Written by Michael Woods
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*The ten to one underdog Mayorga gave a fine account of himself against Miguel Cotto, but came up short in the skill department. (Chris Farina)*Ricardo Mayorga didn't look out of place, like he deserved the severe underdog status as he made Miguel Cotto work his tail off in the main event at the MGM Grand on Saturday night. But Cotto delivered a vicious left hook to the chin in the twelfth, dropping the Nicaraguan, who showed ample stamina and skill before succumbing 53 seconds remaining in the last round, via TKO after Mayorga indicated he couldn't continue. Mayorga after the knockdown shook his left hand, and it looked like the ref would have to pull the plug. He continued, but Cotto jumped on him, and then the pain washed over Mayorga. His demeanor told the ref that he couldn't defend himself.

After, Mayorga told Jim Gray that it was his left thumb which rendered him unable to continue. "He hits really hard," the loser said of Cotto. "I got to look for a job," he said, stating that he would hang up the gloves. Cotto said he'd be open to a rematch with Antonio Margarito, but would let promoter Bob Arum hash it out.

All three judges had it 107-102 across the board, but seen in context, those scores were lopsided. Mayorga made Cotto work, and work hard, and if we scored rounds the way I'd like to see them scored, Mayorga would've earned some 9.5 rounds. I doubt that we've seen the last of a very useful, marketable boxer who has more boxing skills than he's given credit for.

The WBA 154 pound champion Cotto (age 30; from Puerto Rico; 35-2 entering), a 10 to 1 favorite, weighed 154 pounds, while Mayorga (age 38; 29-7-1 1 NC entering; from Nicaragua) was also 154 pounds on Friday.

In the first, Cotto came out with a stiff jab. Mayorga swung wide and hard, as usual. He landed a right which had those that laid a bet down on him salivating. Ricardo went low, got warned, and tried to touch gloves with Cotto, who refused the gesture.

In the second, Mayorga whaled away. Cotto had been lured into an early rumble. But he settled down, jabbed, made the tone more to his liking. The underdog also settled down. He loved it when he made Cotto miss widely with a minute left.

In the third, Cotto seemed to have his joints lubed. Mayorga waved him over to a corner, and asked him to trade. Cotto didn't bite full on. He stayed outside, bounced, moved some, popped the jab. Combos were working now for the Puerto Rican. Mayorga didn't sit in between rounds.

In the fourth, Mayorga wasn't nearly as busy as before. But he stung Cotto with a flurry in the waning seconds.

In the fifth, Mayorga got hurt by some left uppercuts. Cotto was still a bit wild, wound up, overswinging at times. His left hook was connecting more but the Nicaraguan wasn't even wobbled.

In the sixth, Mayorga started the round looking as energized as he did when he began round one. Tongue in cheek, of course, but did anyone check his water bottle for a Panama Lewis special delivery? Mayorga by no means looked out of his class through six. Crude at times, yes, out his league, no way.

In the seventh, Mayorga scored with body work, right after Mike Tyson said he thought both men were sort of mailing it in, looking for a payday, without risking all. He buzzed Miguel, with a right to the ear, in the last 30 seconds.

In the eighth, ref Robert Byrd warned Mayorga for rabbit punches. A left hook hit Mayorga as he took a step back early. His right eye was puffy by now. Counter hooks landed on that eye, but didn't make Mayorga's legs buckle, not yet anyway.

In round nine, Mayorga was chopping with the right, throwing somewhat awkward combos, making Cotto earn his purse. Mayorga worked harder, and landed more in this frame. Tony Margarito, aming to rematch with Cotto, drew boos when his face appeared on the JumboTron after this round. He grinned and ate it up.

In round ten, Mayorga mocked Cotto, barked at him, as he pressed forward, and slipped effectively, and generally looked to be a peer in the skill arena. Cotto's jab was his best weapon here, as it smacked Mayorga's head back. The mega underdog had Cotto backing up to end the round. The round was close.

In the 11th, Mayorga threw bombs, and Cotto slipped them, and danced away.

In the 12th, Mayorga went down off a left hook, and got up. He was shaking his hand, his left hand. He got up, and Cotto went to work. Mayorga retreated to a corner and shook his head, to indicate that he wasn't up for continuing.

Check back for David Avila's ringside report. Follow Woods on Twitter @Woodsy1069.

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the Roast says:

How was the card B-Sug? I didnt watch but I am surprised that Mayorga lasted so long.

brownsugar says:

Roast it was beautiful... Cotto looked to be on his way to a stoppage landing in the first half of the fight with a high percentage connect rate... then Mayorga went crazy and somehow pumped himself up daring Cotto to come in... jesturing wildly and whipping the crowd into a frenzy... Somehow Mayorga is like a psychotic,... meaning he's like crazy folks who get strong off their own adrenalin, and accomplish feats of physical prowess that they shouldn't be possible... Mayorga actually got stronger as the fight went into the later rounds and threw haymaker after haymaker... but Cotto was boxing too smooth and he showed the ability to absorb Mayorgas massive attacks... even though Cotto was still winning there was a sense that Mayorga might still get lucky... Cotto spent the second half of the fight in retreat but found an opening to blast Mayorga with a beautiful hook to the chin and he went down in sections... Cotto approached Mayorga to finish him off and Mayorga raised the white flag... No Mas said the Nicaraguan Bully... classic... it was worth the money.. an all action fight... Cotto slowed down in the second half but still showed dominance through his excellent boxing skills... I think he would be destroyed by Martinez.. Margarito was grinning ear to ear as he watched... he must be thinking " I can beat this guy without pads"... Cotto vs Margarito is a toss-up in my opinion as Cotto still has the problem of losing steam in the second half of the fight... but he still retains his good boxing ability and fought like a warrior tonight.

brownsugar says:

Wolak vs Foreman was exciting but Foreman is not the same and succumbed to the relentless pressure of Wolak, we didn't pay much attention to the other early bouts as the party was getting underway... the Vasquez fight failed to hold our attention. we were switching back and forth all night but managed to record the Cotto fight.