

Rashad Evans Beats Thiago Silva at UFC 108

Written by David A. Avila

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LAS VEGAS-Former light heavyweight champion Rashad Evans avoided the hard-punching Brazilian Thiago Silva and won by unanimous decision in a tactical light heavyweight battle using head movement and more wrestling on Saturday.

Emulating the bob and weave movement of a Mike Tyson it was Evans who was able to utilize a more defensive approach and combine it with multiple wrestling take downs against Silva (14-2) front of more than 12, 000 at the MGM Grand. It was the main event for Ultimate Fighting Championship 108.

It worked for two of three rounds but that was all he needed.

“It was a strategy I got away from for a long time,” said Evans (19-1-1).

The former collegiate wrestling champion showed early that he was not going to be a stationary target as he bobbed and weaved toward Silva then took down the Brazilian on three occasions in the first round. The second round was a carbon copy.

Knowing he needed a knockout or stoppage of some kind, in the third round, Silva connected with a wide left that slightly staggered Evans but the Brazilian did not follow up in the third round. Instead he attempted to goad the American into an exchange that never happened. Time ran out for the Brazilian.

“When I took a step back I felt it,” said Evans about getting hit with a big punch. “Where my legs at?”

All three judges scored it the same 29-28 for Evans. Silva shook his head at the decision read.

Evans said he would like a match with rival Quinton “Rampage” Jackson who has finished filming a motion picture where he depicts Mr. T. “Let’s get it on Rampage.”

Other bouts

England’s Paul “Semtex” Daley exploded several left hands on Kentucky’s Dustin Hazelett (14-5) to suddenly end a slow starting welterweight bout. The fight started with Hazelett attempting a Spiderman-like tumble move that was side-stepped by Daley. For the next two minutes both were very careful until an exchange that saw Daley land a powerful left hook. Down went Hazelett with Daley following him with three more resounding left hands. Referee Herb Dean stopped it at 2:24 of the first round.

“All fights start standing,” said Daley (25-5-1) about winning the fight with punches and not grappling. “Dustin has been in there with the best.”

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Daley's win puts him among the top welterweights that are led by champion Georges St. Pierre.

Lightweights Sam Stout (16-5-1) of Canada and America's Joe Lauzon (17-5) put on an action-packed bout from start to finish. An elbow to the face of Stout opened up a bad cut over there left eye but he rallied with well-placed punches to win that round that sparked the fans. After three rounds the judges scored it 30-36, 30-27 twice for Stout who was able to land crisp combinations while keeping the fight standing up.

"I'm pumped," said Stout. "Yeah, he was tough."

New Jersey's Jim Miller (16-2) caught Denver's Duane Ludwig (27-10) with a right hook that floored the taller fighter. Once down Miller jumped on him and maneuvered into an arm bar hold that prompted Ludwig to tap out at 2:31 of the first round of the lightweight fight.

Brazil's heavyweight sensation Junior Dos Santos (10-1) traded left hooks with Gilbert Yvel (36-14-1) and was the successor as one blasted the American fighter to the ground. Dos Santos followed up quickly with several hammer fists and the fight was stopped by referee Herb Dean at 2:07 of the first round for a technical knockout.

"I noticed he was trying to counter attack," Dos Santos said.

Minnesota's Martin Kampmann (16-3) used a counter right to drop Jacob Volkman (9-2) twice and eventually softened him up to apply a guillotine choke and force a tap out at 4:03 of the first round of a welterweight clash.

"I think he caught me with way too many punches," said Kampmann who expected more grappling than blows. "But I'm happy I got the win."

Georgia's Cole Miller (16-4) withstood a furious attack from Dan Lauzon (12-3) including a monster left hand to force a tap out from the Massachusetts fighter due to a reverse triangle and Kimura at 3:05 of the first round of a lightweight battle.

"I don't promise to win every fight but I promise to make every fight exciting," said Miller.

California's Mark Munoz unleashed a barrage of punches that forced Ryan Jensen (15-5) to tap out at 2:30 of the first round in a middleweight bout. Munoz is a former college wrestling star.

"You make your weaknesses your strengths so that way you don't have no weaknesses," said Munoz (7-1) about improving his punching.

Nebraska's Jake Ellenberger (22-5) cracked a right to the chin of Mike Pyle (18-7-1) for a technical knockout at 22 seconds of the second round of a welterweight fight.

Brazil's Rafaello Oliveira (10-2) beat John Gunderson (22-7) by decision 30-27.