

Abner Mares, Santa Cruz Keeps Titles at Staples

Written by David A. Avila

Sunday, 11 November 2012 00:56



LOS ANGELES-WBC junior featherweight titleholder Abner Mares always finds a way to win and once again proved his adaptability by winning a unanimous decision victory against the fleet Anselmo Moreno of Panama on Saturday. Mares was like a relentless pit bull.

Mares (25-0-1, 13 KOs) retained the title against Moreno (33-2-1, 12 KOs) in front of a partisan crowd at the Staples Center that saw a number of action-packed fights on the Golden Boy

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Promotions fight card.

The Southern California based prizefighter proved against the elusive Moreno that he could adapt but it was not easy.

Mares came out aggressively and caught Moreno with some combinations. The Panamanian fighter tried to hold but the Californian would not allow it and continued punching in round one.

The second round saw Mares pursue and exchange whenever he was close to Moreno. Body shot after body shot was rained on the Panamanian. A counter left hook by Mares connected big for the champion. Moreno also landed a counter left cross.

Moreno seemed to find his rhythm in the third round with some long counter left hands that connected. Mares returned to the body and a counter left hook landed in a very close round. Moreno looked more comfortable.

The titleholder Mares stepped on the gas in round four with some relentless pursuit and combinations to the head and body. A low blow by Mares stopped the fight, but when it resumed Mares attacked furiously until the end of the round.

Mares kept the pressure on Moreno and caught him with a right to the chin that the Panamanian never saw. Slowly he went down and looked groggy but got up to finish the round in round five. It was Mares in pursuit until the end. It was Moreno's first time ever on his knees.

"He had never been down so that felt good," said Mares of his knockdown of Moreno.

The Panamanian had no excuse.

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"I got careless when I went down," said Moreno.

The overhand rights connected big time for Mares in round six as Moreno tried to rally from the previous round. Mares trapped Moreno in the corner for what seemed 30 seconds and landed some big overhand rights again.

"I could tell he felt my power and aggression," Mares said.

Despite a low blow that slowed the fight in round seven it was the Panamanian's best round in a while as he landed a perfect three-punch combination. Mares landed some combos too in a very close and competitive round.

It was the real men's round as both fighters stood in the corner and bombed away. A sizzling right hand counter sent Moreno flying across the ring with Mares in quick pursuit in round eight. But he couldn't muster enough to keep the Panamanian from recovering quickly.

"He did take advantage when I took too long," Mares said. "He's a super champion he knew me well."

Both fighters exchanged combinations to the head and body in round nine with Mares landing the counter right and Moreno landing the counter right hook. Both exchanged evenly.

Mares used the jab effectively in a slower round. When the action picked up it was the body attack and counter rights that connected for the champion. Moreno had some moments but not as many as Mares in round 10.

A point deduction for holding and pulling cost Moreno the round as he caught Mares with some good body shots but didn't win round 11.

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Both fired away with conviction in the final round but their weariness proved to make them sloppy. Mares connected with some counter rights and Moreno used some stiff jabs and right hooks but neither had enough power to hurt the other.

All three judges scored it for Mares 116-110 twice by judges Marty Denkin and David Sutherland while judge James Jen Kin scored it 120-106.

IBF champ Santa Cruz Wins

IBF bantamweight titleholder Leo "El Terremoto" Santa Cruz performed his usual seek and destroy battle plan against Mexico's super tough Victor Zaleta and once again it was a fight filled with enough blows to fill two fights.

East L.A.'s Santa Cruz fought toe to toe in the first two rounds with Zaleta who quickly discovered that he could not match the champion's furious pace. He began to box and move but Santa Cruz pursued with relentless fury and caught the Mexican fighter with shots to the body that echoed in the arena and resulted in two knockdowns in seven rounds.

It seemed Zaleta would quit but he never seemed to look for a way out and tried hardily to return fire. Santa Cruz was just too strong.

"I have the heart and blood of a Mexican fighter," said Zaleta (20-3-1, 10 KOs).

Round nine saw Santa Cruz even more aggressive but Zaleta tried for a knockout blow and during an exchange of right hands, it was Santa Cruz who connected perfectly to the chin with a counter right cross. Down went Zaleta for a knockout. Referee Ray Corona stopped the fight at 1:42 of the round.

"He was a strong fighter," said Santa Cruz (22-0-1, 13 KOs). "I finally caught him and he went down."

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Santa Cruz was ahead on all three score cards 80-70 twice and 79-71 once.

The lanky pressure fighter said he wants to move up a weight division in two or three fights.

Angulo

One punch proved that Alfredo "El Perro" Angulo (21-2, 18 KOs) is back when he connected during a furious exchange to knock out Raul "El Tigre" Casarez (19-3, 9 KOs) with a left hook. It is perhaps the knockout of the year and Angulo ended the fight in 56 seconds to win his first fight of 2012.

"I knew the dog was going to come back," said Angulo. "We worked a lot on defense."

Angulo said he could fight in 20 minutes if necessary.

WBO champion Cleverly

WBO light heavyweight titleholder Nathan Cleverly (25-0, 12 KOs) of Wales was too fast, too strong and too much for South Dakota's Shawn Hawk (22-3-1, 16 KOs) who did well until the body shots began. The two fought rather evenly with Cleverly landing more and just enough to win every round. But beginning in round seven a flurry of body blows caused a sink in Hawk's knees and down he went twice in that round. The eight round saw Cleverly go back to the body and twice more Hawks sunk to the canvas. Referee Tony Crebs ended the fight at 1:33 of the round.

"It was a great experience. He was a tough opponent but I eventually broke him down and it paid off and I got the victory," said Cleverly fighting for the first time in the U.S.A. "I like to take risks but I got caught with too many punches."

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Other bouts

San Diego's Antonio Orozco (16-0, 12 KOs) stopped Riverside's Danny Escobar (8-2, 5 KOs) after six rounds of brutal back and forth punching. An Orozco left hook caught Escobar flush and the San Diego powerhouse followed up with six more blows to end the fight by knockout at 2:06 of round six in the junior welterweight clash.

"This was a great learning experience," said Orozco, who is managed by Frank Espinoza. "I'm ready for the next one."

Former amateur star Chris Pearson (6-0, 5 KOs) needed only 44 seconds to end the battle of left-handers with Jeremy Marts (8-13, 6 KOs) in a junior middleweight fight. Pearson's speed was apparent and he used it wisely against the aggressive Marks who didn't see the blow.

Northern California's Alonso Loeza (3-7-1) upset Zach "Kid Yamika" Wohlman (4-1-1) with a come-from-behind knockout rally at 17 seconds of round four in a welterweight fight. Wohlman was ahead after two rounds but spent a lot of energy attempting to knock out the rugged Loeza. A right hand dropped Wohlman at the end of round three who beat the count but was wobbly returning to his corner. Loeza poured on the blows in the fourth and referee John Taylor stopped the fight.

Montebello's David Reyes (2-2-1) upset Texan Isaac Torres's (2-0-1) winning streak in getting a majority draw after four rounds. Torres started strong but was confused by Reyes' movement especially in the last two rounds. The scores were 39-37 Torres and 38-38 twice for the majority draw.

Robert Easter (1-0) of Cincinnati used a body attack to soften up Nebraska's Eddie Corona (0-2) before pummeling him and forcing the referee to stop the lightweight fight at 2:39 of round two. It was Easter's pro debut.

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the Roast says:

That was my kind of night fight fans! Two networks, five fights, and one DVR made for a better than PPV night in Roastworld. The HBO fights made an excellent undercard for the Showtime fights. Garcia was sharp, Lara and Martrosian was good, Angulo back with a bang and bad hair, Santa Cruz relentless and Mares-Moreno a very good fight. I dont like Paulie as a fighter but I love Paulie behind the mic. Great night of boxing!!!

brownsugar says:

I agree Roast... This was a terrifically satisfying night of boxing.

I've been reading about Cleverly on the pro-European sites and have always wondered what the big deal was.

Now I see why, this kid fights like Paul Williams but is much better technically. I had Cleverly beating a steady tattoo on Hawk from every angle,.. constantly changing angle, speed and power within his combinations.

Throwing a non-stop smorgasborg of punches every round like Aaron Pryor used to do.

He wanted to make an impression in the U.S. and he has my undivided attention,.. Bring on Cloud, Hopkins and Shumenov.

I don't know if his leaky defense will hold up against the better boxers but it'll be a blast finding out.

My 7 and 11 year old grandsons watched the fight with me.

The youngest one asked me why Angulo had a skeleton face and where his eyes were... thought he was some kind of Demon.

Emotional night for Angulo and the Free-Angulo fans. It was good to see Angulo win a measure of redemption... now the real work begins.

Angulo looked like he wanted to box at first until he got hit..... then the Dog came out and he went straight into Beast-Mode-punch-trading Heaven.

Orozco impressed me the way he constantly dipped before he unloaded stiff jabs and potent hooks. This guy fights for results.

On the other hand, Garcia waited patiently for his opening, This guy is tricky and should be considered extremely dangerous.

For all the talk I expected a lot more from Martirosyan and Lara.

Lara fought the more technical and effective fight but at the expense of entertainment.

I thought he edged it out but deserved the draw for stinking it out. That's no way to win a championship. Lara needs a puncher like Alvarez to bring out his best... and it's still not guaranteed he'd win it.

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Anselmo wasn't strong enough to hold off the charging and wild swinging Mares. Donaires gonna eat him alive. P
He's probably drooling over the possibility already.

Got it all recorded for future reference.

Too bad Cruz won't get his wish to challenge Mares. But the guy is must see TV. Showtime put on a hell of a card last night... and proved that Boxing is here to stay. Whoo - Hoo!

brownsugar says:

BTW, the Hawk / Cleverly fight should have been stopped earlier, also his corner could have tossed in the towell. Hawk can never say he wasn't given every opportunity to change the course of the fight.

brownsugar says:

Not even going to talk about the crazy scoring or poor officiating in the Mares/Anselmo bout. Paulie got it right when he said the ref must have been sleeping.... priceless.

DaveB says:

Great night of boxing for real. Paulie was funny with his comment of the judge who scored 120 -106, that he must have been sleeping and missed a great fight. No wonder no one cares about the heavyweights no more. The lighter weights are too entertaining and there are so many good fights out there that can still be made. If Arum and Golden Boy get together the sky will be the limit. Can't wait for DeMarco and Broner next week.

SouthPaul says:

Viva el Perro! Great new look...fun ko.

Performance of the night goes to referee RAY Corona. Stay back...let the fighters do their thang'. Smooth and laid back referring style. Love it.

SouthPaul says:

Overrated referee. Kenny Baseless. His herky jerky ... jumping in and out the action ... has always grated my nerves. He reminds me of an over cautious driver. Scary *** look on his face.. with hands cemented to the stirring wheel .. Over braking. Yea, both him and JAY Nady need to fall back and let the fights unfold.

Shoulder Roll Defense says:

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It was a good night for boxing fans, but I was expecting more from the main events. Lara was starting to break Vanes down when the fight was stopped, thus Vanes is lucky to walk away with a draw in my opinion. On the other hand, I have to give Radam G credit for predicting that Mares would be able to walk Moreno down. I've seen Moreno fight a couple of times on Showtime previously and I thought that his slick defense would give Mares fits, but was wrong. Moreno moves a lot, but he often leaves himself out of range to counter. Also, he doesn't hit very hard and wasn't able to deter Mares from charging forward. People had the nerve to compare Moreno to Sweet Pea and I almost fell for it. He is no Sweet Pea and got exposed last night.

Radam G says:

All righteee RIGHT! I've been chillaxin' wif my boy Marty Mart! And I'm down wif O-P-P! Y'all know MEEEE! And I'm here ta school ya! Not to fool ya!

Moreno is a wannabe slick, quick southpaw. But he's cocksure and a mimicking-a-southpaw man of straw. Fudge him! Dude is a poser. And a nature righty, who could never move in the awkward ways that you righties say that we lefties can straight-up do. And we CAN! Because we have to improvise, adapt and overcome in diz jived-up world made for you righty muthasuckas.

All that 99 percent of right-handers who posture as southpaws can do in the end, is take an arse thrashing and get EXPOSED! In order to adroitly fight like us, one needs to be able to metamorphose into us -- like we do when fight in a righty stance -- not try to mimick one of us, i.e., Sweetpea Whitaker.

I dare that somebodee, and dey syet-talkin' sidebytch, prove me negative. The only great southpaw-fighting natural right hander has been the "Double M Man" Michael "Master of Misery" Moorer.

When it comes to southpaw-fighting greatness, you right handers oughta quit! You are the one percent. But holla at the greatness of southpaws, who fought right handed. Leading the list is the recent demised Carmen Basilio. He upset the supergreat Sugar Ray Robinson, and was in fight of the year battles for five years straight. Following CB is the late, great Smokin' Joe Frazier. Some of you muthasuckas felt his left hook in the womb.

I know that I did. My moms told me so. She was attending one of Poppa Smoke's bouts while I was still inside her womb. He hit a sucka with dat left hook, and moms says that my kicking stop for a sec and I started farting. WTF! You jive suckas didn't know that an infant gets gas while in the womb. Dumb@ss fanfaronades thought that my pregnant-with-Radam-G moms was cutting cheese at the fights. Fudge 'em! They were a bunch of haters anyway. Hehehe!

The awesome natural lefties, doing my lifetime -- not in any necessary order -- are Antonio Marco Barrera, Donald Curry, Big Money O Dela Hoya, Miguel Cotto, Pinklin Thomas, Gerry Gooney and Kelly Pavlik, just to quickly name those on my mind right now, cause I'm sippin' on shark blood and beet juice. LAAIDDD BACK! Got my gold on my mind, and my mind on my gold. Hehehe! Holla!

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ali says:

I hate Jay Mary he's the worst ref ever I just had to say that first off..Now as for the fights Moreno was a major disappointment all he had to do was fight in the pocket and he would have won. Mares is a very average fighter and would get knocked the F out by the Flash. But I do the a fight between Mares and Santa would be a great fight. Vanes and Lara both suck straight up but Lara was going to win the fight going down the stretch.

ali says:

One last thing Paulie M.Does a great,great job as a commentator I hope after he retires he does it full-time