

Manny Pacquiao Shows At San Manuel; Concepcion Wins Tight Battle...AVILA

Written by David A. Avila
Friday, 28 October 2011 08:21



HIGHLAND, CA.-Manny Pacquiao arrived and brought his friends with him at San Manuel Casino and expressed a few words about his upcoming fight in English and Spanish.

Then the fights began.

World class featherweight contender Bernabe Concepcion (31-4-1, 17 KOs) met San Diego's Aaron Garcia (10-3-2, 2 KOs) in a fiery 10 round battle on Thursday. That, and other Filipino versus Mexican matches took place.

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The ballroom was packed.

San Manuel Casino is tucked along a usually green hillside and has been home to more mixed martial arts shows than boxing. But when Pacquiao is co-promoting a show with Top Rank then the people will definitely come.

A crowd of more than 2,000 saw Concepcion pull out a split decision victory over Garcia who matched him blow for blow. The featherweight action saw back and forth action from round two on.

Garcia has that style that reminds me of Marco Antonio Barrera and he rather resembles the Mexico City warrior too. Every time Concepcion would coast Garcia would blast him to the body then work his way up.

Concepcion, who has battled world champions Juan Manuel Lopez and Steve Luevano, pulled out all of his tricks to keep pace early on. Hits, shoves, pull downs and side to side movement kept the Filipino strongman from slipping behind the relentless pounding from Garcia. The kid would not let up.

Because he lacks pure power, most of Garcia's fights end up in a close decision. Once more his lack of firepower allowed the judges to decide the fight. Two picked Concepcion.

One thing that occurred to me is that Garcia proved he belongs in the elite level of featherweights. Many felt he won the fight and you can't diminish the effort he dealt to Concepcion. The scores were 96-94 twice for Concepcion and 97-93 for Garcia. A rematch is not out of the question.

In the semi-main event former world champion Rodel Mayol (30-5-2, 22 KOs) cracked Ernie Marquez's (9-9-3) ribs at the end of the first round but Colorado prizefighter refused to stop in their junior bantamweight clash. Talk about grit.

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Mayol began round two with a left hook to the right side of Marquez's ribs and a grimace appeared that and every time a punch hit that area. Even when he blocked the punch with his arm Marquez nearly collapsed from the pain. But he continued to fight and tried to end the fight with one punch on occasion.

At 2:04 of round four referee Wayne Hedgepeth stopped the fight in favor of Mayol who had just landed a left below the belt. Marquez protested the stoppage to no avail. The Colorado prizefighter really showed courage for three rounds. He could have easily quit after the first round but refused.

A flyweight bout between Richie Mepranum (19-3-1) of the Philippines and Mexico's Rigoberto Casillas (6-7-1) looked lopsided on paper, but in the ring resulted in an entertaining fracas. After eight rounds Mepranum was given the decision unanimously 79-73 twice and 78-74.

Undefeated heavyweight Alex Flores (6-0, 4 KOs) of Pomona stopped Chad Davis (4-10) at the end of round one when he connected with a blow to the nose that splattered the Arizona boxer's nose. That was all for the heavyweight match that started good but ended with the fighter on the stool unable to continue.

L.A.'s Javier Albonica (2-1) out boxed Long Beach's Anthony McDavitt, a fighter who also delves in MMA. After four rounds Albonica won by decision but McDavitt showed that if he had more tutoring in boxing as a youngster he would be very dangerous.

A female bantamweight bout saw Santa Ana's Abigail Castaneda win by unanimous decision over La Habra's Guadalupe Gutierrez after four rounds. Castaneda was the aggressor and landed more blows. Both were making their pro debut.

Hollywood's Dave Clark (3-2, 3 KOs) won by technical knockout at the end of round three against Acapulco's Santiago Alonzo (0-3) in a junior featherweight bout.

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