

San Antonio's Joseph Rios Grabs WBC USNBC Title in California

Written by David A. Avila

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ONTARIO-San Antonio's Joseph Rios captured the WBC USNBC flyweight title by split decision against Allentown's Miguel Diaz on Friday. It was a nip and tuck fight but the Texan started quick and kept the pressure.

Rios (12-7-2, 4 KOs) used his strength and stamina to hand Diaz (9-1, 4 KOs) his first professional loss before a crowd of more than 1,000 at the Doubletree Hotel in Ontario. The Thompson Boxing Promotions card was supposed to also feature Riverside's Richard Contreras but his opponent did not make weight.

Rios used his strength and experience to tie up Diaz in the first round. Fighting inside was a problem for Diaz as Rios locked him up and fired rights.

The second round saw Diaz take the fight at a distance. He used his feet to keep Rios from tying up and fired quick combinations. Rios had to make some adjustments.

Rios took control by crowding Diaz for the next several rounds and didn't allow the Allentown prizefighter to get off his combinations from distance. Counter rights connected most of the fight for Rios who also used his strength to keep Diaz against the ropes.

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It wasn't until round six that Diaz began to mount a consistent attack. Combinations landed as he kept his distance, but Rios didn't allow the momentum to change, though the Texan lost the sixth round it was still close. Diaz began to connect with left hooks.

Both fighters looked to maintain their style of fighting and for two rounds Diaz regained control. In the last round both worked hard but Rios pinned Diaz in the corner and fired off combinations. Though all did not land it was enough to possibly win the round. Judge David Denkin saw it 77-75 for Diaz, but judges Eddie Hernandez and David Mendoza had it 77-75 for Rios.

Other bouts

In a pure brawl between San Fernando's Rigo Flores and Commerce's Joaquin Chavez (1-4-2) the judges scored it for the Flores 58-56 twice and 59-55. But the fight was much closer than the scores indicated.

Chavez suffered cuts on his face after several accidental butts but never stepped backward and Flores was equally stubborn. Both exchanged nonstop blows for all six rounds of the junior welterweight bout. There were no knockdowns in the fight but each had their moments. Chavez took the fight on two days notice but was in superb shape. The crowd was very pleased.

Tampa's Gene McClellan (9-0, 3 KOs) adjusted to Mexicali's Mike Noriega (4-1, 4 KOs) constant body attack to win by unanimous decision after six rounds of a middleweight fight. Noriega worked the body furiously but never shot punches upstairs. McClellan quickly found out the remedy and used short punches to batter Noriega. All three judges scored it for McClellan 58-56 twice and 60-54.

St. Louis boxer Derrick "Whup dat ass" Murray (4-0-1, 3 KOs) floored Las Vegas's Pedro Toledo (2-0-1) in the first seconds of the fight and nearly floored him again in the next round. Then he ran out of fuel and Toledo took over. In round four Toledo crunched Murray and dropped him in an awkward position. Murray came up swinging till the final bell. All three judges scored it 37-37 for a draw. Good scores. Both fighters fired a lot of blows in their four rounds.

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Former L.A. Matador Javier "Monster" Torres (3-0, 2 KOs) edged Lancaster's Avery Gibson (0-1-1) by split decision after four rounds of a heavyweight bout. There was plenty of action between the two heavyweights that were evenly matched. A low blow in the first round by Torres caused a point deduction from referee Ray Corona. The scores were 37-38 for Gibson and 38-37 twice for Torres.

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