

The best thing boxing does, better than provide us couch surfers chills and thrills, is provide a fitting outlet for youths who might otherwise be unable to focus their intensity and physicality in a useful fashion.

Two fighters who found a home in the ring, and are easy to root for, are the Peterson brothers. They were homeless in DC, with their dad in jail and their mom unable to care for them, and managed to steer clear of an inevitable early grave. Instead, boxing took them in, and on Friday night both continued to march towards a more optimistic inevitability: a title shot.

Lamont Peterson (24-0, 11 KOs), ranked No. 3 in the WBO and No. 6 in the WBA at 140 pounds, took on fellow unbeaten Antonio Mesquita (entering at 34-0, 27 KOs), a Brazilian now residing in Las Vegas, in the ShoBox feature from Biloxi, Mississippi.

The junior welterweight scrap was scheduled for ten rounds or less. But Lamont could not close the show against Mesquita, who entered with an inflated record, and inferior skills. Unlike his brother, he's more of a line drive singles hitter, and at the end of the affair, Lamont exited with a 98-93, 99-90, 10-89 UD victory.

The loser, a free swinger, toggled back and forth between orthodox and southpaw stance, and that seemed only to confuse him. He yapped at Lamont, yelling, 'C'mon, c'mon,' after the eighth came to a close.

Twenty-three-year-old Lamont holds his guard a little tighter than his bro, and punches in straighter lines, as well. Anthony (age 22) sat in the crowd, in his gear, to check out his bro's gig after he finished up.

The loser finally got amped up, and pursued Lamont heartily late in the tenth. Where was the fire before, we wondered?

The crowd was blase at the close.

Younger brother Anthony Peterson (26-0, 19 KOs), a lightweight who is ranked No. 1 in the WBO, No. 4 in the WBC and No. 12 in the IBF, disposed of Jose Antonio Izquierdo (16-2-1, 13 KOs) of Chihuahua, Mexico via TKO in the eighth of a scheduled ten rounds in the ShoBox opener.

The end came on the third knockdown of the Cuban born Mexican Izzy, as the loser stayed on the mat, looking up at the ref, unwilling to eat any more shots. You couldn't blame him.

The loser went down in the seventh (a massive left hook), then twice in the eighth (the first from a left and followups, the finisher from a left hook to the body and two crackerjack right follows). He had been in the fight, but things went downhill fast. The official time: 2:54 of the eighth. This

Friday Night Fight Roundup/ShoBox, ESPN

Written by Michael Woods
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Peterson is active, a cardio wonder. Is he ready for a Juan Diaz or a Katsidis? Time will tell.

Who's better? As a fan, I prefer the little bro. He sets down on his shots better.

Over on ESPN2, hometown Allan Green (entering at 25-1) won the headline bout, taking a unanimous decision (98-91, 99-89, 99-90) from Detroit's Rubin Williams (entering at 29-2-1) in a super middleweight scrap taking place in Tulsa, Oklahoma on Friday evening.

The crowd was into the ten rounder, as Green looked in good form, and got some rounds in against a capable, but somewhat hesitant Williams.

Green took control early on, and hurt Williams in the fourth, but backed off some, looking to be patient.

Teddy Atlas noted that Green has a habit of looking down at his feet periodically, an odd tic he may want to address before his next bout, lest some wise scout passes that info on to somebody who takes advantage.

Things slowed down in the eighth, as both men looked for a second wind. Green perked up to kick off the ninth, looking for a strong close for his homies. Not sure what the out of towners was thinking; he obviously needed a KO to go home with a win, and there was a distinct lack of urgency in Williams' game.

Again, in the tenth, Williams hung back, waited for the perfect opening, postured, and floundered, ultimately. Not being a wiseass, but maybe Williams should try hypnosis or something. His temperment doesn't really suit his vocation, it looks like.

Zahir Raheem (29-2) kicked things off with a quickie KO of Ricardo Dominguez (23-2-2) of Mexico in a junior welterweight faceoff. Raheem has promised no more stinkers, and he came out firin.' A left hook on the button was all it took for a stoppage, as Dominguez sat on his behind, and declined an invitation to stand up by ref Steve Smoger. The time was 1:18.

SPEEDBAG Welcome back, FNF. Maybe you missed Teddy's opening remarks last week, when he apologized, not for a "soft" commission, but for a "soft" opening card.

"Quite honestly, we're going to have good fights for you people in the coming months for this new season," he told viewers, "but tonight, I'm sorry to say, a little coal in the stockings, because I think we should have done a little bit better job of putting together this show."

Welcome back Atlas, no company man you...Love it.

This is the tenth anniversary of the series. 'Member Max's leather jacket? That was a long time ago, eh?