

Mares Dominates Game Morel, Moreno Also Snags "W"

Written by Michael Woods
Saturday, 21 April 2012 22:31



Abner Mares landed more than a few hard, clean shots on Eric Morel in the main event from El Paso, Texas on Saturday, but the vet wasn't in pick-up-a-paycheck mode. Indeed, the ex champ Morel earned his keep, as he stayed afloat to the final bell in a Showtime event at the Don Haskins Center. This being Texas we swallowed hard but breathed a sigh of relief when

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the scores were read, 120-107, 119-109, 119-109, in favor of Mares.

The victor expressed surprise to Jim Gray that Morel was able to eat so much punishment. "He was fresh, ready," he said. He said he's still learning, and will improve. He said he felt "more complete" at this weight. He'd like Moreno, Arce or Donaire next, any and all of them. Morel called Mares one of the best he's fought. He said the same thing would've happened probably ten years ago, in classy fashion. Next? He said he will probably fight on. "I will stick around," he said, maybe at 118. He said he'd like to get a rematch, which will not happen.

Mares (23-0-1 entering; born in Mexico, living in CA; ex bantamweight champion) weighed 119 1/2 pounds on Friday, while Morel (46-2 entering; born in PR, living in Wisconsin; ex 112 pound champ; 36 years old) was 120 pounds. The contracted max for the fight was 120 pounds.

The ref was Gaudalupe Garcia. The vacant WBC super bantam title was up for grabs.

In the first, the 36 year-old Morel looked crisp and quick, not like a graybeard. The ten years younger fighter looked to impose himself on the vet, and his one-twos had mustard on them.

In the second, a left hook buzzed Morel. His back was on the ropes and his legs were rubberized. He looked to grab some to collect himself right after. Mares wanted a tradefest, as he asked Morel to bang with him. A capper right hand had the crowd enthused to end the second.

In the third, Morel more studiously avoided contact, with his legs. Then a left hook again caught him as his back was to the ropes.

In the fourth, Morel went lefty, in a bid to try and shift the momentum. Didn't work. He went back righty, and landed a nifty lead right near the end of the fourth, though it wasn't enough to win the round. He slowed things down in the middle rounds, stayed off the ropes, jabbed enough to bother Mares' nose. In the seventh, Mares landed to both sides of the body. Would that work sap the older fighter? If so, when?

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Morel dictated distance well, pivoting and bolting right and left to keep Mares from building momentum. He did land on Mares, but you could see a shutout to that point, through eight. Mares was by the way winging wider shots, getting a bit sloppier later. Morel's corner called for more aggression after the round. In the ninth, he wasn't noticeably busier. Was he waiting and hoping for one nasty strike to change the game? After the round, the Mares corner told him not to open up. In the tenth, Morel hit Mares long after the bell but he apologized right away. Morel was right there in 11; he ate some clean, hard shots but wasn't close to folding. In the 12th, Morel looked to land that difference-maker. He searched for the uppercut brain rattler, but couldn't pull it out. They traded hellaciously in the last minute, before the bell rang and we headed to the cards.

In the TV opener, Panama's Anselmo Moreno put his WBA bantamweight crown up for grabs against David De La Mora, from Mexico. In the first, the lefty Moreno (age 26; pro for ten years; now 33-1-1) blasted DLM (age 23; now 24-2; went 12 in a loss to Koki Kameda) with a body shot heard in the back of the building. DLM landed a single shot in the round. In the second, he literally ran after getting tagged by a long left and the crowd roared. Moreno came forward, used both hands, and put his man down with a right hook to the head with 35 seconds left in the round. A body shot near the bell hurt him as well. In the third, DLM tried to slip and duck to keep from getting whacked. He tried some offense with a minute left and the crowd rewarded him. A left hook came just before a push, which sent Moreno down, but it was ruled a slip/push. The Mexican DLM had a hard time figuring out when to fire. Moreno looked to wait more, counter off a mistake in the fourth. DLM has sharp reflexes, and made Moreno miss more than he was used to. In the sixth, a right hook-underneath left to the body had DLM down. He actually ran right after that instance, with less than a minute left. His body language looked horrid in this round, like he knew he had no shot. He did stick around, though, through eight. DLM went to his corner after that round, and chose not to continue. It was a no mas situation, and the crowd hooted derisively at that move. After, to Jim Gray, the Panamanian said he worked hard in Panama, and knew he'd win. Next? He said he will think about Abner Mares-Eric Morel.

Moreno went 160-306 to 146-333 for the loser.