

RINGSIDE REPORT Tim Bradley Wins Slugfest Over Ruslan Provodnikov

Written by David A. Avila
Sunday, 17 March 2013 10:48



CARSON-WBO titleholder Timothy “Desert Storm” Bradley escaped with his title after 12 eye-popping rounds in hand-to-hand combat with Russia’s Ruslan “Siberian Rocky” Provodnikov on Saturday.

Wow.

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Bradley (30-0, 12 Kos) didn't have to swing away against power punching Provodnikov (22-2, 15 Kos) before 3,000 fans. He could've boxed and moved and everything could have been much easier. Instead he hammered away and got hammered in winning a close and raucous slugfest by unanimous decision at the Home Depot Center.

It looked dim for Bradley (above, right, in pic by Chris Farina-Top Rank) in the opening round as he caught a right hand flush and staggered around the ring for several seconds and fell down. Referee Pat Russell did not rule it a knockdown but Bradley was clearly hurt nonetheless. It was amazing that the titleholder remained in the fight.

Still groggy, Bradley seemed ripe for a knockout as Provodnikov unloaded with the heavy artillery in the second round. Bradley refused to go down though he was hurt and groggy. The extra blows fired by Provodnikov took its toll as he seemed exhausted at the end of the round.

"I was concussed," said Bradley after to Max Kellerman in the ring. "I know because I'm still dizzy."

Bradley took advantage of a spent Provodnikov in rounds three and four. The Palm Springs fighter peppered the Russian with combinations and used the jab to score points during a lull in the action. Provodnikov had some moments but not enough energy after spending so much earlier trying to knock out the champion.

After winning three rounds in a row Bradley was caught with a left hook and wobbled in round six. The Russian attacked looking for the knockout and Bradley stood toe to toe urging him on though he was clearly hurt. It was the best round so far.

"He tried to fight him straight up," said Joel Diaz, Bradley's trainer.

On his toes Bradley was able to reclaim the momentum as Provodnikov waited for an opportunity to land one of his Russian bombs. Bradley's movement never allowed the

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challenger to unload. Instead it was jab and move as he racked up rounds.

A trap set by Bradley in the ninth round nearly toppled Provodnikov who walked into a set up right cross. Bradley tried to finish the Russian but a left hook stopped that notion. Still, Bradley won the round. In the corner Provodnikov's trainer Freddie Roach looked concerned about the damage his fighter incurred.

Provodnikov increased the tempo during the last three rounds with more pressure as Bradley seemed to slow down. A short right cross staggered Bradley who managed to fight his way out of trouble in toe-to-toe action.

With Provodnikov moving in looking for the knockout in the final round, Bradley couldn't seem to get on his toes to stay away from danger. A right hand connected as did some lefts by Provodnikov as Bradley teetered all over the ring. Finally, caught in the corner, Bradley took a knee after a right hand. He got up and soon the bell rang ending the tumultuous fight.

"Win or lose you're a great warrior," Bradley told Provodnikov at the final bell. "He's much more powerful than (Manny) Pacquiao."

Many of the fans roared their approval at the end of the fight perhaps thinking that the title would change hands. But all three judges saw it for Bradley; 114-113 according to judges Marty Denkin and Jerry Cantu. A third judge, Raul Caiz, saw it 115-112 for Bradley.

A swollen and weary Bradley was spent after the fight.

"I wanted to give some action," Bradley said.

Boy did he ever.

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Other bouts

Two undefeated welterweights clashed for a regional title but there was a lot more riding on the victory. After 10 back and forth rounds Jessie Vargas (22-0, 9 Kos) survived a second round knockdown to win by unanimous decision against L.A.-based Wale Omotoso (23-1, 19 Kos).

“I thought I won the fight easily,” said Omotoso. “I was stronger than him.”

Omotoso floored Vargas with a body shot in the second round. But in round five Vargas connected with some vicious blows and had Omotoso teetering throughout the round. From that point on it became a battle of strategy.

“It was my right hand that won the fight,” said Vargas. “We worked on it all through camp.”

Two judges, Fritz Werner and Jonathan Davis scored it 96-93 for Vargas and judge Gwen Adair had it 97-92 for the Las Vegas boxer.

Prelim bouts

Mexican Olympian Cesar Valdez (4-0, 3 Kos) bludgeoned fellow Sonora Mexican Carlos Gonzalez (1-3) for three rounds of a featherweight clash. Gonzalez never went down but was repeatedly hammered by the sharp-shooting Valdez. After a series of brutal blows by Valdez the referee Tony Crebs smartly stopped the fight 58 seconds into the fourth round. Valdez was deemed the winner by technical knockout.

Indio's featherweight Gabino Saenz (9-0-1, 8 Kos) came on like gangbusters against Arizona's Cesar Valenzuela (4-2-1, 2 Kos) and knocked out the visitor in the second round. Saenz caught Valenzuela with an overhand right for a first round knockdown. Then, after Valenzuela beat the count, a left hook dropped him again. Once again he survived. However, round two saw Saenz catch Valenzuela walking into a right hand and down he went for good for a knockout at 2:02 of

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frame. It was one of the most brutal knockouts of the year to this point.

Las Vegas featherweight knockout artist Jesse Magdaleno (14-0, 10 Kos) erupted quickly against Dominican Republic's Carlos Fulgencio (18-10-1, 12 Kos) and mowed through the taller fighter quickly. A double left hook to the body and head floored Fulgencio early in the first round. In the second round a right and left hand combination floored the Dominican a second time. Finally, in round three a Magdaleno right uppercut and several follow up right hands had Fulgencio knocked out on his feet. Referee Tony Crebs stopped the fight at 45 seconds into the round.

Houston's Victor Sanchez (4-5-1) got his first knockout when he caught East L.A.'s Ramon Valadez (11-4, 6 Kos) in the first round of a featherweight match. During an exchange of punches Valadez caught a left hook and collapsed. He beat the count but was unable to survive another attack. Referee Jack Reiss stopped the fight at 2:39 of the first round.

Mexican heavyweight Andy "The Destroyer" Ruiz (18-0, 12 Kos) riddled Matt Greer (15-10, 13 Kos) with body shots that opened up his guard and allowed a flurry of blows to the head. Greer was floored three times total by the quick-punching heavyweight from Mexicali. A right hand to the head knocked down Greer a final time and referee Reiss stopped the fight at 2:53 of the first round.

A battle between two pro rookie junior middleweights saw Oxnard's Egidijus Kavaliauskas (1-0) beat Inglewood's Eridanni Quintero (0-1) by unanimous decision after four rounds.

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Radam G says:

Tim Bradley and the lot of his nut-huggers cannot get "Pacquiao" out of their mouths. They have Da Manny's name on the brain. D@mn! They must be going through some deep emotional pain. Bradley got the nod with some help from lackness of the ref enforcing knockdown rules, so*TB ought*to STFU and move on. He will not hold that alphabet-sanctioning organization belt long. Holla!

brownsugar says:

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I was still at work when the fight started.... decided to take a break to catch a couple rounds of the Vargas vs Lucky Boy action.. After reading a story about Omotoso on the TSS yesterday I wanted to see if the kid would be able to give Vargas any resistance...

During the first few rounds I was shocked at how good a fight this was becoming.

That's when I turned off the company PC and decided that I worked enough overtime...it's time to watch some boxing...recordings be damned.

All of Provodnikov's fights have been compelling .. used to love watching him on ESPN always dealing out the abuse while absorbing his own fair share of it himself.

Bradley finally earned some new fans while putting on a display of heart and fortitude seldom seen except from fights like Rios vs Alvarez.

After the fight however Bradley looked like damaged goods.. The price of glory can come at a high price. Especially when the urge to go into an all out aggressive mode supercedes the common sense to fight within the context of your strengths and attributes.

Bradley chose Provodnikov because he knew he wanted make his comeback against highly respected opposition. But I think it was also personal.

This was his chance to show them all. Paqman... Roach... and all of fans who felt he should have rendered a signed confession after the Paq fight. A statement to the the entire world entitled "YES...I ADMIT TO THE ENTIRE PLANET....I LOST"!

I mean because Bradley seems like such a nice guyright?

WrongBradley is a capitolist like all other fighters and he would have never voluntarily surrendered his "O".

Hence the next best option...Destroy a Wild Card fighter and Paq's sparring partner while humiliating Freddy Roach publically.

Surely accomplishing this would give credence to another lucrative fight with Paqman and give Arum another option for Paq's next fight.

But the good book says that pride comes before a fall and that's what nearly happened when Bradley decided to slug instead of box.

Roger Mayweather always tells Floyd in the corner "just box him, you beat him easy when you box him".. and Diaz screaming the same words in Bradley's ear all night. ...but he wouldn't listen.

Hopefully when Bradley returns from the neurologist he will have learned that it's better to be a live dog.. than a dead lion. Only then will he ready to rematch the hard punching Siberian

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My thanks and applause to both fighters.... hope they both recover to give us more great rights.

brownsugar says:

By the wayMarquez has chosen to skip Paq and fight either Rios should he beat Alvarez or Bradley.

JMM will make his choice after the Rios fight.

Bradleys display of Bravado will surely make him a favorable choice after last nights early FOTY candidate.

SouthPaul says:

Bradley's stock certainly got a boost. The stage is now set for a September showdown/rematch against Manny Pacquaio. And Juan Manual Marquez as the alternative (for Bradley). Whatever happens, hopefully it ain't a fifth bout of Marquez vs PAC. Barf.

Radam G says:

BobFather chose that, not Marquez. We will all be hanging out in Macau, China, in April for the discussions. Marquez's is getting so old that he may still not risk fighting anybody but Da Manny for that BIG CHECK in September, and a last arse whuppin -- with or without da roids supplied to him by Fallin' Angel Heredia. Holla!

Radam G says:

Marquez may be fighting the winner of Rios-Alvarado. But he and trainer Beristrein (name missed) said no -- and HELL NO to Bradley. The TSS scribes will get on their investigative whup-@\$\$ pugilistic journalism and prove me righteous, not a cyberspace nutcase on the loose from the looney tunes. Holla!

Spinach Chin says:

Glad to be wrong about Bradley's stock falling. Sure the fight could have gone either way but nobody loses when two guys fight like this. Bradley's phone will be ringing a lot more as of last night.

jzzy says:

Bradley has taken a frightful amount of punishment in his last two outings. It would be a shame to see this articulate young family man punch drunk. He needs to take stock of the situation and learn some defense (try moving his head) or he's gonna have trouble. He's shown enough bravery now its time to show some skill and intelligence in the ring. Box,slip,move and counter.

Radam G says:

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Bradley is still in the hospital. Holla!

Radam G says:

C'mon, Jzzy! Bradley did move that big-arse dome. It just so big that a fighter cannot miss it. Provodnikov really head hunting. Bradley's head was just in the way. Holla!

amayseng says:

i hope tim recovers well.

dont want to see anyone permantly injured in that ring....

i would like to see jmm fight bradley but jmm wont want to be chasing or stocking him all night being the natural counterpuncher..

pac vs tim may be a good matchup for pac to get the rust off coming from such a knockout....

bradley doesnt have the power to put pac in jeopardy...

i think jmm knocks rios out in 6.

rios is a target, he gets hit as much as ruslan