Written by Ralph Gonzalez
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Scouts have been sniffing around Orozco, right, recently. Looks like he will soon snag a promotional deal.

“It’s time to take care of business,” undefeated prospect Antonio Orozco said before he stepped into the ring as the main event on Thursday night’s “Fight Club O.C.” series at the O.C. Hangar in Costa Mesa.

And took care of business he did.

Orozco (10-0, 7 KO’s), a buzz-worthy junior lightweight out of San Diego, employed a vicious body attack to knockout former Olympian Henslay Strachan (5-9-1 1 KO) of the Bahamas in the first round.

It was Orozco’s first fight back since having to cancel out on his last date due to a food related illness. He showed near perfect form in dismantling and finishing off his opponent who couldn’t handle the relentless pressure of the well regarded prospect trained by Carlos Barragan.

The buzz on Orozco, 23, has been growing increasingly louder and reported interest from both Golden Boy Promotions and Bob Arum’s Top Rank seems to be more fact than fiction.

It’s interesting to note that Top Rank matchmaker Bruce Trampler was part of the sold out 1,400 plus audience that saw Orozco crumple Strachan with a wicked left hook to the body.

Manager Frank Espinoza wouldn’t confirm or deny that talks have occurred with several major promotional companies. “We plan to do what’s best for Antonio’s career so we have to look at all options available,” stated Espinoza who has managed the careers of five world champions. “I think he’s got a great future. He’s well spoken, smart and he can fight. He has all the makings of a star and the industry is taking notice.”

Orozco chooses to remain humble despite all the accolades he’s been receiving from the boxing media. “I still have a lot to learn. There are a few things I could’ve done different in there,” he stated. “Carlos and I are going to look at the tapes and fix whatever has to be fixed.”

Golden Boy or Top Rank?
Where will Orozco land? He’s been fighting on Golden Boy Promotions’ cards but that doesn’t necessarily mean he’ll end up there. Not long ago, it seemed that G.B.P. had the upper hand in signing hot Filipino prospect Mercito Gesta due to their close relationship with Gesta’s promoter Don Chargin. Surprisingly, Top Rank eventually signed Gesta. Will Golden Boy also let Orozco slip away?

“That’s not something I’m going to worry about. I’ll let Frank deal with that,” Orozco stated when asked about the situation. “My job is to train like a champion and win.”

Orozco dedicated the fight and the eventual victory to Genaro “Chicanito” Hernandez. “We’re all keeping him and his family in our prayers,” Orozco stated.

Hernandez, a classy and kind former world champion, is reportedly in the last stage of his battle with cancer.

On the web:
Antonio Orozco vs. Manuel Aguilar: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bho-KeopROI

Fight Club O.C.
Roy Englebrecht Promotions does a great job of turning a hangar into a first rate boxing and mixed martial arts venue.

All the elements and details that a great promotion must have are there. They’ve got more than just the music, the ring card girls and all the other basics. There are things you won’t see at any other venue. How about a giant projection video screen (50 ft?) in the background along with a countdown clock in the corner? Some nice video compilations between fights keep the audience entertained while the fighters get ready to enter the ring. Great showmanship and great promoting by Englebrecht and his crew which includes former fight writer Whitfield Haydon.

The Cigar Club
So you want to light up a stogie at the fights but you can’t do it due to the restrictive California smoking laws? Fight Club OC figured it out. By opening up one of the hangar’s walls, fight attendees can sit outside and watch the action as they light some fine tobacco available for purchase or better yet, bring your own.

The hybrid boxing-MMA concept actually works well as far as I’m concerned. You’d have to be a fan of both sports to truly appreciate the concept. The MMA bouts break up the evening pretty nicely.

If you’re solely a boxing or MMA fan it may be a more exasperating experience. On the other hand, it may be the perfect opportunity to explore both sports.

The next show is slated for August 18th.

On the web:
www.fightcluboc.com

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