

AVILA RINGSIDE: Khan Belts Out Judah in Vegas

Written by David A. Avila
Saturday, 23 July 2011 23:08



LAS VEGAS-WBA junior welterweight titleholder Amir “King” Khan collapsed Zab Judah with an uppercut from hell to the body and grabbed the IBF title too in a battle between young and old speedsters on Saturday.

Khan (26-1, 18 KOs) showed more than 5,000 fans that even the speedy Judah (41-7, 28 KOs) could not keep up in the battle of lightning reflexes at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino. Is there a faster fighter than Khan?

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“Zab (Judah) is a great fighter and he’s awkward,” said Khan. “I knew he was getting hurt because he was moving away and ducking.”

The Bolton bullet sped through Judah with lightning jabs and right hands mixed with some left hooks. Judah left hooked Khan who gave back a few more punches in return in round one.

The next round was slower as Khan slipped into a more cautious mode. Several right hands connected and Judah’s face began to puff up in round two. The stiff jabs were keeping the Las Vegas-based Judah at bay.

Judah came out for the third round more aggressively but Khan’s speed still troubled the Brooklyn native. Several three and four punch combinations landed for the British fighter who looked more comfortable.

The speed of Khan was allowing him to rummage through Judah’s defense. A four punch combination pinned Judah against the ropes in round four. Judah landed a stiff left at the end of the round but that was it.

“I saw he was getting hurt. I think my speed overwhelmed him along with my power,” said Khan. “I busted him up.”

Khan stepped into another gear and backed up Judah with still more combinations. As Judah bent down from the barrage Khan let loose with a right uppercut to beltline area that sent the IBF titleholder to his knees with a look of pain as he held his abdomen with his right hand. He wouldn’t get up in time as referee Vic Drakulich counted to 10 at 2:47 of round five.

“The shot that put him down was clear on the belt,” said Khan. HBO’s television replay should that to be a correct assessment. “If the fight had gone a little further I would have knocked him out.”

Khan won all five rounds according to the judges.

“I’m number one in the division,” Khan said.

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Richard Schaefer, CEO for Golden Boy Promotions that handles Khan, said the United Kingdom prizefighter could be fighting again soon with either Robert "The Ghost" Guerrero, Marcos Maidana or Erik Morales.

"Amir proved tonight he's the best at 140," Schaefer said.

Other bouts

Middleweight prospect Peter "Kid Chocolate" Quillen (25-0, 19 KOs) stopped New Hampshire's Jason LeHoullier (21-6-1, 8 KOs) at 1:38 of round five.

LeHoullier, who was a very late replacement, put in a great effort and withstood several blistering assaults by Quillen. In round five a right uppercut snapped his head and his trainer signaled the referee to stop the fight. It was a great call and the right call.

Super fast Gary Russell Jr. (17-0, 10 KOs) emphatically beat Chicago's Eric Estrada (9-2) over eight rounds to win the featherweight fight by unanimous decision. A seventh round knockdown was scored by Russell who showed that a step up in competition was not a stumbling block. His speed still works even with better competition. All three judges scored it 80-71 for Maryland's Russell, a former U.S. Olympian.

Heavyweight prospect Bryant Jennings (9-0, 4 KOs) of Philadelphia beat Chicago's Theron Johnson (5-6) once again and this time more convincingly. A knockdown in round four of Johnson helped Jennings win by a wider edge by scores of 60-53 after six rounds.

Middleweights James Kirkland (29-1, 26 KOs) and Alexis Hloros (15-4-2, 11 KOs) let loose with the grenades from the start of the opening bell as Kirkland won by second round knockout. Hloros landed the first blow with a right hand to the chin that seemed to surprise Kirkland. He took the blow and both traded big blows with Kirkland getting the upper hand. A thudding right sent Hloros to the floor for a knockdown in round one. Another soon followed at the end of the round. Hloros loaded up in round two and scored another big right, but Kirkland walked through it and delivered some lefts and rights that floored the Michigan fighter again. Referee Russell Mora called a halt at 25 seconds of round two. Kirkland won by technical knockout.

Junior lightweight prospect Ronny Rios (15-0, 7 KOs) didn't waste time in pinpointing the

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weakness of Mexico's Noe Lopez Jr. (8-9, 5 KOs) as he attacked the body quickly with precision. A stiff right hand followed by a left hook dropped the southpaw in the neutral corner for a knock down. He got up and was met with another barrage of body shots and a left hook to the body dropped Lopez to the floor again. Referee Joe Cortez stopped the fight at 1:12 of round one in Santa Ana's Rios favor.

Josiah Judah (10-1-1, 2 KOs) pulled out a majority decision against Poland's Rafael Jastrzebski (4-7-1) in a super middleweight match. Judah had the better defense and looked smoother but Jastrzebski scored often with a stiff left jab and some right hands. The judges scored it 57-57, 58-56, 59-55 after six rounds.

Ireland's Jamie Kavanagh out fought Colorado's Marcos Herrera after six rounds of a lightweight bout. The Irish fighter, who is trained by Freddie Roach, had a little bit too much of everything. But Herrera hung tough and grinded it out despite a very bad round in the middle of the fight. Kavanagh expended a lot of energy in five rounds that left it open for Herrera in the sixth. But he couldn't hurt Kavanagh who won by unanimous decision.

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FighterforJC says:

With this performance I think Khan may have annihilated his chances of getting handpicked by Mayweather. Khan should've at least faked a few wobbles or something.

Grimm says:

Still not that impressed. Khan was aggressive, dominant, sported strong straight punches, but still has problems finding the right distance once he comes forward and punches his foes backwards. He always - always - follows that up by first coming to close, then backing up, and giving his opponents room for recovery. He is good, no doubt about it, but his somewhat stumbling feet presents a problem for him. On the other hand; man, he is fast.

Radam G says:

I just wanna post that the Texan "Mandingo Warrior" James Kirkland and his trainer, the Mermaid Ann Wolfe, are BACK! "THEY'RE BACK!" Y'all ain't saw nuffin' yet! Shocking comeback fighter of the year will be Kirkland. Don't sleep on him. Dat Mermaid got dat sucka swimmin' through dirt without gettin' muddy. She got him working out with a heavy-a\$\$ iron chain around his gloves. Seals Team Six's training ain't nuffin' on dat hard-arse jive dat the Mermaid be puttin' on the Mandingo Warrior. Wow! She scares the heck outta me. Holla!

DaveB says:

This one wasn't that hard to predict, not that I pretend to know what exactly is going to happen. Actually it was easier for Khan than I thought. One thing Khan does have regardless of whether you like him or not, is star quality. One other thing is that in watching these highly skilled fighters, for me, they make me appreciate the skills of Mayweather, Pacquaio, Donaire and JMM that much more. Other people are good, sometimes very good but those four are ring technicians that break you down in almost a scientific way which is a joy to behold. These other guys put on good fights, sometimes they outclass their opponents but they do not put on the same type of boxing clinic. It's all exciting just the same.

mortcola says:

Khan has seriously improved his technique - Wayne A in my gym mentioned several ways in which the sparring with Pac has rubbed off into his own toolkit. Not to mention, he is bigger and stronger than ever, took one HARD left uppercut without flinching...the boy is growing up.

michaelabii says:

[QUOTE=Grimm;8077]Still not that impressed. Khan was aggressive, dominant, sported strong straight punches, but still has problems finding the right distance once he comes forward and punches his foes backwards. He always - always - follows that up by first coming to close, then backing up, and giving his opponents room for recovery. He is good, no doubt about it, but his somewhat stumbling feet presents a problem for him. On the other hand; man, he is fast.[/QUOTE]

Sure, he still has a few chinks in his armor but what impressed me most is the confidence this kid now possesses. He seems to really believe in himself when he is in that squared circle which is more than I can say for Judah. He may miss a few but he punches with authority and his quick feet ensure that he gets out of harms way even when he makes mistakes. I still think his weak point is a lack of infighting skills. I noticed this in the Maidana fight. At long range he is a destroyer.

michaelabii says:

[QUOTE=mortcola;8088]Khan has seriously improved his technique - Wayne A in my gym mentioned several ways in which the sparring with Pac has rubbed off into his own toolkit. Not to mention, he is bigger and stronger than ever, took one HARD left uppercut without flinching...the boy is growing up.[/QUOTE]

I agree. The kid is getting better with every fight. I see him fighting at Super Welterweight pretty soon. He is only 24 and still filling out. I think the main thing that has rubbed off on him from Pacman is the "hunter" mindset. Notice how he comes out fast and hard each fight. Judah reverted to type when under pressure. Still very skilled and in my eyes seemed to be adjusting slowly but surely. I think if the fight had gone four more rounds it would have been more competitive. Problem is Judah was not willing to committ on the inside and this to me is where

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this kid has not been tested. I graded Khan a B+ for this effort.

michaelabii says:

[QUOTE=DaveB;8085]This one wasn't that hard to predict, not that I pretend to know what exactly is going to happen. Actually it was easier for Khan than I thought. One thing Khan does have regardless of whether you like him or not, is star quality. One other thing is that in watching these highly skilled fighters, for me, they make me appreciate the skills of Mayweather, Pacquiao, Donaire and JMM that much more. Other people are good, sometimes very good but those four are ring technicians that break you down in almost a scientific way which is a joy to behold. These other guys put on good fights, sometimes they outclass their opponents but they do not put on the same type of boxing clinic. It's all exciting just the same.[/QUOTE]

Dave, you are quite right. Those four you mentioned are exceptional tacticians though Donaire seems more the phenomenal athlete with lightning reflexes much like RJJ in his prime. The more naturally technical skilled of the four are obviously JMM and Mayweather. I watch the Sugar ray Leonard/Wilfred Benitez fight over and over again and to me thats the standard for watching two brilliant technicians at thier peak over 15 championship rounds. Great stuff !

FighterforJC says:

I think there's a bunch of similarities between Pacquiao's and Khan's technique and could very well be the evolution of the sport's philosophy. Their styles are heavy on footwork with the emphasis on straight, compact punches that economically integrates as much body weight behind each of them without sacrificing speed .Even the hooks and uppercuts are thrown with a straight-ish trajectory, if that makes sense. It's very similar to wing chun. At the hands of a fighter with the athleticism to pull it off, it could be very hard to beat.

And regarding the Leonard-Benitez fight, I think even better than that matchup in terms of sound, textbook boxing is the Toney-McCallum fight, where neither fighter made any real mistake and did just about everything right.

netaloimlnnz says:

very nice - thanks

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