

Russia's Roman Karmazin Beats Bronco

Written by David A. Avila

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INGLEWOOD, CA.-In front of a largely supportive crowd Roman Karmazin piled on the points in beating Bronco McKart in a middleweight bout, and, in another bout, a super middleweight bout set a record for quickest knockout on Saturday.

It was a large fight card with an Eastern European taste featuring Russia's Karmazin and Michigan's McKart in a battle of two former world champions at Hollywood Park Casino. The 12-fight Art of Boxing Promotion was extra impressive.

Karmazin (37-3-1, 23 KOs) returned to California from frigid St. Petersburg and used his herky jerky style to jump to a lead against McKart (51-9-1, 31 KOs) in a 12-round fight.

McKart found it difficult to land any solid blows in the early going. Not until the fourth round did he begin scoring and especially after shooting a right jab that made Karmazin make adjustments.

The Russian boxer landed numerous three-punch combinations to the head and body that proved a good recipe against the cagey McKart. It was only when the American fighter forced the issue that he scored points and slowed the combinations coming his way.

No knockdowns occurred in the fight. The judges scored it 117-111, 119-109, 118-110 for Karmazin who picked up and regional WBC and IBF middleweight titles for his effort.

Perhaps the shock of the night came when Italy's Orlando Brizzo and California's Joe Schilling both entered the ring for their pro debut and set a California record knockout that took only five seconds.

"That broke the record set in the 90s," said Dean Lohuis, the chief inspector for California State Athletic Commission, adding that it was set by heavyweight Jeremy Williams. "It broke it by four seconds."

In the first round Brizzo sprinted across the ring at the sound of the bell and ran into Schilling's tight right hand. Down went the Italian and was he ever tagged. Referee Ray Corona immediately waved the fight over. Brizzo tried to get up but it was a good 60 seconds before he could find his balance.

That record knockout set the tone for the rest of the night.

Next came junior welterweight Dean Byrne of Dublin, Ireland against Mexico's Francisco Gil (6-9).

The former amateur star Byrne came out winging and landed a few punches at the opening bell. Then the Mexican fighter decided to stand and trade and it became a 50-50 fight as both tasted

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each other's best punches.

Byrne's trainer Freddie Roach shook his head at the Irish fighter's decision and made him change tack.

"I was trying to knock him out and threw a lot of punches in the first round," said Byrne (10-0, 4 KOs). "My corner told me to box and move. I just used my jab and knocked him out."

A left hook to the body dropped Gil in the third round. In the fourth, Byrne caught Gil with a counter right hand to knock him down and second time. A couple more right hands forced referee Wayne Hedgepeth to stop the fight at 1:11 of the round for a technical knockout for the Irish fighter.

"Once I knocked him down it was just a matter of time," said Byrne.

Armenia's Vardan Gasparyan and Nicaragua's Octavio Narvaez (7-6-1) didn't waste time in their welterweight bout. Both let the punches fly from the opening bell.

"I tried to knock him out in the first round," said Gasparyan (11-1-4). "He was a Hispanic fighter. He was tough. So I went to plan B and C."

Gasparyan used his superior jab and pivots to keep Narvaez from setting down on his punches. After six rounds the judges scored it 60-54, 59-55, 59-55 for Gasparyan.

"I would be lying if I said it was an easy fight," Gasparyan said.

Other bouts

Hollywood's Khabir Suleymanov (6-0) grabbed a majority decision over Ghana's Lante Addy (6-3) in a fast-paced bantamweight bout. The judges scored it 38-38, 39-37, 40-36 for Suleymanov.

Ismayl Sillakh scored a second round knockout of Jose Coral in light heavyweight bout stopped 1:13 of the round. Referee Hedgepeth stopped the fight after Sillakh began unloading combinations.

In a junior lightweight bout, Gabe Tolmajyan (5-1) scored a knockout over Andre Kim (2-3) in 1:46 of the second round.

Heavyweight Lateef Kayode dropped Long Beach's Ethan Cox twice in winning by knockout at 1:02 of the second round.

A battle between undefeated welterweights ended in a draw. Oakland's Antonio Johnson (7-0-1) jumped ahead quickly with pot shots in the first two rounds. Then Cleveland's ultra tall Willie Nelson (10-0-1) slipped into another gear and began using his jab and combinations. After six rounds Lou Filippo scored 58-56 for Nelson. Fritz Werner 59-55 for Johnson. Judge Jack Reiss

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had it 57-57 for a draw.

California's Vitaliy Demyanenco (9-1, 5 KOs) scored a technical knockout over Marteze Logan (26-35-2) when the Louisiana boxer retired in his corner at the end of the third round in a welterweight bout.