Written by Frank Lotierzo
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This past Saturday night WBC heavyweight title holder Vitali Klitschko 42-2 (39) made the sixth successful defense of his title with a first round stoppage over the WBC's number one ranked contender, Odlanier Solis 17-1 (12). With the fight having lasted barely three minutes, it's hard to draw many definitive conclusions on anything other than what actually transpired during the round it lasted - other than the fact that Vitali Klitschko is clearly the best and most difficult heavyweight in the world to confront in the ring. He can box, he can punch and he's hard to hit. Along with that he's also very versatile and unemotional when he fights.

The fight started off at the anticipated measured pace most expected, with Solis circling to the left and Klitschko inching his way forward. Other than Klitschko pawing with his jab, and Solis timing him with a few over hand rights that made contact, there wasn't much to distinguish between them. Then at the end of the round Klitschko landed a grazing left followed by a right high on the head that he got his weight behind, and after a delayed reaction Solis went down and grabbed his right leg. Odlanier beat the count but was on unsteady legs when he got up.

The knockdown looks totally legit to me after watching the replay several times. It was a sneaky right hand that Solis was open for and didn't see, and if you don't know, they're usually the ones that do the most damage to the fighter who got hit. I also believe the leg problem was likewise legit and since the fight it's been confirmed that Solis tore some ligaments around his right knee. So there was nothing to be done but to stop the fight. Vitali did what he was supposed to do and in part because of that, Odlanier never got the chance to do what he had hoped to do. That's boxing.

To those who were hoping to see Klitschko lose, they'll try and justify his performance as being nothing more than Solis's ineptness. And that's not accurate. Solis looked pretty good finding the exact spot and time to land those right leads and the few left hooks to the body he got through with. But even at that, it's hard not to fathom had the fight gone into the later rounds Klitschko would've probably won.

Vitali Klitschko is an outstanding natural fighter. He's not the type of fighter who blows you away when you watch him fight. At times he appears gawky and awkward, but don't think that's not a formidable weapon for a fighter. Right now the boxing world is in love with middleweight champ Sergio Martinez, but his unconventional attack is as much a problem for his opponents as is his skill-set and aptitude.

Vitali sees everything in the ring. He takes what his opponent gives him and then forces them to do what they don't want to do. His wide stance makes it hard for his opponents to reach him, but because of his height and reach he's usually in position to counter them off a miss or disrupt what they're trying to do. Another thing that many overlook when watching Vitali in the ring is his ability to effectively carry the fight against a retreating and circling opponent like Solis, or move away and out-box or counter an aggressor like Cris Arreola. Think about that. How many heavyweights can fight and be effective while moving forward or backwards? Not many. Add to that he's physically big and strong and knows how to make his opponent deal with his size and reach before they have a chance to try and implement their fight plan, makes him a hand full to deal with. He's also showed he can punch and is both physically and mentally tough.

Sure, his body broke down during his bouts with Chris Byrd and Lennox Lewis, but that had everything to do with heredity and genes more than it did toughness. Former 1970's heavyweight contender Jerry Quarry was vulnerable to facial cuts and due to his skin, Jerry lost a few fights. No one ever questioned Quarry's toughness or heart, did they? It's not like he had any say over his skin having the durability of tissue paper when he was born. Well, in some ways that applies to Vitali Klitschko. No, I don't think he's as mentally tough as Quarry was (a fighter couldn't be tougher than Jerry). But I also don't believe he's a quitter like some have said over the last decade since he lost to Chris Byrd. Just because some so called experts say that's the way it is, doesn't make them right.

It gets tiring and becomes monotone hearing that Vitali, and even Wladimir Klitschko, always win because their opponents are terrible. It may be a fact that the current division is not one that'll be remembered by anyone in a few years. But if you were managing a heavyweight today and trying to move him along, Tony Thompson and Kirk Johnson would look like the biggest life-takers in the world since George Foreman. The point is - it's not easy to get wins that matter even in today's heavyweight division.

Vitali's domination of the heavyweight division since Lennox Lewis retired isn't just because it's pedestrian and lacking quality fighters (although that is in part true). It's more so because he's a much better and smarter fighter than people (including myself) originally thought. Other than a few rounds he fought against Lewis, no fighter has ever beat him up or punched him around the ring.

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Comment on this article

Isaiah says:

Man, I know I'm late on commenting on this fight, but WHAT WAS THAT?! Solis was supposed to have an excellect amateur record and be a promising undefeated pro and he can't even make it out of the first round with Vitali?! Are you serious?! Man, I didn't expect Solis to win, but quitting in the first round?!..... Man, at least Sam Peter could put on a show for a few rounds

before being overtaken. At least Chris Arreola could put up some serious resistance for around 10 rounds. At least Sonowzki or whatever his name is tried to make somewhat of a fight with the big man. Get this lard joke Solis out of boxing! John Ruiz would be ashamed of that effort! So, where's everyone now saying about how great of an amateur pedigree Solis has and how he has a good chance against Vitali? Ever hear of heart? It doesn't look like Solis has. Someone needs to tell him to have a talk with Evander Holyfield and learn the definition.

FighterforJC says:

Solis didn't quit, the injuries are legit. It was a freak occurence and like I said before, luck usually favors the better fighter. It's just unfortunate that something like this happened against the most formiddable foe Vitali has ever faced besides Lennox Lewis. Solis was in control of that first round.

Radam G says:

Ditto F-Lo! YUP! Da heavies STINK, so the bums -- I mean K-bros/docs -- keep winning over marshmellows, supersized tomato cans,
won't-stay-in-the-gym-eat-every-darn-thing-and-beer-drinking fat arses, tally cloud-touching stiffs, stool quitters and faking-knee-injury fatties. Holla!

amayseng says:

Isaiah,
i feel your frustration, but solis tore up some ligaments in that knee. that is a serious injury...what is really sad, if its true, is if that grazing temple or head shot lead to the injury...which i dont think it did. one thing that could help, is to be on weight and not overweight...that is true for all of us in life, and especially more important for professional athletes. i am a physical therapist and you have no idea the amount of knee injuries and replacements that are a result of being obese...

Radam G says:

Ditto! AND A BIG Right on, amayseng! I hear ya! The problem was no doubt dat blutter on Solis's double jelly belly and triple-wide arse. His birdlegs and boney knees could not have possibly stablize all of that obesity. Besides he was barely touched with a luv tap, but not before Doc Vitali bumped his giant-arse knee against Solis's boney one. Holla!