

Froch Adjusted, And May Have Closed The Book On Johnson's Inspiring Career..LOTIERZO

Written by Frank Lotierzo
Sunday, 05 June 2011 22:01



This past weekend super middleweights Carl Froch 28-1 (20) and Glen Johnson 51-15-2 (35) completed the semifinals of the Showtime Super-six tournament. And the fight was an outstanding bout for the majority of the 12-rounds it was contested. When the majority decision was announced it pretty much confirmed what everyone watching surmised, and that is Froch will be advancing to the finals to meet Andre Ward 24-0 (13) to determine who the top 168 pounder in the world is - this side of Lucian Bute 28-0 (23).

The Froch-Johnson bout was a tale of two fights, and don't let anyone say that Carl Froch is not a tough guy. From about the fourth round on he stood virtually in front of Johnson and controlled the fight. And that was after Johnson got out of the gate quick and perhaps won three of the first four rounds with his sound fundamental attack of moving forward behind his straight jab and then throwing his right hand to the head with a left-hook to the body immediately behind it. Then he stopped letting his hands go with regularity and that's about the point where Froch stayed focused and began firing three and four punch combinations without much return from the pressing Johnson, age 42. After 10 rounds the fight was close and still up for grabs, however Froch clearly swept the last two rounds by launching and landing some multiple punch combinations to the head and body and perhaps closed the book on Johnson's truly inspiring 18 year boxing career.

The fight pretty much exhibited why it's so important for fighters to get off first and change the dynamic of their opponents' attack and force them to re-adjust. When Johnson was pushing the fight and letting his hands go, as he was in the early going, he had Froch reaching and missing. Froch's low left hand looked in the early going as if it were going to be his undoing as Johnson was scoring with right hands over the top. Then again that was in part set-up because Johnson was dictating the pace and ring geography. A fighter carrying his left hand low isn't such a travesty if he knows what to do with his right defensively. If the right is in the correct position he can parry or block the jab, block the hook and smother the uppercut - something Froch wasn't doing for the first third of the fight. However, once Johnson's work-rate decreased ever so slightly, Froch began to initiate the exchanges and win the rounds, in some cases not by much. And when Froch got off first, instead of missing with his looping shots around Johnson's guard, he was getting through with his lead punches and opened Johnson up more for his finishing right hands and hooks. And by the midpoint of the fight, Froch answered every run Johnson attempted.

Granted, Johnson landed more of the highlight reel shots that usually invoke a response from

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the crowd, the only problem was there weren't enough of them. Which sadly has been the case for Johnson during a lot of his bigger and more high profile fights down the stretch. When all was said and done the right fighter had his hand raised, although I do find fault with judge John Stewart who scored the fight 9-3 in rounds, 117-111. I just didn't see how he came up with Froch winning nine rounds.

Froch will no doubt be installed as the underdog when he meets Andre Ward in the Super Six final later this year. That said, Carl has shown in his tournament bouts versus Jermain Taylor, Andre Dirrell, Mikkel Kessler, Arthur Abraham and Glen Johnson that he is tough and has the ability to adjust and keep his cool during any rough patch during the bout that he's encountered along the way. In addition to that Carl has improved and grown even more cocky and confident along the way, and it appears that's he's even fed off of that and will no doubt be a formidable foe for the undefeated Ward who has also been impressive during the tournament.

In closing, let's hope that Glen Johnson decides to call it a career--and what a career it was!--and moves onto the next stage of his life. Glen has fought everybody who was somebody and never once embarrassed himself or the sport of professional boxing. Actually, he's been a tremendous ambassador for the sweet science. But one cannot ignore the fact that he's taken a lot of punches to the head during his nearly 70 bout career and at age 42 it's best that he walks away now with what seems to be relatively good health and dignity. No doubt if he chooses to, Johnson by virtue of his experience would make a tremendous trainer or manager down the road. Like his contemporary and former adversary, Bernard Hopkins, Johnson knows the sport of boxing inside and out.

Watch Lotierzo discuss Froch's win with Dave Bontempo on BoxingChannel.TV here <http://bit.ly/mCUDRK>

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the Roast says:

Glen will fight on. You heard the Jim Grey interview. Glen fought a good fight. He has to get paid just like everyone else.

MisterLee says:

Nice article. Small point, froch taylor was before the Super Six. Also, I called Froch - Ward back in 2009 before the tournament began when everyone was championing Kessler and Abraham and how "the Americans were so inexperienced". Mikey Garcia looked sharp over the weekend, anyone else thinks he can give Juanma and Salido a run for the money within a year? Holler!

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MisterLee says:

I think Froch's long jab, his hidden craftiness, and his combination punching won the fight.

ultimoshogun says:

@MisterLee, true that! Mikey Garcia looked like the real goods saturday night. I'll be keeping an eye out for him.

MisterLee says:

@ultimo, i AM a fan of Mikey/Miguel/Mike now.. or whatever his other aliases are... I guess you gotta please ALL fans, right Richie Valens? :-p. The guy is smart, and he punches hard as heck. I think garcia vs. gonzalez or ponce de leon would be a fun fight...

Real Talk says:

Great article F-Lo. Love analysis and breakdown of the fight. Very knowledgeable. I knew Froch had what it takes to win just wasn't sure if he would rise to that level of opp because he's never been in with a fighter of that caliber. Good win for Froch and congratulations. I missed the fight because I was working in Va. but I'm looking forward to catching it later. Andre Ward has got his work cutout for him but he can pull it off if he uses good footwork and settles down but he knows what to do. Looking forward to this one which is a toss up. I'm out TSSU. Dueces

Radam G says:

Mikey Garcia is ready to shake shake up da wirrrrrllllllldddd! I give him a very good chance to take down anybody in his division. Holla!

the Roast says:

I'm with 'yall. Garcia is a straight puncher and is a tough match for anyone at that weight.