

Victor Sanchez Beats Richard Contreras in Ontario, CA

Written by David A. Avila
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ONTARIO, CALIF.-Despite the main event falling out due to fighter injury, there was no drop of excitement as Houston's Victor Sanchez stopped Riverside's Richard Contreras after seven of the most brutal rounds on Friday night.

Two Houston fighters were brought in with Sanchez (5-6-1, 2 Kos) emerging the victor after a toe-to-toe featherweight war with Contreras (10-2-1, 9 Kos) at the Doubletree Hotel. The Thompson Boxing Promotions fight card also featured a junior welterweight fight but let's talk about that later.

Contreras had been in numerous wars and was matched with southpaw Sanchez, who opened up the first round with a knockdown of the Riverside boxer. During a brief exchange Sanchez caught the Riversider with his hands down and down went Contreras. He stood up and smiled at Sanchez.

The second round saw both crunch each other with blows that would have made Mickey Mantle proud if he had connected that solidly. Each fighter refused to back off or slip punches. It seemed to be a matter of honor.

Contreras had rallied back with some shotgun blasts blows emanating from his right leads. Punch after punch connected solidly on Sanchez's head. The uppercuts seemed to be the most effective of the blows.

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But Sanchez would not relinquish the momentum and kept peppering Contreras with short, crisp punches that were connecting in abundance. Right uppercuts would return from Contreras but a shift in the momentum returned to the Texan.

Sanchez absorbed vicious blows one after the other. Body shots had been busting his side but the Houston fighter would not slow down. After a particularly vicious seventh round, Contreras returned to his corner and his trainer Joe Esquivel stopped the fight.

The brutality was finally ended.

In the semi-main event San Diego's Giovanni Santillan (8-0, 5 Kos) used his height, reach and poker face to defeat ultra-tough Jesus "Bam, Bam" Mendez (3-4, 2 Kos) after six rounds of a junior welterweight clash.

Santillan started quickly behind his long jab and quick combos but Mendez began giving angles and making it tough for the San Diego boxer to make adjustments in the third round. That would change as Santillan began firing lead left hands that snapped Mendez head back many times. On two occasions left handed blows sent the Texan's mouthpiece flying in different directions.

After six rounds Santillan was ruled the winner by unanimous decision.

Ukraine's Taras Sheletyuk (3-0, 3 Kos) floored Chula Vista's Mario Angeles (1-4-1) twice in the second round forcing referee Raul Caiz to stop the fight at 2:04. Sheletyuk, who is trained by Freddie Roach, used right hooks to drop Angeles, who tried moving around from the taller and stronger Ukrainian but was twice caught with clean shots.

Lancaster's Johnny Reyes (3-0, 1 KO) powered his way through Las Vegas veteran Johnny Frazier (2-15-4) to win by unanimous decision. Reyes was the heavy hitter but Frazier had no problem taking the blows to the head. It was the body shots that made him hold but Frazier was able to protect his body enough to survive four rounds. Scores were 40-36 on all three cards.

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Riverside's Rafa Lopez (6-1, 5 Kos) defeated Pomona's Omar Barefield (0-4) after four rounds of a middleweight bout. Lopez, the younger brother of welterweight contender Josesito Lopez, was the stronger puncher but found Barefield a very tough-minded boxer. All three judges scored the fight 40-36 for Lopez who had retired for several years and is now making a comeback.

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