

Mauricio “El Maestro” Herrera’s A+ Performance Noted By GBP

Written by David A. Avila
Sunday, 23 March 2014 15:39



A week has passed since Mauricio “El Maestro” Herrera nearly defeated WBC and WBA junior welterweight titlist Danny “Swift” Garcia. Most observers claim he won.

“I did think we won. He (Garcia) wasn’t coming on strong. It was me pushing on the fight all the way to the end,” Herrera said by phone.

Herrera wasn’t alone in thinking after 12 rounds against Garcia in Puerto Rico, that the victory and the world titles were his to claim. Even the television analysts, including a former two-division world champ agreed.

Former junior welterweight and welterweight world champion Paul Malignaggi, who served as analyst for Showtime in Puerto Rico that night, felt Herrera was the superior fighter last weekend and “should be walking around today a junior welterweight world champion.”

But it’s not how two judges saw it. It’s understandable, Garcia was undefeated, Puerto Rican and the world champion.

Despite the loss, Herrera’s sterling performance places him smack dab in the middle of the junior welterweight and welterweight pool of boxing wealth. It’s where he’s always wanted to be and proved hard to shove his way through.

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Eric Gomez, matchmaker for Golden Boy Promotions, said he wasn’t surprised by Herrera’s abilities. It was a major reason that they quickly signed the Riverside-based boxer to a contract after his deal with Thompson Boxing Promotions expired.

“We first saw him early in his pro career in a fight in Tucson,” said Gomez. “He beat an undefeated guy from Oxnard that Rolando Arrellano brought and beat him good.”

Because Herrera’s pro career started at age 27, his former promoters wasted no time in putting him against very tough competition. His first pro fight came against junior middleweight Angel Osuna, a tough scrapping type fighter. (Osuna is currently in a hospital after suffering brain damage after a knockout loss. A fundraiser is being planned for the fallen fighter. More on that later).

From there on it got even tougher. The clever and surprisingly quick boxer primarily fought opponents with records that others refused to face. Even when he suffered his first loss in a fight against former world champion Mike Anchondo, he looked impressive.

Up to now, the most impressive win came against Russia’s human wall Ruslan Provodnikov in January 2011. Nobody knew either fighter and after 12 of the most brutal rounds ever seen, Herrera walked away the winner by unanimous decision. So why didn’t the public give Herrera any love?

“Nobody knew Provodnikov at the time,” said Gomez of the current WBO junior welterweight titlist. “Even though he beat a good fighter everyone forgot about that win.”

Gomez said the impressive performance by Herrera put him smack in the middle of several potential mega fights.

“He’s in the mix. We’re going to have a meeting and do some mapping out,” said Gomez on Saturday. “Herrera was willing to fight Lucas Matthysse. We told him to slow down. Mauricio is a

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tough, tough fighter.”

After it was announced that he was judged the loser by two of three judges, Herrera was immediately swarmed by Puerto Rican fans impressed with his showing. Many of Garcia’s fans now became Herrera’s fans.

“The crowd was buzzing and loud like a bunch of storming bees. The boos you could feel in the pit of your stomach. But I knew it was just me and him. The ring is just for the both of us,” Herrera described. “I just felt confident. That’s why I was able to pull it off.”

Social media twerps were chirping away at the match up weeks before the fight, claiming that Herrera was undeserving of fighting Garcia. Those on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook said he did not deserve the fight despite defeating Provodnikov and causing havoc against Mike Alvarado.

“Now I see the messages from people who were taking trash about me are now my fans,” said Herrera amusingly. “Some of those guys talking trash on Twitter closed their account.”

Herrera’s performance proved that sometimes when you lose, you win.

Gomez said GBP was eager to sign the Riverside prizefighter for many reasons, especially for his spirit.

“That’s one thing you can’t teach, a fighter’s heart,” said Gomez.

Angel Osuna Benefit

The Cabazon Band of Mission Indians and Fantasy Springs Resort Casino are pleased to be

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hosting a benefit supporting injured Coachella boxer Angel Osuna on Wednesday, April 2nd.

This past December, the middleweight fighter was severely injured during his boxing match at Fantasy Springs Resort Casino. Osuna spent the past several months recovering from his brain injury, where he was not able to support his young family. This fundraiser will help provide funds to Osuna and his family during this unfortunate time and alleviate strain with medical costs.

As part of the benefit, the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians will present Osuna with a check donation. Lee Espinoza of the Coachella Valley Boxing Club, Doug Welmas, Cabazon Band of Mission Indians Chairman and Coachella Mayor Eduardo Garcia will be on hand to speak during the benefit.

The benefit begins at 6:00pm inside the LIT Ultra Lounge at Fantasy Springs Resort Casino. Included with the \$20 cover charge will be heavy hors d'oeuvres, live DJ, raffle and the opportunity to take photos with the following evenings *Golden Boy Live!* "Night of the Heavyweights" boxers. All proceeds from the door and raffle will go directly to Angel Osuna.

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