

No-Nito Problem at 122; Donaire Defeats Vazquez Jr. in Texas

Written by Michael Woods

Saturday, 04 February 2012 22:55



He's saddled with a bit of a rep after his hardcore KO of Fernando Montiel last year. So much is expected of Nonito Donaire among a segment of the fight fans who have picked up on his talent recently. One hopes they won't be disappointed that the 29 year-old Donaire wasn't able to stop Wilfredo Vazquez Jr at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas in the HBO Championship Boxing TV opener on Saturday night. Because Donaire showed himself to be a rock-solid pugilist in taking a split decision from Vazquez, who concentrated a good deal on defense, by scores of 115-112 (for Vazquez by Garcia), 117-110 (for Nonito by Martinez) and 117-110 (for Nonito by Trella).

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The card for Vazquez is basically ludicrous, considering he scored a knockdown in the ninth, and enjoyed an edge 231-556 to 163-548 edge in punchstats. Add Martinez to your list of iffy judges, please.

Donaire said he thought he won every round, or at least the majority after to Larry Merchant. He said he hurt his left hand between the second and fourth round, that it was hurt, but he didn't know if it's broken. There was blood seeping through the tape on his left hand, and he showed that to the camera. He said he thought his power would tell more. "The bigger guys are tougher than expected," he said. No, he will not go soon to 126. "I'm not happy with the performance today," he said, citing the hand injury, though as usual, he made sure to remain thankful for the win.

Four time world champion Donaire (from General Santos City in the Philippines; 27-1 with 18 KOs entering) was 121 ½ pounds, while the ex bantamweight champ Vazquez Jr. (from Puerto Rico; ex super bantam champ; from Mexico; 21-1-1 with 18 KOs) was 122 at the weigh-in Friday.

Donaire said before the bout that he has never been angry like this going into a bout, as Vazquez irked him at the Thursday news conference.

The vacant WBO junior featherweight crown, formerly held by Junior, was up for grabs.

Ruben Garcia, Levi Martinez and Don Trella were the judges, while Rafael Ramos was the ref.

In the first, Donaire snapped a sharp jab. The PR fighter looked tentative as he assessed the Filipino-American. Trainer Robert Garcia told Donaire to take his time, and noted that Vaz was slower than his guy. "Take your time, we got twelve rounds," the trainer said after.

In the second, Donaire fired combos, then got pushed down by Vaz, and jumped up, heated. Vazquez got the jab going a bit in round two, but Donaire was winning the frame. He dug nicely to the body, with a hook, several times. His right eye did sport a small mouse, for the record.

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In the third, the son of the super bantam and featherweight champ Wilfredo Vazquez Sr, Vazquez was in slight retreat mode, and wasn't looking to be first. He ate a hard lead leaping left hook which buzzed him and Donaire followed up looking to add to the damage, but Vazquez weathered the storm. A left to the breadbasket had my gut aching for Vazquez right before the bell. Vazquez landed one single power punch in the round, according to CompuBox.

In the fourth, Nonito was in total control. He mugged a bit, having some fun, at the minute mark.

In the fifth, Donaire showed no fear of anything Vaz had in his arsenal. His jab was hitting the mark more than in earlier rounds, though. The jab had some blood coming from Nonito's nose in the sixth. He tightened the distanced and had more luck. But was Donaire baiting a trap? In round seven, during the last minute of the round, the announce team went quiet for 40 seconds, and we listened only to Robert Garcia. He yelled "that was not low" when Vaz indicated that Donaire strayed low on him. Garcia told his guy he was giving Vaz "a lot of breaks" after the round. "Let's start backing him up," he ordered. Donaire went 22-55, including a sharp left hook, while Vaz was 19-64 in the round.

In the eighth, Nonito ripped a mean left hook to the belly button and Vaz shook his head to indicate he wasn't affected. Donaire mugged, putting his gloves on his thighs and bouncing in a crouch, which drew whistles from the crowd. Vaz' corner called for uppercuts after the round.

In the ninth, the busier Vazquez of the middle part of the fight gave a decent account of himself. But a left uppercut hurt him and a left hook, which may have landed mostly on the left shoulder, put him down at the 40 second mark.

In the tenth, some in the crowd booed as the men watched more than they threw. Vaz landed a lead right, and made Nonito miss a bunch, but still didn't win the round. Donaire stayed alert and pretty busy in 11. In the 12th, Donaire favored a hurt left hand and didn't press for a KO.

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Radam G says:

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Willy Vazquez took a page from Juan Manuel Marquez and fought to last the distance against a Pinoy, and then declared that he won the bout because of one blind-arse, or bias-arse, or just-plain dumb-arse JUDGE. That sucka should be removed from judging until he is thoroughly checked out for competence. Enough said! Holla!

PinoyFan says:

Judge Garcia is BLIND! He should find a new career.

ali says:

Donaire should stay at 122 for a min it a lot good fight in and around that division...

brownsugar says:

Yes much is expected from Donaire, He'll have to grow into the 122 division and that will take some time. He wisely declined a challenge from Rigondeaux,... he's not quite ready to tackle the Cuban at this point... and he knows it. However that doesn't stop the multiple gold medal winner from dogging him verbally everytime he gets a chance. Donnaire should tap the colorful Arce for his next bout and stay far away from Rigondeaux.

TotoyBato says:

Burden of being a Pinoy, very good is not good enough. Nonito was not spectacular.

Radam G says:

I'm with you, TotoyBato. @B-Sug, I'm not with you. Rigondeaux is a glorified Cuban amateur, who is now a professional amateur, who be able to crossover to super stardom as a pro, IMHO.

Dude is still STAIGHT AMATUERISH! The Filipino Flash would confuse him with pro movement and knock him da double fudge OUT! Of course after beating him silly and cutting him up.

You know what! Rigondeaux better stay away from any live body with power and side-door movement. Or da sucka will never get to TFF. WOW! In the amateurs, the Cubans had the luck and magic. But in the pros, most of da suckas become a combined tragic.

I don't see any Luis Rodriguezes, Sugar Ramoses or Jose Napoleses in nowadays Cubans. Gamboa is the Cubans' only chance for a hotshot arse-thrashing pro. Dude is sharp, and has now gone on to get a grand professional trainer in GBG Manny Steward. Ronnie Shield is just smack talkin' about Rogondeaux. Rigondeaux is good, but not in the same league with TFF or Juanma Lopez and or even Evil Vic, to name a few. Holla!