

SIBERIAN SLUGGER Ruslan Provodnikov Stops Mike Alvarado (TKO10)

Written by Michael Woods

Saturday, 19 October 2013 22:48



Ruslan Provodnikov said in the pre-fight buildup to the main event from the FirstBank Center in Bloomfield, Colorado, on Saturday night, and on HBO, that his fight with Mike Alvarado wouldn't be decided by strategy or technical skills. Heart and will would be the difference-maker, he said. He was right; Alvarado sat down after the tenth round a beaten man. His corner said they'd pull the plug, and the ref Tony Weeks walked over and asked Alvarado if he wanted to continue. Weeks didn't hear what he needed to, and ended the affair.

Alvarado was almost spent in round eight, going down twice, but showed his own Mile Wide heart by getting his legs back, and firing back. But body shots sapped Alvarado, and stole energy from him. He simply couldn't shake off the concise shots of the rugged Russian, whose power isn't ultra top tier, but is considerable, when paired with his stamina and stubborn aggressiveness.

The WBO 140 pound champ Alvie was 141 and then came back, and made 139.8 on Friday, while Provo was 139.8 at the weigh-in. Alvie is 33 to 29 for Ruslan, and was 157 on fight night, versus 148 for the Siberian.

The loser went 182-563 to 206-597 for the winner.

After the bout, Max Kellerman spoke to Ruslan (*seen in Chris Farina-Top Rank photo tagging Alvarado*) . The winner said he broke the champ's will because he wanted to please his team. How'd he do it? He had the support of his mom, his loved ones, his team. Freddie Roach helped him immensely, too, he said. He called stand-in Marvin Somodio the "Filipino Freddie Roach." And next? Let me rest and think on it, he said.

Alvarado to Kellerman declined a post-fight interview, then reconsidered. He said he was cool

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with the stoppage and admitted he was hurting. His corner did the right thing saving him brain cells, he said. He didn't blame a difficulty making weight, and gave Provo full credit.

In the lead-up, Ruslan said his urine after his last fight, against Tim Bradley, was black, proving how hard he was pushed in that bout. It was good to see a Friday Night Fights staple getting another big stage opportunity. It was also good to see Alvarado, who had some brushes with misbehavior and the ramifications of that, getting to this point, getting to a stage of maturity that allowed him to focus on fighting.

Provo trained with Freddie Roach but Somodia worked his corner, with Roach training Manny Pacquiao for his Nov. 23 clash with Brandon Rios. Alvie last fought against Brandon Rios, winning a UD12, in March, after dropping a TKO7 loss to Rios previously.

Top Rank was lead promoter for the card. Art Pellulo, on a stellar run after his fighter Brian Vera gave a fine account weeks back against Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., repped the victor.

One dollar from each ticket sold went to help Colorado flood victims, a nice touch.

In the first, the 34-1 Alvie was backing up. A right hurt Alvie. It was toe to toe from early on. The champ's corner told him to jab, and don't be stationary after the frame.

In the second, the 22-2 Provo stalked, as Alvie moved more. A right buzzed Provo, who wasn't able to cut off the ring so well in this one. The hometown went lefty some, just to mix it up.

In the third, Mike stood close but was busier, and didn't let Provo be busy. Late in the round he moved more, and was mixing his game up so smartly.

In the fourth, the lefty Alvie went back and forth. He dipped forward and made Ruslan miss long often and made himself hard to hit by various means. Uppercuts worked for Alvie in tight, and this round was not a "running" round for Mike. Somodio asked for body work after the round.

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In the fifth, Ruslan was the busier man. In the sixth, Alvie started busy. Ruslan tossed a succession of left hooks then. Lead rights landed for Mike, who was the smarter boxer in the round.

In the seventh, Alvie dictated distance. He worked body shots, but a sharp right scored late for Provo. The Siberian's corner told him he was winning after. Some blood appeared on his right eye. Alvie's right eye was swollen.

In the eighth, Alvie went down, at 1:55, for the first time in his career. Body work, mostly the right, and left hooks, hurt Alvie. He was up at nine plus, very nearly cutting it too close as he looked to get his senses. It was the first time he'd been down, amateur or pro. He went down at 1:16, again. A right to the body hurt me in Brooklyn. About ten shots landed, and he went to a knee. But Alvie got his legs, and fired a left hook, and his eyes looked OK to go on.

In the ninth, Alvie ate some clean shots and also launched his own right. A left hook buzzed the Colorado man. He was told he needed a KO to win after the round.

In the tenth, a right landed for Alvie. But rights to the body looked harsh, by Ruslan. Alvie got buzzed bad late by Ruslan. He went to his corner, and a conversation ensued. "Mike, we gotta stop this fight," trainer Rudy Hernandez said. "You don't got nothing left. Huh Mike, huh? You don't got nothing left.. OK we're done." Weeks then came over, seeking confirmation from the fighter himself. "Are you OK?" he asked the champ. "You need to tell me. Tell me you OK? Do you want to continue?" Alvarado didn't seem to answer audibly, though he might have indicated with a shake of his head that he couldn't continue. Weeks saw a beaten man. "That's it, fights over!" he said to the boxer and the world.

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brownsugar says:

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Immensely satisfying... Its good to see the humble hard working, meat and potatoes, blue collar banger get the win. Not that Alvarado doesn't fit in that category. But Provodnikov has that old school vibe like former middleweight champ Gene Fulmer and the Onion Farmer.

Honestly couldn't pick a winner... Which is rare for me... I initially picked Provodnikov then wavered toward Alvarado because of his punching power,.... superior boxing ability and the hometown advantage.

Both fighters fulfilled my preflight picks...but ultimately the much improved Provonikov proved to be the more relentless and resilient of the two..... Kudos to the Attack Attack Attack School of Roach and the Wildcard Gym.

Whose next ? Bradley? Maidana? Broner? Alexander? Certainly not Khan....and unfortunately not GoldenBoy promoted Garcia..or Mattysse.

I'd even like to see him against Mayweather...he's one of the few fighters who could force Money to punch consistently with bad intentions.

Good win...Hope he gets a good contender in his next fight.

Radam G says:

Nothing for me to add. But NO! NO! NO! The Siberian Rocky is no match for Money May. And they couldn't fight anyway. They have different promoters. Holla!

brownsugar says:

Heh heh heh.... Maybe your right holla.

DaveB says:

First of all that wasn't Provodnikov's mother. They don't look anything alike. The fight I would really, really like to see would be Rios vs. Provodnikov. That would be one hell of a match up. Those guys are equally tough. While Alvarado is just as much a warrior as those two I think they are just a tad tougher all around. That would be my dream match. Unfortunately Rios is not available. Still there are some good fights to be made at 140, 147. Yeah and Matthyse would be a good one too.

the Roast says:

Very good fight tonight. Alvarado must have been truly broken to quit on his stool in front of his home fans like that. I'm sure Mike will regret that forever. Provodnikov is a much better fighter than I thought he was. He applied pressure until his man broke. A lot of good fights lie ahead for Provo. Fans will always fill seats for action/pressure fighters like that.

Radam G says:

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@DavidB, that was Siberian Rocky's mother. Maybe looks are in the eyes of the beholder. Holla!

Hop says:

So many things to say from last night. Got a few pics that I need to get out of my phone, but thought I'd at least make a preliminary post here since I basically said I would. Here are seven takeaways:

1) It was great. [U]Really[/U] enjoyed being there. I sat next to Mike Alvarado's cousin. The place was [I]krazy[/I] in support of Mike.*

2) Provodnikov is as brutal as a Siberian winter. He's a cyborg. He's a Russian bear, impervious to pain. It's hard for me to imagine him ever being stopped (which he hasn't been). He smiles whenever his face is smashed, then continues walking you down. That's [B]got[/B] to be disheartening.

3) However, even given #2 above, Mike's refusal to come out for round 11 was [U]shocking[/U] to the crowd. We'd all seen the amazing signature victories MA had pulled out before in similar circumstances (Prescott, Rios). The place was amped with expectation. We were going to explode with another thunderous wave of deafening support - louder than ever, and then . . . [I]wha? what? He's stopping on his stool? It's over![/I]

4) I thought referee Tony Weeks did a great job. I agree with him not stopping the fight earlier.

5) Enormous credit to Ruslan, obviously, and as I said before the fight on here, I like him. However, Alvarado did not "flop" in front of his hometown fans -- far from it. Provo's face was testimony to the fact that Mike doled out a beating -- just not enough to stop this truly fearsome opponent. Provo said it was going to be a matter of will in the end, and no one could've said it better.

6) Even though I hate and am repelled by 'star worship', there is something kind of fun about seeing 'TV personalities' in person, as many of you know. The order in which I did was Roy Jones (pic later), Harold Lederman (round in every way), Jim Lampley (was that his wife & son?), Max Kellerman (right there in his chair getting his make-up applied), Larry Merchant (whom I didn't expect to be there), and Michael Buffer (you know it's an event when ...). BTW, Roy was so close I could easily have called to him and probably talked, but why? I feel sorry for the way they are given no space to breathe. [I]"Roy! Roy! Roy! ..."[/I] He either had to consent and come pose for a hundred pics with people he doesn't know from Adam (which he did), or pretend to ignore it, which makes him look aloof. Yucky scene to me.

7) Two fights in the crowd, one right in front of me. I'll be honest w/you fellas, it got just a tad concerning until yellow-shirted security (each guy approaching 3 bills in weight, seriously) literally pounced on the main perpetrators and brought it to a stop. I was really hoping the chaos wouldn't spread and engulf me, you know? (Remember the Bowe-Golota post-fight brawl? Didn't want that.)

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[B]*[B] Though in the main I thought the crowd was great in throwing huge support behind their local hero (Alvarado), I must admit I was disappointed in my fellow Coloradans by two things in particular last night. First, some (not all) booed all the way through the (LONG!) Russian national anthem. But secondly, and perhaps even worse, after Provodnikov won a tremendously well-deserved victory, they booed him. What a total lack of class. I, and a few others, applauded him.

I'm sure I'm leaving much out, but that's a start.

Radam G says:

Note booknote, Hop. Thrilling report. You can really keyboard scrap. Holla!

Hop says:

[QUOTE=Radam G;38889]Note booknote, Hop. Thrilling report. You can really keyboard scrap. Holla![/QUOTE]

Thanks, Rad. Forgot a lot of stuff, believe it or not. Like the fact that Mike didn't even hang around long enough for a post-fight interview. Must have been dejected, I guess. Still, I think an acknowledgement to all the local fans who had turned out (and paid \$) on his behalf would have been better.

Oh, and DaveB, how can you not think Provodnikov looks like his mother?! Haha. The first second they showed her on the screen I knew.

Hop says:

I'm probably the worst poster on the site as far as keeping track of the [U]politics[/U] of boxing. I don't even try to remember who's with Golden Boy vs. who's with Top Rank, etc. I should, too, b/c it obviously matters. So, maybe this won't happen for political reasons, but after watching the fight last night, I think a great match-up would be [B]Ruslan Provodnikov vs. Danny Garcia[/B]. Can anyone tell me the likelihood of it happening? I guess not very good if Danny's next in line to fight Floyd, right?

DaveB says:

Hop, that is a great report. I just want you to know that Alvarado did give an interview in the back. He said it was just better to quit than risk his health. It was shocking but I think when they told him he would need a knock out to win and Provodnikov was ripping those body shots he figured it was futile to go on. I haven't been to an event in a long time but I remember those brawls real good. I think Bradley will get more and more credit as Provodnikov's stature rises. Roy Jones thinks Bradley should do a rematch. He must think Bradley is on a suicide mission. Roy Jones is suggesting matches I couldn't have seen him (Roy Jones) even having the first time.

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DaveB says:

Garcia is a GB fighter so that fight is not going to happen, sadly. Neither will Matthisse.

Hop says:

[QUOTE=DaveB;38901]Garcia is a GB fighter so that fight is not going to happen, sadly. Neither will Matthisse.[/QUOTE]

Thanks for the nice words, Dave, and for letting us know about Mike's backstage interview. It's easy/hard to criticize a guy for not going out to face an unstoppable cyborg, isn't it? What a little strange, though, is that Mike's round 9 was better than his round 8. (?) Regarding what you said about Garcia-Provodnikov, though, I didn't think Provo was a Top Rank fighter. Am I mistaken?

Shoulder Roll Defense says:

Great fight last night. On one hand, I'm happy for Provodnikov for getting the win because it was well deserved. On the other hand, I feel bad for Alvarado. His last three fights have been brutal. The writing was on the wall for Alvarado, the Rios fights have taken a piece of him that he probably won't get back. He career is far from over, but I don't think he has what it takes to beat any of the elite 140 or 147 pound champions. Ruslan, is the reincarnation of Rocy Marciano in that he is the ultimate pressure fighter. They won't fight because they have the same trainer, but I would love to see him and Manny fight. If Rios upsets Manny, bring on that match up, which would be highly entertaining. Another fight that could be made because both fighters are with Top Rank is Ruslan Provodnikov vs. Terence Crawford. Crawford would have to go up 5 pounds, but has already done so (Prescott fight). That would put a master boxer in Crawford vs. a iron chin pressure fighter with granite in his fist in Provodnikov. Styles make fights!

SouthPaul says:

Sensational action fight. The Siberian Rocky is a machine!

SouthPaul says:

I feel a bit bad for Alvarado as well. He wins the Rios war then he's put right back in another one and for less money likely than Rios is making against Pacquaio. Harsh boxing world.

DaveB says:

From what I understand now Provo is not an Arum fighter so I guess it is possible he could fight GB fighters. It seems though that Arum has plans for him. He even mentioned him fighting Pac but that fight may not happen because they are friends. All kind of obstacles in boxing. LOL

Hop says:

[QUOTE=Shoulder Roll Defense;38904]... the elite 140 or 147 pound champions.[/QUOTE]

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Can you guys get over how swollen with quality fighters these particular weight classes are?!
Like [B][I]WOW![/I]/B]

Hop says:

[QUOTE=DaveB;38907]From what I understand now Provo is not an Arum fighter so I guess it is possible he could fight GB fighters. It seems though that Arum has plans for him. He even mentioned him fighting Pac but that fight may not happen because they are friends. All kind of obstacles in boxing. LOL[/QUOTE]

Thanks. Good post.

I'd rather see Garcia-Provodnikov than Mayweather-Garcia.

amayseng says:

Alvarado deserves a vacation of rest and recovery he has had three brutal fights.

I don't look at Mike like a quitter, he was beaten into submission, he could have broken ribs and orbital fractures for all we know. he took a hellacious beating for many rounds....

the russian is for real and should have two wins over champions both tim "gift" bradley and now mike alvarado.

i dont see the russian fighting pac as they share trainers and i am high on the russian i don't want to see pac dismantle and beat him up.

the russian still has room to improve, head movement and spacing, mike crowded him early and slowed him down until the russian adjusted mid fight. however he does have the tools, good coordination power and speed. the russian throws punches more fundamentally sound than does alvarado with his winging and looping shots....the russian has good speed as well.

Ruslan reminds me of a smaller version of GGG, they are similar in their approach with ggg having better defense and everything else really, although similar styles.

there are so many good matchups to be made it is a shame this cold war continues between promoters.

alvarado may have the ability to beat say a Molina for a jmw belt and i would like to see him fight even bradley who he could give fits if he recovers from these wars.

after pac beats rios then perhaps the russian will then retire him

Hop says:

[QUOTE=amayseng;38910]Ruslan reminds me of a smaller version of GGG.[/QUOTE]

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Not questioning the comparison, A-M, but is not Golovkin quicker? I kinda hope so.

Hop says:

[QUOTE=amayseng;38910]Ruslan reminds me of a smaller version of GGG.[/QUOTE]

Not questioning the comparison, A-M, but is not Golovkin quicker? I kinda hope so.

amayseng says:

[QUOTE=Hop;38915]Not questioning the comparison, A-M, but is not Golovkin quicker? I kinda hope so.[/QUOTE]

yes, i wrote the russian reminds me of ggg with ggg doing everything better.

everything.

just similar stalking styles...

ggg's boxing iq is superior thanks to his amateur pedigree.

at 140 the russian is a force to reckon with

amayseng says:

what about a healthy and recovered alvarado fighting devon alexander for his ww title belt?

i dont see anything special in alexander, alvarado has a good chance at beating him if he heals up properly..

also i think its time to move up to ww for mike, he should have more in him than dropping so much weight.

teaser says:

yes time for mike to move to welterweight ..seemed making weight affected him (along with provodnikov's body work of course)...ruslan looks to have improved since the bradley fight..more patience ..and has chivalo like toughness...must be in the genes