (Retains WBC title)

Antwone Smith, 146 $\frac{3}{4}$, Miami, Fla. KO'd Franklin Gonzalez, 146 $\frac{1}{4}$, Dominican Rep. (3)

Joe Elegele, 142 $\frac{1}{2}$, Winter Haven, Fla. TKO'd Mario Haves, 156, Tallahassee, Fla. (3)

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Junier Dorticos, 208, Cuba KO's Zack Ziegler, 208, Ft. Thomas, S. Dak. (1)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Jonathan Cepeda, 158 $\frac{3}{4}$, West Palm Beach, Fla. KO'd Shadrack Kiprato, 159 $\frac{1}{2}$, Nairobi, Kenya (2)

Willie Monroe Jr., 158, Ithaca, NY dec. Ibrahiem King, 160, West Palm Beach, Fla. (6)

Yudel Johnson, 156 $\frac{1}{2}$, Cuba KO'd Chris Grays, 158 $\frac{1}{4}$, Traverse City, Mich. (1) [Comment on this article](#)