

## Berto Gets TKO Win, Stops Zaveck After Fifth Round...WOODS

Written by Michael Woods

Saturday, 03 September 2011 23:03

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This fight won't remove the hurt from his last bout, but Andre Berto helped ease the sting a bit with his stoppage victory over Slovakian Jan Zaveck in the main event which unfolded at the Beau Rivage in Biloxi, Mississippi on Saturday night.

After the fifth round, Zaveck's corner said no mas, with their man's right eye swollen badly. He wanted to continue, and swore in dismay, but he was starting to eat clean, hard shots in the HBO After Dark headliner. Berto, who dropped his WBC crown to Victor Ortiz in April, threw 90 more punches, while Zaveck landed 20 more, but Berto's power was the difference-maker.

Both men have a tendency to drop their heads, and lower their eyes, which lessens their ability to pick up incoming fire. Berto took full advantage of that, and cracked Zaveck while the loser looked down. No one can question his heart, as he seemed genuinely irked that his face was busted up. "Is my right eye swollen too?" he asked his corner while they tried to urge him to

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quit.

Berto (age 27; from Florida; 27-1 with 21 KOs entering) weighed 146 3/4 pounds, while the IBF welterweight champion Zaveck (age 35; from Slovenia; 31-1-1NC with 18 KOs entering) was 146 1/2 pounds.

Analyst Max Kellerman mentioned that Berto hired ex Balco chemist Victor Conte to recommend supplements, and lauded the hire. Berto did indeed look strong and fast and fiesty in the first. He ripped to both sides of the body. Zaveck didn't come to survive; he thrived in the first with a solid uppercut, and didn't look overwhelmed by his first fight in the States. Berto pumped a jab, but mostly as is his custom wants to get it done with power shots. Trainer Tony Morgan told Berto after the second that he wanted him to get in and get out, and move his head more. The Zaveck corner told their guy to "be careful."

In the third, both men were squared up, winging it, though Zaveck wasn't as busy as Berto. His right hand to the body after Berto piled up combos with a minute left wasn't enough to win him the round. Berto took the fourth off, somewhat, and I think let Zaveck open up. He roared back in the fifth, and opened up a nasty cut on Zaveck's right eye. The fight became a rumble, but Berto had more skills, and more strength. Zaveck went back to his corner and his trainer didn't like his face. "Both eyes are swollen, it's too much," the trainer said. The left eye was cut too, not as badly, though.

In the TV opener, Gary Russell Jr clashed with Leonilo Miranda (26-3 entering; from Mexico), in a clash of featherweights. Russell looked solid against a guy who'd amassed wins at home, and emerged the victor, by scores of 80-72, 80-72, 79-72.

The 17-0 Russell has been having hand problems but they looked to be working well early. The 23 year old Russell comes from Maryland, and was selected for the 2008 Olympics. His hand speed is most noticeable, one termed an "exceptional" talent by Kellerman. Jones said he thinks Russell will be a big star in years to come, but heard his brittle hands are troublesome.

The two lefties started fast, but Russell was faster. His jab is crisper than a Deadhead, and though he often throws it in singlet form, he put a few combos together late in the first. His father-trainer Gary Sr asked him to add the hook to the mix after the round.

In the second, Jones had me shaking my head when he told Kellerman that Russell wasn't really a "boxer" because he stays in the pocket, and doesn't really move his feet much, after Kellerman had made a point of saying what an impressive "boxer" he is. Kellerman defended his point, and then Jones flip-flopped, and admitted that Russell is indeed a boxer. "You are boxing, he is a boxer," Jones said. It was a more-than-a-bit-strange exchange. Russell, during all this, was in a comfort zone. He stood in the pocket, slipped some when he had to, but basically stayed in an offensive mode.

Russell got nastier in the fourth. He worked over Miranda on the ropes a minute in. Body and head, hard shots were landing on Miranda. Russell did go low-ish a few times, but nothing Golota-ish. Watching Russell slip punches, and then slide to reset, I flashed back to Jones Jr.

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telling us he isn't really a "boxer" and I shook my head again.

Russell blasted Miranda in the sixth, and the underdog ducked outside the ropes to get some air. Kellerman by this time cemented himself as at least a vice president in the Russell Jr Fanclub, as he said that he could see Russ and Donaire in a super fight in a couple years. We shall see how it plays out. I'd like to see him against top 20 guys first, then top tenners, and of course if those hands are as brittle as they say, his time could be short.

All wondered if maybe Russell hurt a hand by the eighth. Why wasn't he putting Miranda down, then?

We'd go to the cards...

Russell said his bum left hand felt good, so the "hurt hand" theory went out the window. He also said he was ready for the division's elite.

SPEEDBAG Kellerman to end the show sort of ripped Al Haymon a new one. He said the advisor gets slammed for having excess influence at HBO, and evidenced Russell getting to fight an eight rounder against a journeyman. Max said the coddling of Haymon fighters by Haymon and those who sign off on the fights on TV is unfair to the fighters themselves. Max is Mensa smart; I'd be surprised if he didn't have cover as he said this. Might there be a good idea among those truly in the know who'll be running HBO boxing, and might Max understand that Haymon's coziness, or perceived coziness, might be at the end of the line under the new regime?

OTHER ACTION (From DiBella Release)

Biloxi, MS - (9/3/2011) - It was a clean sweep for DiBella Entertainment (DBE) stable-mates Thomas Oosthuzien, Randall Bailey, Luis Orlandito Del Valle and Ivan Redkach earlier in Biloxi, Mississippi, on the undercard of tonight's live HBO Boxing After Dark telecast, featuring former WBC Welterweight Champion, Andre Berto looking to reclaim a piece of the welterweight crown when he takes on reigning IBF Champion, Jan Zaveck.

In a very entertaining fight, South Africa's Oosthuzien defended his IBO Super Middleweight Title with a twelve round unanimous decision victory over Aaron Pryor Jr. The southpaw Oosthuzien, who was making both his U.S. and DBE debut, was able to work behind a vicious body attack to outwork Pryor for most of the fight. Pryor hung tough, and did some good work of his own, causing a nasty cut to open over Oosthuzien's right eye, but in the end Oosthuzien was the much busier of the two, winning by scores of 117-11 on all three judge's scorecards.

IBF #2 rated welterweight, Randall "The K.O. King" Bailey improved to 42-7, 36KO's with a dominant ten round unanimous decision over Yoryi Estrella. Bailey, the mandatory challenger to tonight's main event winner, controlled the action throughout, dropping Estrella with an uppercut in the 5th round, before going on to win by scores of 100-89, 100-89, 98-91.

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Del Valle knocked out Anthony Napunyi with a tremendous overhand right, improving to a perfect 14-0, 11KO's. Official time of the stoppage was 1:21 of round three.

Redkach improved to a 8-0, 7KO's stopping Vernon Alston (4-2, 4KO's) in the third round of their scheduled six round lightweight contest.

In the opening bout of the evening, Gerald Jordon (8-5-1, 5KO's) scored an upset six round split decision over previously undefeated welterweight Sergio Vartanov (9-1, 6KO's).