

AVILA RINGSIDE Andre Ward Dominates Abraham

Written by David A. Avila
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Craig Bennett photo

CARSON- WBA super middleweight titleholder Andre Ward dominated Germany's Arthur Abraham on Saturday and a slimmer and faster Chris "The Nightmare" Arreola reminded fans why he's among the top heavyweights with a battering knockout victory over Nagy Aguilera.

"It's a tough business," said Ward (24-0, 13 KOs). "But I was able to pull out the victory."

It was all Ward especially after the speedy boxer from Oakland established the stinging jab to the body and head. Abraham (32-3, 26 KOs) was helpless midway through the fight. Despite large representation from Abraham's fans the German fighter was almost helpless against Ward's speed.

It was very tentative in the first round between Ward and Abraham in the super middleweight title match. But in the second both let loose with some good combinations. Ward opened up first and Abraham closed the round with a flurry of shots.

Jabs took the third round for Ward who worked it up and down. But a pretty right uppercut by Abraham pierced Ward's guard for the best punch of the round.

Ward seemed to warm up in round four with some sizzling combinations and solid body shots. Abraham tried to rally but was met with a big left hook to the head that made the German fighter pause.

A very stiff left jab nearly dropped Abraham who walked into the quick blow. Ward grappled with Abraham and fired punches inside a little more than the previous rounds. Abraham couldn't find the speedster much.

Ward's jab and lightning combos were mounting up against the German Armenian. Few blows were coming back from the former middleweight world champion and Ward kept on ringing up the blows.

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Abraham stepped it up in round eight but still could not match Ward's speed and accuracy. Ward was willing to stay in the pocket where both fighters tangled up repeatedly. Round nine saw Ward repeat the same sequence of punches including a pretty left uppercut-left hook and right hand.

Ward dominated round 10 with combos from a right hand stance and combos from a left-handed stance. It didn't matter. A left to Abraham's body caused the German to complain but it was a legal blow. Ward hit him immediately in the same spot.

"I wish the referee would have let us fight more on the inside because that's what we trained for," said Ward.

All three judges scored it big for Ward 120-108, 118-110 and 118-111.

Now Ward proceeds to the finals of the Super Six Middleweight tournament.

"I want to be champion for a long time," Ward said.

Arreola TKOs Aguilera

Rumors were that Arreola had cut 20 pounds from his last fight and he immediately proved that it was true with a one-side beating of Dominican heavyweight Aguilera (16-6, 11 KOs).

Arreola stalked Aguilera quickly at the opening bell and landed a left hook to the eye of the Dominican that kept him blinking throughout the first round. Lots of exchanges took place early in the round. It would prove to be the least amount of punches thrown.

A furious series of exchanges took place in the second round as Arreola opened up with everything in his arsenal and pinned Aguilera in the corner. The Dominican fought back but then Arreola opened up again.

"I felt real good," Arreola (31-2, 27 KOs) said.

Round three saw Arreola crank out even more punches with Aguilera on the ropes and absorbing a large number of violent head snapping left hooks, right hands and stinging uppercuts.

"I know I hurt him," Arreola said.

Referee Raul Caiz Jr. looked ready to end the fight in round three but remained a few feet away. Arreola went back to work ripping body shots to both side of the belly and still Aguilera remained upright. Arreola resumed the onslaught and finally the referee ended the fight by wrapping his hands around the Dominican's body as the fighter fired a blow two seconds late at 1:58 of round three. Arreola scored a technical knockout.

"I'm surprised he didn't stop it sooner," said Arreola who looked anxious for more rounds. "I had

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to get composed and went back at it.”

Still feeling strong and energized by the crowd response, Arreola said that he felt the difference, that the loss of weight aided him immensely in his impressive performance.

“Now I feel like speed kills especially pressure and speed,” Arreola said while talking in the tunnel as fans anxiously looked at the Mexican-American heavyweight hopeful. “I want to fight soon, real soon.”

Trainer Henry Ramirez said he was not surprised at Arreola’s dominance.

“He’s back on the right track,” Ramirez said.

Other bouts

East L.A.’s Shawn Estrada (12-0, 11 KOs) fired a right hand-left hook combination to knock out Rhode Island’s Joseph Gardner (7-3-1) in 1:27 of the first round of a light heavyweight bout. Despite weighing more than six pounds past the contracted limit, Estrada was too fast and too powerful for Gardner.

Former Olympian Javier Molina (6-0, 4 KOs) won convincingly by unanimous decision over Minnesota’s Danny Figueroa (3-2) after four rounds of a welterweight match.

Undefeated German middleweight Dominik Britsch (22-0, 8 KOs) floored Arkansas’s Delray Raines (18-10-1) three times and maybe a fourth that was discounted by the referee. After two knockdowns via body shots and right hand to the chin finished the job at 2:05 of the fifth round.

Armen Ovesepyan (11-1, 9 KOs) didn’t need much time to take out Arturo Brambilla (9-15) of Mexico with some big blows in a welterweight match. A right hand sent Brambilla down for good at 2:44 of the opening round of the mismatch.

Andrey Klimov (11-0, 6 KOs) stopped D.C.’s Ty Barnett (18-2-1, 12 KOs) with a flurry of blows to the body and head at 1:12 of the third round of a junior welterweight fight. Klimov was stunned early in the first round by a left hook but rallied to turn things around behind steady body punching.

Van Nuys bantamweight Matt Villanueva (6-0, 6 KOs) knocked down Highland’s Frank Gutierrez (0-1) with a blow behind the head early in the fight. Referee Ray Balewicz let the infraction go and Villanueva took advantage with numerous blows behind the head including one that led to a knockout of Gutierrez at 2:56 of the first round.