Written by Michael Woods
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It was no classic for the ages, the main event of the HBO-Top Rank show from Wynn Resorts on Saturday night. The Erislandy Lara-Vanes Martirosyan scrap didn't mesh stylistically, and ended prematurely in round nine, when the boxers clashed heads. A cut opened on Vanes' left eye, severe enough that the fight had to end. They went to the cards, with that partial round being scored, and the judges saw a technical draw 86-85 Martirosyan, 87-84 Lara, 86-86 even.

CompuBox said Lara outlanded Vanes, 74-33, for the record. Lara out-threw Vanes, 257-243.

Vanes told Max Kellerman he thought it was close, but that "he ran all night." Vanes said trainer Freddie Roach wanted him to be aggressive, and hunt him down. Vanes said the Cuban has an amateur style and is "kind of dirty." Rematch? He said he wanted one, one hundred percent. I dare say most fans won't. Lara after said Vanes is a good fighter, but "I hit him with everything I wanted to." Is he dirty, as Vanes said? Lara said he's never had a point taken away, as proof that he isn't dirty. Lara said Vanes is Top Rank fighter and that is why he didn't get the win. Rematch? Yes, he said. "In the final few rounds I was going up and he was going down," he said.

The California resident Vanes, who is of Armenian descent, weighed 153 while the Cuban born Texas resident Lara was 153 1/2 in the junior middleweight showdown.

In the first, Vanes, whose wife had a baby a week ago, looked to press forward, but Lara, a lefty, had luck with his left to the body.

In the second, Lara used the ring, moved to get out of range, and wasn't so superb offensively,

but his ring generalship was solid. In the third, Lara kept on making Vanes miss badly at times, which might have been helpful on the scorecards. Lara got Vanes in a headlock at one point, and when it was broken, Vanes punched Lara in anger.

In the fourth, Lara went low, and Vanes got a break to collect himself. It may have been intentional; if yes, Lara was building a rep as a dirty fighter in this fight.

In the fifth, Vanes hit on the break and was warned. We wondered if the judges would be frowning on Lara's movement, and liking Vane's plow-ahead style. Lara was cut over his left eye to start the seventh. He found a home for the left, did Lara, as the round progressed.

Vanes kept backing up and getting hit with the straight left in the eighth. The left eye was cut badly to start the ninth and the doc said to pull the plug. 26 seconds had elapsed in the round.

Comment on this article

Radam G says:

That is what I say! The Cuban pros are hyped, but da bytches ain't all dat and a bag of chips. Da muthachumps need some boxing tips.

First one: Go back to fighting old school -- taught to the Cubans by the late greats Sarge Johnson, Junior Robles and the Old Mongoose Archie Moore, to name a few of the American coaches, who help out Cuba back in da day.

That hyped-up New Jack Gym in Houston did Lara no services. His @$$ was grass, if not for the dirty tricks of the trade that he used. Now dude has mad skills in da TsOTT. Holla!

Bernie Campbell says:

Despite the Draw, Martirosyan really has to step up his game from here on out! How bout taking that stiff's Bunderage lunch money?