

The Past Week in Action 10 April 2018

Highlights:

Jarrett Hurd floors Erislandy Lara in the last round to clinch a points win and unify the IBF and WBA super welter titles

-James DeGale regains the IBF super middle title with victory over Caleb Truax

-Dennis Hogan closes in on a world title fight with win over “Jimmy” Kilrain Kelly

-Julian Williams beats Nathaniel Gillimore in IBF eliminator

-Jhonny Gonzalez keeps his aim of a fight with WBC champion Miguel Berchelt alive with win

-French hopes Tony Yoka, Nordine Oubaali and Souleymane Cissokho score wins

April 6

Quilmes, Argentina: Middle: Javier Francisco Maciel (33-6) W TKO 6 Martin Rios (22-16-4). Maciel stops Rios in a war. The fight started badly for Maciel as he was deducted a point for dangerous use of his heads in the first minute. Rios had edges in height and reach and took the opening two rounds. The third was a war as the just stood and traded which suited the smaller Maciel and his strength began to get him on top. In the fourth Maciel was scoring with clubbing rights to the head and left hooks to the body and was bullying Rios around. The fifth saw Maciel in complete control of the action again getting through with right crosses and hooks inside. Rios tried to fire back but his punches lacked any snap and he was rapidly tiring. Rios opened the sixth with a right to the head but was soon under pressure and being forced back by the stronger Maciel. Rios did get a bit of respite when he lost his mouthguard but with just seconds to go in the round a vicious left hook to the body saw him drop to his knees. He did make it to his feet but then signalled he wanted no more and the fight was over. The 33-year-old former WBO title challenger Maciel lived up to his “La Bestia” nickname and gets win No 23 by KO/TKO. Former Argentinian middle and super middle champion Rios has now lost five in a row.

Helsinki, Finland: Light Heavy: Dayron Lester (10-1) W TKO 8 Niklas Rasanen (14-2-1). Finnish-based Cuban Lester comes from behind to stop Rasanen. The Finnish southpaw made a good start setting a fast pace with Lester content to box well and counter Rasanen’s attacks. Rasanen was by far the busier fighter with Lester throwing less but showing more power. Rasanen paid for that fast pace he set and started to tire. Lester had paced the fight better and began to get on top. In the eighth a right put Rasanen on the canvas. He beat the count but had very little left and as Lester piled on the punishment the referee stepped in to save Rasanen. Good win for the 31-year-old Lester and an important one as he had been knocked out in four rounds by unbeaten Pole Pawel Stepien in his last fight in August. Born in Havana Lester was a high level amateur in Cuba getting silver in the Cuban Championships and competing at International events before moving to Finland in 2015 with his Finnish wife. “Drummer Boy” Rasanen, he plays drums in a jazz band,

lost to Mariano Hilario for the European Union title in 2016 and may have to think whether he wants to continue as a pro. His wife Eva Wahlstrom is the biggest attraction in Finnish boxing and retained her WBC super feather title on the show so it was not all bad for the family on the night.

East London, South Africa: Light Simpiwe Vetyeka (30-4) W KO 8 Thompson Mokwana (23-12-1,1ND). Super Fly: Yanga Siggibo (10-1-1) W PTS 12 Sabelo Ngebinyana (9-3).

Vetyeka vs. Mokwana

Vetyeka keeps his career alive as he beats experienced Mokwana. Over the early rounds Mokwana held his own in the match scoring with stiff left jabs that rocked Vetyeka onto his back foot. The action was close but the quality work was coming from Vetyeka who was moving Mokwana around and opening him up for some quality body punches. In the eighth Vetyeka backed Mokwana up and then bulled him around the ropes. Mokwana began to fall apart as Vetyeka scored with jabs and hooks. He forced Mokwana to the ropes and landed a couple of hooks to the body. Mokwana missed with a left and Vetyeka came over the top with a chopping right to the side of the head which dropped Mokwana to his knees and he was counted out. Vetyeka, 37, a former WBA feather and IBO bantam and feather champion had lost a majority verdict to 10 fight novice Lerato Dlamini in October but looked more like his old self here. Mokwana, 32, a former national light champion had scored a win over former IBF champion Mzonke Fana in June.

Siggibo vs. Ngebinyana

Siggibo retains the national title with comfortable victory over Ngebinyana. The champion was just too slick and too quick for limited southpaw Ngebinyana and outboxed him all the way. The only knockdown came from a right from Siggibo in the sixth as he cruised to victory. Scores 118-109, 117-111 and 116-112 for Siggibo who gets his seventh win in a row, Ngebinyana had scored a win over former South African flyweight champion Doctor Ntsele last year but was well beaten here.

Dar-ES Salaam, Tanzania: Super Light: Mfaume Mfaume (12-3-2) W PTS 10 Habibu Pengo (12-3-2). Mfaume wins the vacant East & Central African title with comfortable points victory over fellow Tanzanian Pengo. Scores 99-91 twice and 98-92 for the 25-year-old Mfaume. Two of Mfaume's losses have been on the road in Europe against tough opposition. Pengo had lost only one of his last 14 fights.

Pretoria, South Africa: Super Light; Xolisani Ndongeni (24-0) W PTS 12 Abraham Ndauendapo (16-6). Super Light: Xolani Mcotheli (16-4) W TKO 6 Warren Joubert (26-6-5). Light: Michael Mokoena (12-1) W PTS 10 Marcus Lebogo (8-3-1).

Ndongeni vs. Ndauendapo

Ndongeni too quick and too skilful for Namibian Ndauendapo and picks up the vacant WBF title. The unbeaten South African boxed his way to victory over a willing but limited Ndauendapo. Scores 118-110, 117-111 and 115-113 for Ndongeni. The

South African is a former undefeated IBO champion but he lost that title due to inactivity not having fought between November 2016 and December 2017. Ndaudapo, 34, had lost 3 of his last 4 fights but the losses had all been to good level opposition.

Mcotheli vs. Joubert

Mcotheli retains the national title with cut stoppage over Joubert. This was close and entertaining fight with plenty of lively exchanges so it was a pity it had to end early. The cause of the stoppage was a bad cut over the left eye of Joubert and with the blood trickling into Joubert's eye the referee stopped the fight. First defence of his title for Mcotheli who gets his third win in a row, Former undefeated national champion Joubert will be hoping for another chance to regain his old title. It was Joubert's first fight since losing in six rounds against Josh Taylor for the Commonwealth title in March last year

Mokoena vs. Lebogo

Mokoena retains his Gauteng Provincial title with a majority decision over Lebogo. A variation in the scoring with two judges having Mokoena the winner by six points and the third seeing it as a draw. Now five wins in a row for Mokoena the South African No 2. Lebogo, rated No 3 by BSA was moving up to ten rounds for the first time.

April 7

Alta Garcia, Argentina: Super Feather Jose Romero (19-0) W PTS 10 Jesus Cuadro (14-4). Romero remains unbeaten with majority decision over Venezuelan-based Mexican Cuadro but is lucky to do so. Romero made a confident start and looked to have built a small lead after three rounds but the southpaw guard of Cuadro gave him problems and he then fell away as Cuadro swept the middle rounds. Romero rallied in the ninth but with Cuadro taking the last the Venezuelan seemed to have done enough to win. Scores a ridiculous 98-92 and 96-94 for Romero and 95-95. The 21-year-old Romero, the Argentinian No 2, retains the interim WBC Latino title but it was a poor performance from him against modest opposition.

Brisbane, Australia: Super Welter: Dennis Hogan (27-1-1) W PTS 12 "Jimmy" Kilrain Kelly (23-2). Light Heavy: Damien Hooper (14-1) W TKO 9 Renold Quinlan (12-3). Cruiser: Jai Opeteia (15-0) W TKO 2 Lukas Paszkowsky (9-2). Hogan vs. Kelly

Big win for Hogan as he gets unanimous verdict over Kelly in a fight that Hogan hopes will lead to another title shot. Englishman Kelly had height and reach on his side and made a confident start using the jab well and scoring to the body. Hogan began to roll from late in the third. Much of the work was untidy but Hogan was just getting the better of the exchanges. Kelly went to the body well at the start of the fourth but Hogan usually a slow starter was getting into his stride. There was too much clinching in the fifth but the effective work was coming from the Australian-based Irishman in that round and he pocketed the sixth and seventh. Kelly fired back

in furious action in the eighth rocking Hogan with a right but Hogan banged back to take the ninth. It swung Kelly's way again in the tenth as he was just the busier fighter. Hogan was stronger over the closing rounds landing a huge right in the eleventh and almost bundling Kelly out through the ropes in the last as he staged a storming finish. Scores 119-109, 117-111 and 117-113 all for Hogan who retains his WBO Oriental title and captures Kelly's WBO Inter-Continental title. Hogan was a clear and deserved winner but the scores seemed wide and did not reflect how tough Kelly made this for Hogan. The 33-year-old "Hurricane" lost a wide unanimous decision to Jack Culcay for the interim WBA title but has now scored five wins on the bounce against good level opposition. He is No 3 with the WBO behind Liam Smith and Kanat Islam. Smith challenges Sadam Ali for the WBO title on 12 May. Kanat Islam is No 2 but he is also No 1 with the WBA and the highest rated challenger with the IBF so he may try for a shot at new champion Jarrett Hurd and so improve Hogan's chances of a WBO title fight. Kelly, 25, the WBO No 4 going in, was stopped in seven rounds by Smith for the WBO title in 2015 but had rebuilt with seven wins since then and has time to get over this loss and come back strongly.

Hooper vs. Quinlan

Hooper climbs off the floor twice to stop Quinlan. Hooper was quicker and had a longer reach so was able to keep on the move spearing the advancing Quinlan with his left and scoring to the head with long rights. Quinlan was trying to walk Hooper down but was just not quick enough. He managed to land a couple of good jabs and a right in the third but Hooper was tying him up when he did get past the jab. Hooper boxed his way through the fourth scoring at range with the jab and catching Quinlan with rights as he came forward. In the fifth Quinlan finally managed to trap Hooper on the ropes and threw a bunch of punches none which looked that hard but Hooper dropped to his knees. Hooper was up quickly but as the count got to six he went down on one knee before getting up again. A left uppercut from Quinlan had Hooper's legs wobbling badly and he again dropped to the floor. He was now cut below the left eye but was up quickly only to again go on down on one knee before rising again at eight. Hooper was staggered again by a right and was floundering but managed to hold and make it the bell. Hooper boxed his way through the sixth and seventh with Quinlan tiring and not able to cut the ring off. Hooper was also tiring but he unloaded some heavy rights in the eighth before being deducted a point for a blow to the back of Quinlan's head. Quinlan was scoring with some wicked uppercuts early in the ninth. Hooper then began to find the target with right crosses and then landed a right uppercut that rocked Quinlan back on his heels. Suddenly Quinlan's legs were gone and he tried to hold on to Hooper but Hooper shook him free and with Quinlan trapped on the ropes Hooper kept punching a practically defenceless Quinlan until the referee stopped the fight. Then 26-year-old "Super" Hooper retains the WBO International title he won with an upset victory over unbeaten Umar Salamov in July. A few years back Hooper was the No 1 Australian amateur beating Marcus Brown at the 2012 Olympics. He was expected to march to some major titles as a pro but serious doubts arose after he was knocked in just 21 seconds by 3-1 novice Rob Powdrill. His win over Salamov has seen him elevated to

No 10 by the WBO but he was one punch away from a loss in the fifth and those questions over his chin remain.

Opetaiia vs. Paszkowsky

Opetaiia wins the vacant WBO Asia Pacific title as he blows away game Paszkowsky inside two rounds. Opetaiia was too quick handed and too heavy handed for German Paszkowsky. Opetaiia rocked Paszkowsky with a southpaw right hook in the first before putting him down with a left later in the round. Paszkowsky was up immediately and made it to the bell. Opetaiia put him down again early in the second with a succession of punches from both hands and again Paszkowsky was up quickly. He tried to punch back but was reeling under another bombardment when the referee stopped just as the fight as the towel came in from the German's corner. Now ten wins in a row by KO/TKO for the 22-year-old Australian champion and WBO No 15. He is a former World Youth champion and 2012 Olympian. After losing his first pro fight Paszkowsky had won nine in a row but was outclassed by Opetaiia.

Vienna, Austria: Heavy: Tervel Pulev (10-0) W KO 2 Laszlo Penzes (7-1).

Middle: Marcos Nader (19-1-1) W KO 2 Darko Knezevic (12-25).

Pulev vs. Penzes

Pulev eases to win No 10 with brutal kayo of Penzes. The fight was never going to last long and Pulev ended it in the second with a thunderous left hook that deposited Penzes on his back with his head resting on the bottom rope. The 35-year-old younger brother of Kubrat twice won silver medals at the European Championships and a bronze at the London Olympics where he lost to Olek Usyk before turning pro at 33. He has won 9 by KO/TKO. Penzes, 39, had won five of his fights in the first round but against very poor opposition.

Nader vs. Knezevic

Nader returns to the pro ranks with stoppage of Knezevic. He had the Serbian down in the first and under pressure early in the second with the referee stopped the fight. The Spanish-born Austrian is a former European Union champion. He lost his title on a split decision against Emanuele Blandamura in 2014 and then contracted himself to fight in the AIBA pro boxing hoping to qualify for the 2016 Olympics but was unsuccessful and was then inactive due to an elbow injury. Now 18 losses by KO/TKO for Knezevic

Quebec City, Canada: Super Light: Mathieu Germain (14-0) W TKO 8 Miguel Zamudio (40-11-1). Heavy: Simon Kean (14-0) W KO 5 Ignacio Esparza (21-3).

Germain vs. Zamudio

Germain adds another win as he halts experienced Zamudio. Germain had his jab working early opening a cut under the right eye of the Mexican in the opening round. Germain used his better skills to build on that start and he had Zamudio hurt in the third. Zamudio survived but took heavy punishment over the next three rounds before he was put down by a right/ left combination late in the seventh and only the bell saved him. Germain went straight after Zamudio in the eighth and after a left uppercut had the Mexican stumbling on shaky legs the referee stopped the fight.

Good win for the 28-year-old “G-Time” as he builds on an impressive victory over Cam O’Connell in February. He has eight wins by KO/TKO. Zamudio had won 5 of his last 6 fights but this is his ninth loss by KO/TKO.

Kean vs. Esparza

The only way to describe this is to call it a farce. The 6’5” “Grizzly” was faced with a 40-year-old Mexican who it was expected would come in at around 240lbs. Since Esparza started out as a 190lbs boxer it was natural he should look a bit overweight. In fact he was so obese that the press were not allowed to see him stripped down before the fight as Esparza came in at 273lbs with rolls of fat around his waist. He actually stood up well to the punishment Kean handed out but the crowd were booing the mismatch by the second round. The 29-year-old Kean ended it in the fifth dropping Esparza twice with head punches and the Mexican was counted out. Now thirteen wins by KO/TKO for Kean and his sixth win in a row inside the distance but this one was an embarrassment for the unbeaten Canadian. He will get a much tougher fight out of fellow Canadian Adam Braidwood in June. This was Esparza’s first fight for 16 months and he had put on 26lbs since that 2016 fight.

Paris, France: Heavy: Tony Yoka (4-0) W KO 5 Cyril Leonet (13-10-3). Bantam: Nordine Oubaali (14-0) W KO 2 Luis Melendez (47-12-1). Super Welter: Souleymane Cissokho (6-0) W PTS 10 Jose de Jesus Macias (23-9-2).

Yoka vs. Leonet

Too easy for Yoka as he easily breaks down and halts former French champion Leonet. The 6’7” Yoka towered over the 6’1” Leonet but made a cautious start using his huge reach advantage to score at a distance with jabs and hooks to the body. With Yoka also being much lighter on his feet Leonet just could not close the distance. In the fourth strong jabs from Yoka opened a cut on the bridge of Leonet’s nose. Leonet made a big effort to get inside in the fifth but a straight right from Yoka sent Leonet down to the canvas on his back and he was counted out. The 25-year-old 2016 gold medal winner now has three wins by KO/TKO but is still very much a work in progress. For missing three test whilst travelling or training overseas he was given a suspended suspension. Leonet, 34, the French No 5 suffers his fourth loss by KO/TKO.

Oubaali vs. Melendez

Another sparkling show by southpaw Oubaali. He just blew away experienced Colombian southpaw Melendez. From the opening bell Oubaali had Melendez under pressure. He was banging home hooks from both hands with Melendez soaking up punishment and not finding the space to fire back. Oubaali ended it in the second as he staggered Melendez with a left hook and then landed a couple more punches which saw Melendez slide to the canvas. He beat the count but a right hook followed by a left hook put him on the floor again. The referee started to count and then waived the fight off. The 31-year-old Oubaali is No 4 with the WBC following wins over former WBO fly champion Julio Cesar Miranda, former interim WBO bantam champion Alejandro Hernandez and useful Filipino Mark Anthony Geraldo. Now four losses by KO/TKO for 38-year-old Melendez a former IBO title challenger.

Cissokho vs. Macias

Olympian Cissokho has to go the distance for the first time as he outclasses a game Macias. The Rio bronze medallist put on scintillating exhibition as he was too fast and too clever for the Mexican. Cissokho was dazzling Macias with the speed and variety of his punches. It was the fifth round before Macias even managed to land one good punch as the silky movement and constant change of angles had him bemused. A left almost put Macias down but he stayed on his feet as Cissokho took every round and showed no problem in going ten for the first time. Scores 100-90 for Cissokho from all three judges. France has plenty of talent in the super welter division with Cedric Vitu, Michel Soro and Maxime Beaussire all high quality fighters and the 26-year-old Senegal-born Cissokho is right up there with them. Last time out Macias had taken Canadian hope Mike Zewski the distance over eight rounds and he earned his pay by doing the same here against Cissokho.

Hangelsberg, Germany: Middle: Denny Lehman (14-6-2) W KO 3 Chris Hermann (22-15-1). Lehman wins the vacant Global Boxing Council Inter-Continental title. With kayo of Hermann. Lehman, the German International champion, gets his eleventh win by KO.TKO. The 30-year-old "Spartan" started his career by going 1-4-1 but persevered and improved. Fellow German Hermann falls to 13 losses by KO/TKO.

Accra, Ghana: Super Welter: Patrick Allotey (38-3) W TKO 6 Frank Dodzi (19-10). Allotey beats fellow-Ghanaian Dodzi to win the vacant WBO African title, Allotey used a strong jab to take the first round and strengthen his dominance by rocking Dodzi with a right to the head in the second. Dodzi was more competitive over the third and fourth but again they were rounds that Allotey took with some quick combinations. Allotey came close to ending it in the fifth. He rocked Dodzi early with a left hook and another left hook had Dodzi on the verge of going down. Allotey finished it in the sixth as he stormed forward landing hard to head and body and the referee stopped the fight just as the towel came in from Dodzi's corner. The 27-year-old Allotey gets his fourth win since losing on points against Kanat Islam in a creditable performance in 2016. He wants a return. Dodzi was stopped inside a round by Brit Sam Sheedy in 2015 and this was his first fight since December 2016.

Tokyo, Japan: Feather: Taiki Minamoto (15-5) W TKO 7Takenori Ohashi (15-5-2). Minor upset sees Minamoto wins the Japanese title with a victory over champion Ohashi. Minamoto made good use of his longer reach and was quicker to the punch than the powerful but slower Ohashi. He landed some hard shots in the second particularly a powerful left hook and although Ohashi did better at the start of the third Minamoto finished the round strongly. Ohashi had his jab working in the fourth but again Minamoto broke through with hard left hooks and by the fifth Ohashi was cut over his right eye and looking a beaten fighter . After five rounds Minamoto was in front 49-46 on two cards and a dominant 50-44 on the third. Minamoto weakened Ohashi with body punches in the sixth and after Ohashi was on unsteady legs from a

Minamoto right in the seventh the referee stopped the fight. Minamoto had lost on points to Yukinori Oguni for the Japanese super bantam title in 2015 but earned this title shot with a run of four wins. Ohashi was making the first defence of the national title and suffered his fourth loss by KO/TKO.

Ixtapa Zihuatanejo: Super Feather: Jhonny Gonzalez (66-10) W PTS 12 Marlyn Cabrera (24-1). Super Light: Lindolfo Delgado (4-0) W KO 4 Juan Chavira (9-15).

Gonzalez vs. Cabrera

Gonzalez makes it eight wins in a row with wide unanimous verdict over Dominican Cabrera. Gonzalez was his usual aggressive self and even from early in the fight Cabrera was not looking to stand and trade. Gonzalez was doing plenty of damage with his jabs and digging hard to the body. As the fight progressed Gonzalez mixed in more and more combinations with Cabrera gutsy but really only looking to survive. He managed that but lost every round. Scores 120-108 for Gonzalez from all three judges. The 36-year-old former WBO bantam and WBC feather champion retains his WBC Latino title for the third time. He is No 3 with the WBC and calling out champion Miguel Berchelt. Cabrera's record is padded with some pretty poor opposition. His other loss was a second round stoppage against Javier Fortuna in 2016.

Delgado vs. Chavira

The former Olympian makes it four in a row by KO/TKO. He put the more experienced Chavira down twice with a hammering rights to the body and the latter of those rights convinced the referee to stop the one-sided fight in the fourth round. The 23-year-old from Monterrey has yet to go past the fourth round for a win. He represented Mexico at the 2016 Olympics and the 2013 and 2015 World Championships as well as winning a silver medal at the Central American & Caribbean Games. Chavira had won 4 of his last 5 fights but was no test for Delgado.

Lagos, Nigeria: Middle: Paul Valenzuela (22-7) W PTS 12 Aaron Coley (15-2-1). Middle: King Davidson (19-3,1ND) W PTS 12 Ishmael Tetteh (34-15-2). Light: DeMarcus Corley (51-29-1) W PTS 12 Patrick Lopez (25-12). Super Welter: Sule Olagbade (6-1) W PTS 10 Stephen Okine (13-15-1).

Valenzuela vs. Coley

Valenzuela wins the vacant WBU title with a split decision over Californian Coley. Valenzuela made good use of his longer reach to win this one on the outside but he needed a win having been 1-3 in his last 4 fights. Southpaw Coley's only other loss was on points against Ievgen Khytrov in 2015 and he had followed that with six wins on the bounce.

Davidson vs. Tetteh

Australian-based southpaw Davidson returns home to get a win and collects the WBU African title. Davidson had the superior skills and harder punch with Tetteh competitive but never really threatening. Scores 118-112, 118-113 and 116-112 all for Davidson. The 33-year-old "Hand of God" turned pro in Australia after competing

at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. He won the Australian title and was 18-1 in his first 19 fights and was based in Britain for a couple of years but has not been active enough being inactive in 2014 and only one fight each in years 2015,2016 and 2017. Ghanaian Tetteh a former Commonwealth title challenger was stopped inside a round by unbeaten Brit Scott Fitzgerald in February.

Corley vs. Lopez

“Chop Chop” just rolls on. The veteran former WBO super light champion adds another world title as he captures the vacant WBU crown with a unanimous verdict over Venezuelan Lopez. The 43-year-old Coley now has 80 fights on his record and you wonder whether he intends to go on to 100 but he will probably fall short as it could take him another 4 or 5 years to get there. Lopez, 40, was a double Olympian and won a gold medal at the Pan American Games so big things were expected from him but he never fulfilled that promise as a pro. He is now 2-7 in his last 9 fights.

Olagbade vs. Okine

Nigerian champion Olagbade collects the vacant West African Boxing Union title with stoppage of experienced Ghanaian Okine. It can difficult building a career in Nigeria as there are too few promotions and this is only the second fight in almost three years for “Tyson” Olagbade. Okine, 39, is a former Ghanaian and West African Union champion but is now 2-7 in his last 9 fights.

San Juan, Puerto Rico: Minimum: Carlos Licona (12-0) W PTS 10 Janiel Rivera (16-2-3), Light Heavy: Lenin Castillo (18-1-1) W TKO 10 Aaron Mitchell (27-3-1).

Licona vs. Rivera

Licona comes in as a substitute and gets wide unanimous verdict over local fighter Rivera. Mexican Licona forced the fight over the first two scoring well with his left and already marking up Rivera’s face. Rivera then had a strong spell over the next two rounds moving and countering well. The Puerto Rican also had a slight edge in the fifth which was probably the best round of the fight as they traded heavy punches. Licona continued to take the fight to Rivera and the Puerto Rican slowed and was being forced to stand and trade more and Licona swept the closing rounds to take the decision. Scores 98-92 twice and 99-91 all for Licona. The 23-year-old Mexican was moving up to ten rounds for the first time and wins the vacant WBO Latino title. Rivera was 8-0-1 in his last 7 fights but lost clearly here.

Castillo vs. Mitchell

Castillo wins the vacant WBO-NABO title with late stoppage of Mitchell. Dominican Castillo was in charge of this one from the start he was getting through with his jab and straight rights. Mitchell had some success with counter attacks but never really threatened. Castillo set a fast pace and as expected Mitchell quickly faded. In the seventh Mitchell made no attempt to trade punches but instead did some showboating and was warned for his tactics. Mitchell just circled the perimeter of the ring in the eighth hardly throwing a punch and when he repeated his negative tactics in the ninth he lost a point. Mitchell showed no more enthusiasm for the fight in the tenth and the referee lost patience and stopped the fight declaring Castillo the winner by TKO. Third inside the distance win for the tall Castillo since losing a majority

decision to unbeaten Joseph Williams in February last year. He now has 13 wins by KO/TKO. As an amateur under his first name of Gilbert Castillo he was Dominican champion and competed at the 2008 Olympics and 2009 World Championships. The 48-year-old Mitchell was having his first fight since January 2105.

Uster, Switzerland: Light Heavy: Davide Faraci (8-0) W KO 2 Emmanuel Feuzeu (10-6-2). Faraci makes a successful transition to ten round status with kayo of Feuzeu. Italian-based but Swiss-born Faraci impressed his fans as he took the first two rounds despite Feuzeu showing some good skills. Faraci ended it early in the third putting Fuss down and out. The tall 26-year-old now has five wins by KO/TKO. He is No 4 in the Italian ratings and is looking to land a shot at the Italian title. Cameroon-born Feuzeu, a former Spanish title challenger had won his last two fights but now has four losses by KO/TKO.

San Francisco, CA, USA: Welter: Karim Mayfield (21-4-1) W PTS 8 Gaku Takahashi (16-9-1). Mayfield gets win but only just. Mayfield had plenty of problems with the long reach and southpaw style of the taller Japanese fighter. When he could get past the jab Mayfield was able to score with his right and he wobbled Takahashi legs with one in the second round. He scored with more overhand rights and a stoppage looked possible but Mayfield was too wild and Takahashi survived. Mayfield seemed to have punched himself out and Takahashi was able to work with the jab and grew more confident with every round. Mayfield was only working in spurts and relying too much on big right hands. It turned into a tough gruelling fight with both fighters having good spells and both being on shaky legs at times. It was close and could have gone either way. Scores 77-75 twice and 77-74 all for Mayfield. Mayfield climbed into the world ratings when he went unbeaten in his first 19 fights but he twice suffered consecutive losses in important fights. He should have been too good for the limited Takahashi but at 37 he is going nowhere now. Takahashi was 2-3 in his last 5 fights.

Las Vegas, NV, USA: Super Welter: Jarrett Hurd (22-0) W PTS 12 Erislandy Lara (25-3-2). Super Middle: James DeGale (24-2-1) W PTS 12 Caleb Truax (29-4-2). Super Welter: Julian Williams (25-1-1) W PTS 12 Nathaniel Gallimore (20-2-1). Super Middle: Sergio Mora (29-5-2) W PTS 8 Alfredo Angulo (24-7).

Hurd vs. Lara

Hurd unifies the IBF and WBA titles when behind on all three cards going into the last 40 seconds of the fight he scores a fight deciding knockdown which nets him victory on a split decision.

Round 1

Lara was quickly on target with his jab slotting rights home and following up with quick straight lefts. Hurd pressed hard but was unable to cut the ring off enough and Lara took the round

Scores 10-9 Lara

Round 2

Hurd took this one. He was in Lara's face for the full three minutes forcing the Cuban back and scoring with clubbing hooks and uppercuts inside. Lara showed excellent defensive skills and drilled home some hard counters to make it close but it was Hurd's round.

Score 10-9 Hurd 19-19

Round 3

Hurd continued to take the fight to Lara. The Cuban was blocking most of Hurd's punches and slotting home quick countering lefts to the body but was also spending too long just hiding behind a high guard and not throwing enough and allowing Hurd to grab the points.

Score 10-9 Hurd 29-28

Round 4

Another close round. It was the silky skills of Lara against the battering ram of Hurd. Lara was quick and accurate with his punches but Hurd was throwing more and landing some heavy hooks to the body and just edged the round.

Scores 10-9 Hurd 39-37

Official scores: 39-37 Hurd, 39-37 Lara and 38-38

Round 5

Again Hurd was just walking Lara down and landing hard shots to head and body. There was nothing pretty in what he was doing. He is a monster at 154lbs and he was using his strength to keep Lara going backwards. Lara was firing quick accurate combinations but just not enough of them.

Score 10-9 Hurd 49-46

Round 6

Lara used his speed and accuracy to take this one. Hurd continued to march forward but Lara moved more and threw more to offset the harder punches from Hurd and landed the best punch of the fight so far in the shape of stunning left uppercut

Score 10-9 Lara 58-56

Round 7

Classy boxing from Lara saw him win the seventh. Hurd started the round with his usual aggression but with Lara doing a good job of blocking the shots Hurd backed off trying to get Lara out from behind his high guard. It worked but gave Lara some room and he was able to bang home quick jabs and straight lefts and finished the round with a couple of sizzling combinations.

Score 10-9 Lara 67-66

Round 8

Hurd was forcing Lara back for the whole three minutes. He was continuing to pound home left hooks to the body and right uppercuts. Lara countered with quick shots but Hurd just walked through them.

Score 10-9 Hurd 77-75

Official scores: 76-76, 76-76 and 76-75 Lara

Round 9

Hurd took this one as he used his strength to bull Lara around and marched forward swinging hard hooks and uppercuts. Lara was countering but was under pressure all the way and Hurd was doing the more effective work.

Score 10-9 Hurd

87-84

Round 10

Hurd staged a furious attack at the start of this round but Lara showed he was not going to give his title away without a fight. Once the Hurd storm blew itself out Lara was actually pushing Hurd onto the back foot and scoring with both hooks and uppercuts inside and straight rights and lefts.

Score 10-9 Lara

96-94

Round 11

This was a gruelling round as they were both tired and both just stood and worked inside. Lara was doing a better job of blocking punches and was quicker and more accurate. Late in the round he made some space and landed a quality three punch combination and walked Hurd onto a straight left counter.

Score 10-9 Lara

105-104

Round 12

This was the round that decided the fight. With his right eye closing and blood seeping from a cut by the eye Lara just did not have the strength left to hold off Hurd. A series of uppercuts and hooks had Lara rocking and with just 40 seconds remaining in the round a left to the head put him down. He was up at eight and made it to the bell somehow finding the energy to punch with Hurd.

Score 10-8 Hurd

115-112

Official scores: 114-113 twice for Hurd and 114-113 for Lara.

Hurd adds the WBA and IBO titles to the IBF title he already holds. On the official scores Hurd was down on all three official cards after the eleventh round so needed that knockdown to win the fight. At 6'1" (185cm) and with great power Hurd is capable of beating both WBC champion Jermell Charlo and WBO champion Sadam Ali if those fights could be made and at 27 he has a great future. Lara fought hard and bravely and was just 40 seconds away from Victory. The 34-year-old Cuban has classy skills but this time the power of Hurd proved too much but he can and will come again.

DeGale vs. Truax

DeGale regains the IBF title with unanimous verdict over Truax in a messy fight which never scaled any heights but DeGale did enough to earn a victory that keeps his career at the top still alive.

Round 1

DeGale made a more confident start than he had in the first fight. He had his right jab on target early and also got through with some straight lefts. Truax was unable to get inside to work, DeGale was dangerous with his head and as they clashed Truax tumbled back but luckily no one was cut.

Score 10-9 DeGale

Round 2

Truax pressed harder in the round. Again DeGale's head banged into the face of Truax and he was warned to keep his head up. DeGale again managed to outscore Truax but it was a closer round

Score 10-9 DeGale 20-18

Round 3

Truax was hunting DeGale down for the full three minutes. DeGale kept moving, staying off the ropes but Truax scored with a good short right and did enough to take the round. DeGale was cut over his left eye . It was ruled as coming from a punch but looked like it happened in a clash of heads.

Score 10-9 Truax 29-28

Round 4

Truax pressured throughout this one. He was firing punches on the way in. DeGale was trying him up inside to stop him working but was not throwing enough punches himself and this was beginning to follow the pattern of their first fight.

Score: 10-9 Truax 38-38

Official scores: 38-38 twice and 39-37 for DeGale

Round 5

Truax had a strong fifth. He kept coming and DeGale was unable to land anything to discourage him. DeGale's cut had worsened and he was being troubled by the blood running into his right eye. He lost his mouthguard and already the fight seemed to be getting away from the former champion

Score 10-9 Truax 47-48

Round 6

A closer round. DeGale was spearing Truax with jabs and straight lefts at distance and tying Truax up inside. It was a messy fight but DeGale had worked his way back into it.

Score 10-9 DeGale 57-57

Round 7

A better round for DeGale. He was moving more, turning Truax stabbing him with rights jabs and occasional lefts. Truax was still rumbling forward but not scoring and he was cut over his right eye in a clash of heads,

Score 10-9 DeGale 67-66

Round 8

It continued to be a messy fight. DeGale was boxing well outside scoring with his southpaw jab and quick lefts and then tying up Truax inside so that there was little sustained action and too much clinching but DeGale was doing the scoring.

Score 10-9 DeGale 77-75

Official scores: 79-73 DeGale, 77-75 DeGale, 77-77

Round 9

Truax kept marching in but when he got close he was content to just hold and land a few prods to the body. DeGale was moving well spearing Truax with his jab and was not interested in working inside either so again too many clinches.

Score 10-9 DeGale 87-84

Round 10

A good round for Truax. Finally he was landing punches on the way in and DeGale was using his jab less. DeGale warned for holding but then was deducted a point for using his shoulder to knock Truax back.

Score 10-8(9) Truax

95-94

Round 11

DeGale picked up the pace again in this one. Truax did not press so hard and despite continually being troubled by blood affecting his vision from his right eye DeGale was able to score with some shots at distance including a right uppercut to the chin.

Score 10-9 DeGale

105-103

Round 12

DeGale had one of his best rounds in the last. He alternated between standing and punching with Truax and scoring with quick flurries of punches and standing off and piercing his guard with rights. Truax kept rolling but was not able to score anything more than a couple of short hooks.

Score 10-9 DeGale

115-112

Official scores 114-113 twice and 117-110 for DeGale

DeGale, 32, regains the IBF title he lost on a majority decision in a poor performance against Truax in September. This was not by any means a vintage DeGale but the result was the important thing as it keeps him in line for a big fight against the winner of the George Groves vs. Callum Smith fight. Interim IBF champion Andre Dirrell or top rated contender Jose Uzcategui will press their claim and as DeGale had dropped to No 8(6 as first two positions are vacant) so he is unlikely to be allowed a voluntary defence. Truax has probably achieved more than he could have expected after inside the distance losses to Daniel Jacobs and Anthony Dirrell but as a former champion there are some good paydays out there for him.

Williams vs. Gallimore

Williams wins IBF eliminator with majority verdict over Gallimore. Williams settled quicker and took the first round with his accurate jabbing with Gallimore not letting his punches go. The second was more even with both landing heavy rights. The third saw both going to the body and Williams had more success with body punches in the fourth but was also warned for holding and Gallimore fired back at the end of the round. Gallimore had a good fifth getting home some sharp rights and a clash of heads saw Williams cut over the left eye but he bounced back in the sixth again going to the body. Williams had the better of the exchanges in the seventh and but the eighth was close. Gallimore started to tire. He fought hard and might have edged the tenth but Williams was stronger and dominated the last two rounds and deserved the decision which should have been unanimous, Scores 117-110 and 116-112 for Williams and 114-114. The 28-year-old from Philadelphia was crushed in five rounds by Jermall Charlo when he challenged for the IBF title in December 2016 but he put himself back in contention with a win over former champion Ishe Smith in November. US-based Jamaican Gallimore had won his last seven fights by KO/TKO but now will rebuild and be back again.

Mora vs. Angulo

Mora gets split decision over Angulo in contest between two seasoned pros trying to keep their careers alive. Mora had a big edge in speed and he used that early to outbox the slower but stronger Angulo. Mora landed some heavy stuff early but Angulo kept rolling forward working the body to slow the former champion. Those tactics began to work from the fourth round as Mora tired and Angulo was landing more often and Angulo took the fifth. Mora rebounded to have a good sixth and seventh outboxing and out scoring Angulo but Angulo picked up the last to make sure this one was close. Scores 78-74 and 77-75 for Mora and 78-74 for Angulo. Former WBC champion Mora was having his first fight since losing in seven rounds against Daniel Jacobs for the secondary WBA title in September 2016. He is now 37 and another title shot could be out of his reach. Former interim WBO champion Angulo is 35 and is now 2-5 in his last 7 fights and any chance he had of a title shot has long since gone

Laredo TX, USA: Light Heavy: Rodolfo Gomez (13-4-1) W TKO 8 Ricardo Mayorga (32-11-1,1ND). Local fighter Gomez gets a win over a very faded Mayorga. The Nicaraguan came in 5lbs over the contract weight but despite his lack of condition he used his experience to outscore the much taller 6'3" (191cm) Gomez over some of the early rounds. Naturally Mayorga mixed in some showboating. However eventually his lack of conditioning caught up with him and he tired badly and was floored in the eighth. He beat the count but the referee stopped the fight. Mexican Gomez gets win No 9 by KO/TKO but is really just a prelim fighter. Mayorga, 45, had retired but he took this one for the money and hopefully it will be his last fight.

8 April

St. Pauli, Germany: Super Middle: Sebastiano Lo Zito (12-0) W TEC DEC 6 Roman Hardok (6-1). Super Middle: Khoren Gevor (33-9) W PTS 8 Viktor Polyakov (13-4-3).

Lo Zito vs. Hardok

Lo Zito wins the German title with victory over champion Hardok. Southpaw Lo Zito had the edge in skill with Hardok the harder puncher. Lo Zito managed to build and hold a lead over the first four rounds but a punch from Hardok fractured his nose early in the fifth. That injury did not stop the fight but a gash was opened over Hardok's right eye which did and Lo Zito took the title on a technical decision. Russian Hardok was making the first defence of his title and hopefully will get a return match.

Gevor vs. Polyakov

Gevor returns to the ring and picks a tough one in Polyakov. Gevor was in control when he could stay in ring centre and avoid being trapped on the ropes. Polyakov managed to keep pressing and made the rounds and the fight close but Gevor showed good conditioning and emerged the winner. Scores 78-73, 78-74 and 77-75 all for Gevor. The 38-year-old former European champion and WBA and WBO title

challenger had a 1-5 spell that saw him hang up his gloves and this is his first fight since losing to Max Vlasov in November 2012. Polyakov scored good wins over Dariusz Sek and Giovanni De Carolis last year but in his last two fights had been beaten by Stefan Haertel and Nieky Holzken.

Kempton Park, South Africa: Feather: Lerato Dlamini (11-1) W PTS 12 Sydney Maluleka (17-9). Big but disputed win for Dlamini as he takes split decision over Maluleka for the vacant prestigious WBC International title. The fight took a while to come to life and Maluleka made the better start and two of the judges gave him all of the first four rounds. Dlamini got into his groove and took command over the middle rounds scoring with some hard combinations and by the end of the eighth round all three judges had them level at 76-76. An important moment in the ninth saw the referee deduct a point from Maluleka for holding and Dlamini had a good tenth he seemed to tire in the eleventh but as they scraped hard in the last Dlamini just seemed to come out on top. Scores 115-113 and 114-113 for Dlamini and 114-113 for Maluleka so that point deduction cost Maluleka a draw. Second good win for Dlamini following his points victory over former world champion Simpiwe Vetyeka in October. After losing his first fight Dlamini has reeled off 11 wins in a row. Former national champion Maluleka had lost to Azinga Fuzile for the South African title in May and he suffers the low level of activity that affects so many African fighters and this was only his second contest in almost two years.

Fight of the week: Jarrett Hurd vs. Erislandy Lara with honourable mention to Javier Maciel vs. Martin Rios

Fighter of the week: Jarrett Hurd now a two-division champion

Punch of the week: Damien Hooper's left uppercut that was the beginning of the end for Renold Quinlan and Tervel Pulev's left hook that flattened poor Laszlo Penzes

Upset of the week: Most went the way they were expected to do so Taiki Minamoto for winning the Japanese title as an outsider in the betting

One to watch: Canadian Mathieu Germain 14-0