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What did we learn about Amir Khan Saturday night? That, more than anything else that happened before a sparse crowd of witnesses in Las Vegas, is the question of the moment in boxing.

Did we learn he has a great chin? Not sure about that because I'm not sure whether Marcos Maidana is quite the great puncher some have anointed him. You knock out 27 of the 31 fighters you've face you obviously have some kick in your fists but most of those victims hailed from the 'Who He? Academy of Boxing,' so you have to wonder because, frankly, three of the guys he couldn't stop are the only ones that count.

Honestly, what can you tell anyone about Esmeraldo Jose Da Silva or Jairo Moura dos Santos? Do you know the difference between William Gonzalez and Speedy Gonzalez? Speedy's faster.

So let's look, for a moment, at whom he couldn't finish. He couldn't finish Khan in the 10th round despite rocking him early with a stunning overhand right and several nasty uppercuts. He wobbled the previously chin-challenged Khan but could not finish him then or over the next two rounds, which Maidana dominated in a losing cause because he was already so far behind it took a knockout to get his hand raised.

He also couldn't stop, or even beat, Andreas Kotelnik and he couldn't rid the ring early of the depleted former WBO champion DeMarcus "Chop Chop'' Corley. In other words, against the best three fighters he's faced he knocked no one out, although he did shake up Khan as if he was a martini in a mixer.

So was it Khan's improved chin (a mandible which boxing people will tell you really can't be improved upon beyond what God made it) or simply that Maidana is not as heavy handed as those 27 knockouts might have you think?
Khan, of course, subscribed to the former theory and why not after surviving a night that went from painfully easy for nine rounds to just plain painful over the final three?

"I took everything he gave me,'' Khan said. "My chin was tested. I proved today I've got a chin.''

Maybe or maybe what was proven is he now has a much better trainer in Freddie Roach than he had before and it was Roach's teachings - both on how to protect that chin when rocked and

how to hold on for two minutes when the sound of wind chimes are tinkling between your ears - that saved the day.

I would tend to lean toward the latter but that doesn't mean Khan deserves no credit for his accomplishment. He had to hold on and he did. He had to not panic and he didn't. He had to avoid the urge to try and slug it out and, with Roach's sometimes stern rebukes, he found a way to avoid that dangerous inclination.

So what did we learn about Amir Khan Saturday night?

We learned he has one of boxing's finest trainers in his corner and the value of that is beyond knowing. In my mind, we also learned Maidana (29-2, 27 KO) is no finisher when facing top quality competition. Had he hit most of his previous opponents with the shots he landed in that 10th round they would have fallen through the floor but that may say as much about them as it does about Maidana.

So we return to the question: What did we learn about Amir Khan Saturday night?

We learned he is what he says he is – which is a tough kid from Bolton, England who desperately wants to be great and that is a good thing.
We learned he belongs in the final equation in the junior welterweight division along with Timothy Bradley and Devon Alexander and that Maidana does not. After nine rounds, Maidana trailed by seven points on one card and five on the others. He was barely competitive, despite the occasional rousing moment when he would land a bomb or at least come close to landing one.

Then he nearly righted his ship with one right hand that badly wobbled Khan a minute into round 10. He had two minutes to find a way to finish off a bleeding and wobbly opponent and couldn't do it. What that tells me is Marcos Maidana is not a world-class finisher more than that Khan's chin has been reinforced with steel since Breidis Prescott knocked him silly in one round several years ago.

Khan also showed he will be competitive against the eventual Bradley-Alexander winner if they meet sometime next year after those two square off next month. Can he beat either of them?

Probably so.

Can he lose to either of them?

Probably so.

That, of course, is what makes the fight game interesting and is what will make that junior welterweight unification fight compelling because mystery sells in boxing as much as dominance does.

Saturday night, Amir Khan started out dominant and ended up mysterious. Either way he didn't

lose but he also didn't answer all the questions about him. Only the future can do that but this much we do know – when he finally does get in the ring with either Bradley or Alexander the guy back in his corner will be dominant.

Maybe that presence of Roach plus his own considerable skills and work ethic will be enough to make him Britain's next great star, a more skillful version of his boyhood idol, Naseem Hamed.

We'll have to wait to know however because when they read the judges' cards Saturday night we already knew who won. What we didn't know for sure yet was who Amir Khan really is.

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