

Melson Wins At Last DiBella Roseland Show

Written by The Sweet Science
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DIBELLA ENTERTAINMENT CLOSSES ROSELAND BALLROOM WITH A BANG

"THE LAST DANCE" DELIVERS AN ACTION-PACKED NIGHT OF FIGHTS

New York, NY (2/12/14) - On Wednesday night, DiBella Entertainment hosted the last ever boxing event to take place at the historic Roseland Ballroom in mid-town Manhattan. The nine-bout card was the epitome of old-school New York boxing, and was as good of a sendoff as the ballroom could have asked for.

In the main event of the final boxing event ever at the famed Roseland Ballroom, Boyd Melson, 160, White Plains, NY, of "Team Fight to Walk", outboxed Donald Ward, 155, Memphis, TN, to earn a majority decision victory on scores of 78-74, 79-73, and 76-76.

Melson hurt Ward on occasion with his straight right and right hook upstairs. Ward threw some nice flurries to the body, but was not active enough. Melson improved to 14-1-1 (4 KOs), while Ward fell to 6-4 (3 KOs).

In what will go down as one of the best fights in "Broadway Boxing" history, Brooklyn's fierce and popular Heather "The Heat" Hardy, 121³/₄, and Cristina Fuentes, 121³/₄, Laredo, TX, blasted away at each other from the outset, never letting up for their entire eight-round scrap. With the crowd on their feet, Hardy pounded away to the head and body of Fuentes, who happily ate those punches to land her own. Hardy seemed determine to prove her toughness rather than boxing finesse, with bobbing and weaving not part of this night's game plan. Already one of New York City's hottest tickets in female boxing, this performance will surely elevate her popularity

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by leaps and bounds. After eight explosive rounds, Hardy, now 8-0 (2 KOs), would win a well-deserved split decision (all cards 57-55). Fuentes' record dropped to 2-5-3.

The always-exciting Joe Smith, 175½, Long Island, NY, outboxed the experienced Otis Griffin, 177, Sacramento, CA, over six frames. Smith's aggressiveness and pressure style kept Griffin tentative. The judges tallied 60-54 twice, and 59-55, all for Smith, who improved to 14-1 (11 KOs). Griffin, who has battled many elite fighters, dropped to 24-15-2 (10 KOs).

The popular junior lightweight prospect Bryant "PeeWee" Cruz, 130½, 9-0 (5 KOs), New Rochelle, NY, came out blasting, quickly dropping Joshua Reyes, 129½, 5-2 (2 KOs), with a series of shots in round one. However, Reyes proved his heart, coming back to trade heavy shots with Cruz over the remainder of the fight, with the crowd cheering wildly. Cruz dealt with the pressure of Reyes with precise counter shots and combinations to win a unanimous decision on scores of 58-55 twice, and 59-54.

Brooklyn light heavyweight prospect Travis Peterkin, 177, 11-0 (5 KOs), outfought the game Michael Gbenga, 174½, 13-11 (13 KOs), Washington, DC, to earn a six-round unanimous decision with a score of 60-53 three times. Gbenga tried to make it an ugly fight early and crowd Peterkin, but the Brooklynite did his best when he created distance to land his jab and snapping straight right hand. Gbenga lost a point in round four for excessive head butting.

SMS-promoted lightweight Donte Strayhorn, 136, Cincinnati, OH, battled Jose Gomez, 133½, Kent, WA, over four intense rounds. Strayhorn fought well on the outside establishing his jab, but the stocky Gomez fought his way in close to make it a trench war. However, Strayhorn's strategy proved to dominate the majority of the rounds, to earn him a majority decision with scores of 39-37 twice, and one vote of 38-38. Strayhorn improved to 5-1 (1 KO), while Gomez went home with a 3-6 record.

Chris Galeano, 155, the former #1-rated U.S. amateur from the Bronx, improved to 2-0 with a dominant four-round shutout decision over Travis McClaren. Galeano controlled the action and boxed nicely, scoring with hard combinations to both the body and head of McClaren. McClaren, 154½, hung tough and tried to walk the taller Galeano down, landing a few shots of his own, but in the end, Galeano, now 2-0, was just too slick for his opponent, who fell to 1-4.

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Danny Gonzalez, 141, Queens, NY, and Ray Velez, 140½, Troy, NY, waged war for four blazing frames. Both fighters dispensed with their jabs and fought toe-to-toe from the outset. Gonzalez appeared to have the upper hand at times when he trapped Velez against the ropes and unloaded a fury of leather. In the end, scorecards read 40-36 Gonzalez, and two tallies of 38-38, resulting in a draw verdict. Gonzalez is now 5-0-1 (3 KOs), while Velez is 3-4-1 (1 KO).

Lightweight prospect Ryan Martin, 136, of Chattanooga, TN, and promoted by 50 Cent's SMS Promotions, dominated the tough Jose Del Valle, 133½, over four rounds to earn a clear unanimous decision with a score of 40-36 across the board. Extended the distance for the first time as a pro, Martin, now 3-0 (2 KOs), would often counter Del Valle's lazy jab with lead rights, in addition to banging away at the body.

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