

Showing Heart and Stones Galore, Rios KOs Acosta

Written by Michael Woods
Sunday, 27 February 2011 00:09



Feb. 26, 2011, Las Vegas, Nevada --- Brandon Rios knocks out Miguel Acosta in the 10th round to win the WBA World Lightweight title on Saturday night at Palms Resort Casino in Las Vegas. --- Photo Credit : Chris Farina - Top Rank

The early going was rough for Brandon Rios in the main event from the Palms in Las Vegas

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which ran on Showtime Saturday night. It was looking through the first four rounds like the 24-year-old was in a bit over his head, like he'd stepped up a bit too far, like Freddie Roach had done him in with some voodoo. But he kept coming forward, and broke down the WBA lightweight champion Miguel Acosta. Rios scored knockdowns in the sixth and eighth, and with a couple doozy right hands in the tenth, sent Acosta to the floor for good.

The end came at 1:14 of the tenth, and the victor let loose with a scream to the heavens when it sunk in that the belt would be his. After, Rios told Jim Gray that "I'm a late bloomer..in the late rounds I get stronger and stronger." He admitted that he learned just how good his chin is now, after eating some nasty Acosta blows. He said he'd be ready for anyone, whoever his promoter Bob Arum put in front of him. Arum said he was a star, and would consider a rematch with Acosta, but down the round.

Acosta told Gray that "Rios has power." He said that after the first knockdown, he felt dizzy and couldn't recuperate.

Rios went 190-454, while Acosta was 156-464 in total punches.

Acosta's WBA 135 pound title was up for grabs. The judges on hand were Adelaide Byrd, Dick Houck and CJ Ross, and they all saw it 86-83 for Rios through nine complete.

Acosta (age 32; 28-3-2 entering; from Venezuela; coming in with 19 straight wins) weighed 134 1/2 pounds in his first title defense, while Rios (age 24; 26-0-1 with 18 KOs entering; from Oxnard, CA) was 134 1/2 pounds.

Rios, who admits he is a loose cannon, and who dipped himself into a pot of hot water when he mocked Freddie Roach's tremors from Parkinsons on a video which went mega viral before the Pacquiao-Margarito fight, was looking to try and make his in-ring work help restore his rep.

In the first, a counter right by Acosta right away. A right clipped Rios a minute in, and bang, another one landed pretty flush. The challenger came forward, but we wondered how long he would, or frankly, if this thing would go long. Acosta features a lively defensive style, and is hard to pinpoint as his head movement is rapid and frequent.

In the second, Rios wanted to crowd Acosta, who owns nimble feet. With his gloves glued to his face, Rios left himself out of position to fire quite often.

In the third, Acosta stayed mobile, and Rios came forward. But he ate a few rights, and reeled

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back, buzzed, in the last ten seconds.

In the fourth, Acosta got it done from the outside, as he was able to get full extension and sting Rios. Rios was now backing up, by the middle of the round. The vet showed his experience, as he didn't get over-enthused as he had his way with Rios. The kid ate left hooks to the body, and crackerjack rights in the round. This was an education, boxing style, that would leave bruises and bumps galore in the days following.

In the fifth, Rios stayed in the game, stayed in attack mode. Acosta has the heavier hands, though Rios had more moments than in rounds previous.

In the sixth, Acosta went down with two minutes to go, off a left hook to the neck, and a followup jab. This was the Rios who opened out eyes last year, against Anthony Peterson. Acosta got his legs back some, but continued to eat Rios shots when trapped on the ropes. His cutman worked on a slice on his right eye after the round. His corner told him to tie up because Rios has power.

In the seventh, Acosta's movement, which earlier looked like it would be his best asset, read like a deficiency. Rios was in stalking mode. But the champ's effort looked more like the first three rounds rather than the difficult sixth.

In the eighth, we saw further evidence that Rios has a stellar chin. He ate a bomb, then answered and sent Acosta to the mat for the second time with 35 seconds remaining. The telling blow was a left hook, which looked like it got some help from fatigue. Acosta's corner told him to hold when he got buzzed, strangely, since that doesn't seem to be in his arsenal.

In the ninth, Acosta went to the floor, from fatigue, thirty seconds in. The stalker Rios wasn't as bothered by Acosta's punches, which had lost a bunch of steam. He laid on the ropes, working, but leaving himself open to getting tagged. This was a helluva round, you won't see many busier over the course of a year.

In the tenth, Rios sent Acosta to the mat, for the third and final time. Two vicious rights had him down and his corner was in the ring with a towel.

In the TV opener, Antonio DeMarco (from Los Mochis, Mexico; age 25; a loser in a world title crack, against Edwin Valero in Feb. 2010; No. 1 in WBC) won a UD12 over Reyes Sanchez (from Mexico City; age 25; No. 2 in WBC; sporting a pink Mohawk with a white skunk tail). This lightweight bout took place in Grand Island, Nebraska.

The judges saw it 115-113, 116-112, 117-111 for the lefty DeMarco, who went to 25-2-1. He opened a cut on Reyes' left eye in the first minute of the tussle and was in control for the first portion of the tiff. DeMarco's long left stung Sanchez early on. His corner gave him the business, told him to "concentrate" after the fifth. The cornerman, by the way, was his manager, subbing for his trainer, who couldn't get here from Mexico.

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The seventh saw some sweet trades. The slight Sanchez, boasting the body of a 15 year old boy who is most fond of video games and has no yen for junk food, shoved DeMarco around, surprisingly, towards the later rounds. If this was 22-plus years ago, and this bout was set for 15 rounds, Sanchez might've gotten the nod.

The loser, who came in with a well crafted record, falls to 20-4-1.

DeMarco will get a chance at champion Humberto Soto, or Urbano Antillon, who is scheduled to face the champ in a rematch from their Dec. 4 scrap, which resulted in a UD12 Soto win.

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ultimoshogun says:

Rios/Acosta, in alot of ways reminded me of Margarito/Cotto...Rios is one tough dude and will make a fight vs anyone fun to watch. I wasn't too impressed with DeMarco, he had all the tools to blow away a very sloppy Sanchez early but was too apprehensive and never kicked it into the next gear.

brownsugar says:

I agree ultimoshogun,.. Damarcos looked more like a fighter in his losing effort to Vallero.....the main event couldn't come soon enough..... For a while I was wondering if Rios bit off more than he could chew... but he perservered and eventually put the hound and pound on his man... awesome fight... seesaw action,.. guts galore.. he fights like sort of a modified prime Margarito... couldn't believe he wasn't arm weary after the 9th...great show...tip my hat to both men.

brownsugar says:

yeah Fe'Roz,.. Rios delivered...awesome.

Radam G says:

I saw it just the opposite of Editor Mike. The trouble started for Acosta in the early going. Whenever a dude makes you move straight back to fight off the ropes, instead of moving side to side and angling, he has already slowed you down and taken away a lot of your sting. Again, the game is full of optical illusions. Rios used one of the oldest tricks of the trade on Acosta -- "making 'em b*tch rush," while taking away his punching sting and power. Ninety-five percent of Acosta's shots were arm punches. By jumping straight back and backing up, while forward punching, you have absolutely no snap, crackle, pop, especially when you are not turning your punches over and putting dat arse in them. The fight looked closer than it was, because Rios was walking Acosta down and also walking into the Acosta's fanfaronade-friendly arm punches. The oldtimers calls/called that type of Acosta punching, "B---h-touch, I hope ya stay off me s--t!"

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And in the pros, those types of amateur-like licks don't suppose to count as much proper professional mayhem punches.

Rios's trainer Robert Garcia is on his way to being trainer of the year for 2011. Thus far, his charge, "The Filipino Flash" has the knockout of the year. And now one can say that "Bam Bam" Rios was thus far in the fight of the year. Now if Margarito somehow upset Cotto, if they dance later this year, trainer Bobby G is Da MAN! He spit the perfect advice to Rios. In Spanish, RG told his charge to "keep dat bastard backing up and f--king him up in the body...then go upstairs and scramble his f--king brains." Hehehehehe! That was COLD! The Showtime translator should be given extra for cleaning that up to the English-speaking audience. Oh, yea! Trainer Bobby G gets caught up in the moment, and need some soap put in that voice box. Dude sounds like a Mex-Am Richard Pryor, Imfao! Holla!

#1 PacFan says:

What's all the fuss about Brando Rios? He has a lot of heart I can give him that but heart can only take you so far. He reminds me a lot of Fernando Vargas who didn't go far in his career and was also a face first fighter. This guy will run into a fighter who will box his @ss off sooner than later. No matter how sharp the horn is you can't bullrush every single opponent you face. Bring on Rios-Gesta early 2012!!!!

mortcola says:

Radam G is right, after the 5th round Acosta began swatting with his weight in back foot, and the quick hard shots that stunned Rios became ineffective. As for PacFan's comparison to Vargas, I don't see it. Rios is a grittier fighter, less of a front-runner, with a more focused attack. Now, if you take the best of Vargas and Arturo Gatti, and it's still true after a few more serious matches, then you have a good comparison. The kid keeps his focus when under fire, hits very hard, seems to have an excellent chin, and mixes it up well. I'm impressed.

Radam G says:

@ #1 PacFan, you hear a lot about styles make fights. But not necessary. That is more of a throw-away term than anything. Boxing is highly mental -- 75 percent, if is not more. I've been seeing Gesto since he has first come to the States a few years ago. Matter of fact, right now I'm in San Diego County, where Gesto resides and trains 90 percent of the time. He is really, really good but needs to step up to better competition. Too many of his bouts are being and have been scheduled for just eight rounds against C+ fighter. You will have to check it out on Boxrec -- I'm not sure about it -- but he been in the pros for four years and haven't ever fought a fighter ranked in the top 10 in a 10-or-12-round bout. I think in 2012, he may want to go for one of the other beltholders. Unless he is playing possum, and hiding his best performance, he should stay a long distance away from "Bam Bam Rios. If he cannot get in Rios's head and make him have a mental breakdown, he will be in deep kimchee. Holla!

brownsugar says:

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My dream fight for Rios would be Marquez,.. it's hard to know whether that fight could be made since Marquez is about making the "Mega" fight happen in the twilight of his career. Marquez is best when faced with someone who is aggressive and comes right at him. (like Pac, Katsidis, or the Baby Bull)... cute boxers give Marquez more trouble. Would the strength of Rios overcome the pinpoint counterpunching of Marquez??? Don't know but I have a faint suspicion that Rios would finish the fight (style-wise) that Juan Diaz started. too strong.

brownsugar says:

actually...Rios is too big for most lightweights.

#1 PacFan says:

@Radam, I've notice the level of comp Gesta have been facing but I think he's ready. What a way to put him in the fire with a guy like Rios. I see Gesta having great success if they were ever to share that ring. Rios was having trouble early against Acosta's handspeed and counters. Gesta has fast hands and have improved in his countering ability and he's mobile. I'm just skeptical about his punching power and his conditioning.

ultimoshogun says:

I like your thinking brownsugar, Rios vs Marquez = fireworks from start to finish.

Radam G says:

Let me tell you what I do know, #1 PacFan. Gesta is a bit timid. He needs a lot of mental building up, yet. A while ago, I saw him get chumped out by a prospect name Mike Dallas -- or something like that -- at the Wildcard. [Dallas got kayoed in his last bout.] And Gesta gets distracted by too many girls, who are running a game -- a chicken-head game on him. Plus, he is too trusting -- A BIG NO, NO in this big backstabbing game. Gesta is a very, very nice cat. But he has to be made into a LION before challenging the BIG BOYS. He needs a ROAR, not a meow from a pussycat! Give him time. He will be fine. If you rush the egg, it will never become delicious balut. Fermenting a prospect into a champ is a process of adroitly maneuvering and manipulating his whole nine -- desire, personality, mentality, diet, condition, insight, foresight, psyche and heart. Champs may be born, but they will not become that without the whole nine and the BIG one -- a legit title SHOT. A straight-up opportunity because you have the GOODS and it's your time. If you don't have the GOODS, but maybe just the name, or ethnicity or national connection, or blood ties, you will go the route of Ronny Hearns and Hector Camacho Jr, just to name a couple of the most famous fighters who got the hook up, book up and crook up, but could not luck up or put up, so they f ___ up. Holla!

brownsugar says:

Mr ultimoshosho'... we can only hope...in a perfect world Rois vs Marquez would be a fight fans dream...toe to toe all the way.....Sadly as mentioned by Fe'Roz Marquez's future is still up in the air... rumors abound that he won't be fighting at 135 anymore and may possibly try to

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position himself against Khan in a profitable venture or wait to see what comes after Pac vs Mosley (which may be his prime objective). Arum has already said that the soon to be "opponentless" Pacman may entertain a Marquez bout since he will have cleaned out all the big money marketable challengers after he dispenses of Mosley in May.

#1 PacFan says:

@Radam, you sound as if Rios is a world class fighter after beating a champion I have never heard of. Yes Rios has gone through stiffer competition but not that good. IMO Gesta is ready for a title shot, let him get his feet wet in there with some top notch comp. We will never know how good or committed this kid will be unless they stop hand feeding him with low class fighters. Nonito for example, nobody knew who this guy was or what he was capable of. He came in fighting Darchinyan with only 19 pro fights and 2 twelve rounders.

Radam G says:

"Bam Bam" Rios is super, super mentally strong. I don't think that the 38-year-old fading Marquez can keep him off dat long-in-the tooth arse. Besides, if Rios bounces JMM off the canvas, he'd lose his young mind and turn into a beast and punch a recovering JMM into the canvas PacMan style of 2004. At 38, instead of 31, JMM would not get out of the first round with Rios. I say that it is no way that JMM dance with Rios. As an ancient pugilist, JMM is into BIG prizefighting, not one iota of pridefighting. He wants Da for the prize, not the pride. I predict, if their is another Pac-Fight with him, a now-well-feed PacMan kayos him in three rounds. Holla!

Radam G says:

Rios is a world beater, @ #1 PacFan. Sorry that you never heard of Acosta or probably Lamont Peterson who Rios upset to get the title shot. Rios was also a standout amateur boxer who fought in the U.S Olympics Trials. Maybe as a fan, you didn't know "The Filipino Flash," but everybody and dey momma in the game knew and know how dangerous that he was going to be starting way back in the amateurs when he was gunning down competition. [I guess you musta' fo'got how that angry TSSU reader, "School of hard knocks" use say that Nonito could fight.] The kid, as an amateur was a hotshot U.S. national champion, nation Junior Olympic champion, Diamond Belt champion and just a kick-arse who all in the know knew would be special. His dad taught him well. Man, JunJun and his BIG Bro were superBAD in the amateurs. Matter of fact, they both got robbed in the Olympic Trials to the Hawaii Punch, BV, who was also special and won a title twice at light flyweight. Gesta did not have an amateur career, and was taught kick boxing by his father. Don't believe the hype and BIG TALK. His management will be move him anywhere in the same zip code with Rios. Holla!

Radam G says:

*His management won't move him anywhere near Rios. Time to hit da pit. Holla!

riverside says:

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What a fight, bit late on topic. Good to see lots of tss regulars back talking boxing!

@ Brownsugar, your right on JMM Vs Rios, What a fight it would be. Same type of fight as JMM vs the baby bull. I would have to agree, Rios would finish what the baby bull started. Rios would run JMM out of the ring, Too strong, too big, with Good chin. How about Maidana vs Rios? I think Rios could box him and break him down, We would difinitely see fireworks.

riverside says:

I heard DeMarco and Soto would never fight, they are realatives?, I've heard this same story several times.

ultimoshogun says:

@riverside, yeah, one of the commentators mentioned they were cousins.

the Roast says:

I watched this fight yesterday. Rios very impressive again. He really can bring the pressure. I agree that he would be too much for JMM at this point. I also agree that JMM will steer clear of this dangerous young man.

the Roast says:

Glad to see riverside back up in here!

riverside says:

Thanks guy's!. I've watched the final round atleast 5 time on you tube since saturday.

Fight reminded me of Pavlik/ Taylor #1 and Cotto/ Margarito. Early candidate for Foty. Rios could smell the blood, I can't see how JMM would hold Rios onslaught!

brownsugar says:

@Riverside, we could only hope for that fight.... but I'm hearing that Marquez is clutching very tightly to his dream of getting a rematch with Pac..