

## **The Past Week in Action 12 July 2020**

### **Highlights:**

- Jose Zepeda keeps on track for third world title challenge with win over Kendo Castaneda**
- Luis Alberto Lopez wins split decision over Andy Vences**
- Carlos Takam comes in as a late substitute and outpoints Jerry Forrest**
- Boxing returns to the UK with Brad Foster retaining his British and Commonwealth titles with point victory over James beech**
- Super Bantamweight Carlos Castro moves to 25 wins as halts Cesar Juarez**

### **July 7**

**Las Vegas, NV, USA: Super Feather: Luis Alberto Lopez (21-2) W PTS Andy Vences (23-2-1). Welter: Jose Zepeda (32-2,1ND) W PTS 10 Kendo Castaneda (17-2). Light: Andres Cortes (13-0) W PTS 8 Alejandro Salinas (10-4).**

#### **Lopez vs. Vences**

Lopez just edges past Vences on a close split decision. An even first round saw Vences using his longer reach to stab Lopez with jabs. Lopez was trying to jump past the jab and connect with bursts of hooks. Vences had the better of the exchanges in the second. He was using his jab well and connected with a couple of strong right crosses. Lopez had his jab on target over the first half of the third but Vences outscored him over the last two minutes using jolting jabs and straight rights to edge into the lead. Vences solidified that lead by taking the fourth. Lopez just could not get past Vences jab and was being caught with rights at distance. Lopez upped his pace in the fifth and was getting through with hooks inside with Vences losing some of his accuracy. A clash of heads saw Lopez cut over his right

eye and Vences suffer a small cut on his forehead. The referee asked the doctor to examine Lopez's cut but the fight continued with Lopez getting the better of some wild exchanges. Lopez attacked fiercely in the sixth and a huge right uppercut had Vences staggering badly and in trouble. He was fighting through a fog. Lopez was clubbing him with rights and driving him around the ring with punches jarring Vences as he struggled to stay up and somehow he made it to the bell. It was Vences landing the big punches in the seventh until a clash of heads resulted in a cut over the left eye of Vences. The doctor decided the cut was not serious enough for the fight to be halted and Vences continued to outscore Lopez with long lefts and rights. The pace dropped in the eighth but Lopez just did the better work only for Vences to press hard in the ninth and take the round scoring with some good rights to the head. He also outscored Lopez in the tenth with Lopez's work rate dropping off. Scores 96-94 twice for Lopez and 96-94 for Vences. I saw Vences as the winner but it had been a hard close fight. An important win for Mexican Lopez who has won 9 of his last 10 fight with the loss coming against unbeaten Ruben Villa. He did well to win this one as he suffered a broken thumb. Now he will look to crash the world ratings. A bad thirteen months for Vences as he lost his unbeaten record against Albert Bell in June last year. His next fight will be crucial in deciding whether he has hit his ceiling.

### **Zepeda vs. Castaneda**

Zepeda comprehensively outpoints an aggressive but limited Castaneda. Zepeda outboxed Castaneda without every really going in to high gear. He constantly found gaps for his southpaw jabs and frustrated Castaneda's attempt to counter with some great defensive work. He was constantly changing angles and raking Castaneda with accurate shots from both hands. Castaneda tried switching to southpaw a few times but it made no real difference which guard he adopted. Zepeda seemed comfortable at just boxing on the back foot and

winning the rounds without really sitting down on his punches and going for an inside the distance finish. Castaneda just could not find a way into the fight he was not quick enough to pressurise Zepeda. Castaneda had some success over the seventh and eighth rounds as Zepeda seemed to coast his way through those rounds before taking charge again over the closing two rounds to ease his way to the decision. Scores 98-92 twice and 97-93 for Zepeda. The 31-year-old Californian is due some luck in a world title fight. When he fought Terry Flanagan for the vacant WBO light title in 2015 he had retire after two rounds with a dislocated shoulder and in February last year lost a majority verdict to Jose Carlos Ramirez for the WBC super light title. He is No 3 with the WBC so he has good chance of getting a third title shot next year. Texan Castaneda came in as a substitute when Ivan Baranchyk was injured. He had scored useful victories over 24-3 Eudy Bernardo and 20-2 Stan Martyniuk This is his second loss in a row having dropped a majority verdict against unbeaten Yomar Alamo in February. He was not expected to win here but he gave Zepeda ten useful rounds of work.

### **Cortes vs. Salinas**

This was the fight of the night as Cortes extended his 100% record. From the opening bell these two ignored the niceties and spent eight rounds trying to knock bits off each other. Pressure from Salinas forced Cortes to fight with his back against the ropes in the early action. Cortes was countering well and just stealing the points but was cut over his left eye in a clash of heads in the second round. Salinas had a big fourth as late in the round a hard right stunned Cortes and he went down on one knee. That gave Salinas an edge in the scoring but Cortes recovered quickly and as Salinas slowed Cortes battled back and then forged ahead with a strong finish to take a deserved decision. Scores 79-73, 77-74 and 76-75 for Cortes which illustrated how close and difficult to score many of the rounds were. Las Vegan Cortes, 23, is making good progress.

Salinas from Ohio has now lost 3 of his last 4 fights. All against unbeaten opposition.

## **July 9**

**Las Vegas, NV, USA: Heavy: Carlos Takam (39-5-1) W PTS 10 Jerry Forrest (26-4). Super Bantam: Carlos Castro (26-0) W RTD 4 Cesar Juarez (25-9).**

### **Takam vs. Forrest**

Takam comes in at short notice and outpoints Forrest in a dull contest. Takam fought a more controlled fight than normal. He was bouncing on his toes and outboxing a negative Forrest who seemed reluctant to commit himself and allowed Takam to take the first round. Forrest was more positive in the second coming forward behind his southpaw jab but neither fighter was throwing much or landing much. Takam is no speedster but he was quicker and getting his punches off first to take the third and fourth rounds. Takam was cut over his right eye in the fifth but again did enough to take the round with Forrest just not active enough. Takam took the sixth. He used his 20lbs extra weight to force Forrest back scoring with a series of rights and working Forrest over on the ropes. The seventh and eighth went to Forrest's as he connect with some goods lefts eating into Takam's lead. Takam's work rate dropped and he was clinching more. Takam was on his toes in the ninth bouncing around and spearing Forrest with single punches. Forrest was lumbering forward for all three minutes but was too slow with his footwork and his punches. Both landed some clubbing shots in the last with Takam just that bit more accurate. Scores 98-92, 97-93 and 96-94 all for Takam. The 39-year-old Cameroon-born Frenchman came in at just two weeks notice after Jarrell Miller yet again tested positive. He tired late but his higher punch output deservedly got him the decision. He had been scheduled to face Oscar Rivas next Tuesday but injury ruled Rivas out and although Takam's father had died

just a week ago he felt this was an opportunity he could not pass up. He has lost big fights against Alex Povetkin, Joseph Parker, Anthony Joshua and Dereck Chisora but winning here keeps his hopes of another big fight very much alive. Forrest was a disappointment. He had taken unbeaten Jermaine Franklin to a split decision loss. He was slow and crude at times with poor footwork and has scored his wins on the backwoods circuit.

### **Castro vs. Juarez**

Castro pounds a gutsy Juarez into a fourth round retirement. Good first round for Castro. With his much longer reach he was popping Juarez with jabs and catching him with rights when Juarez came forward. Juarez had a little success when he could take Castro to the ropes but that was a rare event. Castro was keeping Juarez on the end of his jab in the second and when Juarez tried to lunge inside he was staggered by a right. Juarez has a solid chin and he was soon coming forward again and drawing Castro into some exchanges but Castro was the one scoring with the better punches. Castro was using his jab to set Juarez up for overhand rights in the third and he again staggered Juarez with a couple of rights to the head. A focused body attack had Juarez backing up and he was taking some serious hurt at the bell. Castro handed out some savage punishment in the fourth. He was cutting Juarez in half with hooks to the body and staggering him with hooks and uppercuts to the head. Juarez would not fall but his corner wisely retired their man at the end of the round. Castro, 26, has climbed to No 3 with the WBC after victories over 32-1 Genisis Servania, 18-2 Mario Diaz and former WBC super bantam title challenger Jesus Ruiz. The IBF and the WBO also have him in the top 10 so 2021 could see him scrapping for a world title. He is a very upright stylist with a strong jab and good variety in his punches. Juarez has lost to Nonito Donaire and Isaac Dogboe in title fights but took a beating when being floored and stopped by unbeaten Angelo Leo in December.

**July 10**

**Pionki, Poland: Light: Damian Wrzesinski (20-1-2,1ND)  
W KO 4W Otto Gamez (19-3). Heavy: Marcin Siwy (21-0)  
W TKO 1 Kamil Bodzioch (6-1)**

**Wrzesinski vs. Gamez**

Local fighter Wrzesinski beats Venezuelan inside four rounds. Wrzesinski took the first round with some strong jabs although Gamez showed some clever upper body movement and quick hands. Gamez was livelier in the second. He was holding his hands low and springing forward with some useful hooks. Wrzesinski was finding the target with long rights in the third and with Gamez, who has spent most of his career fighting at super bantam, lacking the power to keep him out Wrzesinski continued to get through with heavy rights with Gamez looking shaky at the bell. Wrzesinski rocked Gamez with rights at the start of the fourth and Gamez looked ready to go but the right that put him down only seemed to skim past the Venezuelan's head. Gamez showed no inclination to get up and just sat watching the referee count him out. Wrzesinski, 33, retains the Polish International title with his sixth inside the distance win. His only loss is a majority verdict against Jean Pierre Bauwens in 2017 and he is 9-0-1, 1ND since then but against carefully selected opposition. Gamez record is misleading. Like so many Venezuelan fighters his record is heavily padded with 19 of his victims having only 12 wins between them and he collapsed here once Wrzesinski applied pressure.

**Siwy vs. Bodzioch**

Siwy blows away novice Bodzioch. Siwy went after the quick finish and Bodzioch was forced to stand and trade. A left followed by a right to the head put Bodzioch down heavily. He made it to his feet but Siwy drove him to the ropes and staggered him with another big right the referee stepped in. Despite his impressive statistics Siwy only creeps into the EBU

ratings at No 17 due to his low quality opposition. Bodzioch was overmatched here but is only 24 so he will have time to recover from this poor performance.

**London, England: Super Bantam: Brad Foster (13-0-2) W PTS 12 James Beech (12-1). Super Welter: Hamzah Sheeraz (11-0) W RTD 6 Paul Kean (12-2). Light: Mark Chamberlain (6-0) W TKO 1 Stu Greener (3-5).**

### **Foster vs. Beech**

Foster successfully defends his British and Commonwealth titles with a hard-fought unanimous verdict over fellow Midlander Beech. The fight started at a hectic pace and that set the pattern for the whole twelve rounds. Foster's combination punches gave him the first two rounds but Beech banged back to take the third. Beech was cut over the left eye in the fourth and Foster was impressive with his hooking to the body with both hands. The fifth was a little scrappier and close but both fighters scored well in the sixth with Foster again attacking hard to the body but with Beech countering well. A right from Foster brought blood from Beech's nose in the seventh. The pace of the fight was still high with both landing quality punches in a fight that was there for either fighter to take. The entertainment level was high and it was a pity there were no spectators to enjoy the spectacle. Foster outlanded Beech in the eighth but was warned for being careless with his head and was cut over his left eye. Again the body work from Foster was impressive but Beech kept firing back hard. Both landed with good punches in the tenth with Foster slightly ahead but with the fight still liable to go either way. Foster's body punching paid dividends over the final two rounds as he hammered at Beech with combinations of hooks and uppercuts to emerge a clear winner. Scores 116-113 twice and 117-111 for Foster. The 22-year-old "Blade" was making the fourth defence of the British title making him the owner of the Lonsdale Belt the highest quality trophy in boxing and this was the third defence

of his Commonwealth belt. He is making great progress. Despite losing Beech enhanced his profile with his performance here. This is the fifth fight in which he has suffered a cut so that may be a problem for him.

### **Sheeraz vs. Kean**

Sheeraz continues his excellent progress with battering of Kean. Great start for Sheeraz as with just ten seconds gone in the opening round he landed a short right to the head that dumped Kean on the floor. Kean beat the count and survived by boxing and moving. The 6'1" Sheeraz dominated the second with some stiff jabs and landed a rib-bending left to the body that hurt Kean. Sheeraz kept up the pressure over the third and fourth with Kean punching back when he could but spending most of the time pinned to the ropes as Sheeraz connected with long rights. Kean did a bit better in the fifth firing hooks to the body of the taller Sheeraz but he took a pounding on the ropes before the bell. Sheeraz continued to land heavily in the sixth and with Kean cut over his right eye and never in with a chance his corner stopped the fight before the start of the seventh. The 21-year-old Sheeraz dedicated his victory to his aunt who died from COVID-19 leaving five children including quadruplets motherless. He retains the WBO European title with his seventh inside the distance win and he looks an outstanding prospect. Scottish Area champion Kean had won his last four fights but was never in with a chance after that first right hand.

### **Chamberlain vs. Greener**

Southpaw hope Chamberlain gets another first round victory. Chamberlain sent Greener into the ropes with a left hook then landed a couple of body punches before two brutal lefts sent Greener down and the fight was stopped. All over in 55 seconds. Fourth first round finish for the 21-year-old former English Elite Level champion. Greener was coming off a win over unbeaten Tyler Davies but was wiped out in this one.

**Rosarito, Mexico: Welter: Ronald Cruz (21-5) W TKO 4  
Iisandro de los Santos (25-20-1). Feather: Malikai  
Johnson (7-0-1) W TKO 1 Rigo Cruz (2-4).**

**Cruz vs. de los Santos**

Cruz batters poor de los Santos to defeat in four rounds. In a farcical one-sided bout Cruz handed out a beating to Mexican de los Santos all the way. Cruz lost a point in the third for low punches but other than that slip he just hammered away at human punch bag de los Santos until the referee called him off in the fourth round. A very chubby looking Puerto Rican-born Cruz was having his first fight since suffering three tough losses in a row in 2014 against Kermit Cintron, Errol Spence and Dmitry Mikhaylenko. de los Santos has a 100 % record. All of his 20 losses have come by KO/TKO

**Johnson vs. Cruz**

A bad night for boxers carrying the name Cruz. "Machine Gun" Johnson ended this one quickly. He was digging in some vicious body punches until Cruz dropped to his knees. Cruz just beat the count but the referee would not let him continue so all over in the first round. The 22-year-old Newark-born Johnson is now based in Sacramento. He started out in kick boxing. The draw on his record was a technical draw and he gets his third first round victory. All four of Cruz's losses have come inside three rounds.

**July 11**

**Toowoomba, Australia: Super Light: Steve Spark (10-1)  
W TKO 4 Michael Whitehead (7-4-1).**

In front of his home town fans Sparks retains the IBF Australasian title with stoppage of Whitehead. Sparks dropped Whitehead in the first and fourth rounds before the fight was stopped as Whitehead dropped to the floor under a barrage of punches. Now ten wins by KO/TKO including a run of eight on the bounce for the 23-year-old Australian No 1. Whitehead

going in the opposite direction with four losses in his last five fights.

**Dusseldorf, Germany: Super Welter: Ahmed El Mousaoui (33-3-1) W TKO 2 Sergej Wotschel (14-5-1). Light Heavy: James Kraft (18-0-1) W PTS 6 Karel Horejsek (17-13-3).**

#### **El Mousaoui vs. Wotschel**

Frenchman El Mousaoui crushes Wotschel in two rounds. El Mousaoui handed out serious punishment to a game Wotschel in the first. Wotschel tried to punch with El Mousaoui in the second but wilted under some left hooks to the body and was shaken with overhand rights before the referee jumped in and halted the fight. El Mousaoui, 30, lost important fights against Jeff Horn and Ceferino Rodriguez but has re-established himself with a run of nine wins against an acceptable level of opponents. German-based Russian Wotschel had won 8 of his last 9 fights and this is his first loss by KO/TKO.

#### **Kraft vs. Horejsek**

Home advantage played a big part here as Kraft takes a split decision over Czech Horejsek. The visitor was able to rumble past the reach of the 6'3" Kraft and did enough damaged inside to earn at least a draw but to no one's surprise the judges gave Kraft a split decision win. The 23-year-old "Baby Boy" from Munich turned pro at 17 so is still learning the sport and being carefully protected but in struggling to get by the 38-year-old Horejsek he looks to still need plenty of protection. On a good night Horejsek can be competitive as in the past he has drawn with Lennox Clarke and Adam Deines and taken Rocky Fielding the distance.

**Biloxi, MS, USA: Cruiser: DeShon Webster (12-3-3) DREW 10 Samuel Clarkson (22-6-1). Middle: Vladimir Hernandez (11-4) W PTS 10 Aaron Coley (16-3-1). Super**

**Feather: Jeremy Hill (12-0) W PTS 8 Xavier Wilson (11-2-1). Super Middle: Lorenzo Simpson (8-0) W KO Alex Duarte (16-9-1).**

### **Webster vs. Clarkson**

In the first boxing show in the USA in front of a live audience since early March Webster and Clarkson fight to a draw in an entertaining contest. Clarkson was forcing the fight early but Webster was boxing well. He was landing more with Clarkson throwing fewer but heavier shots. Clarkson rocked Webster with a right in the fifth but Webster steadied himself and looked to have a small lead after eight. Clarkson came on strong with a series of hooks to take the ninth and chased Webster down in the tenth to close the gap. Scores 95-95 twice making it a majority draw with a score of 96-94 on the third card but it was not announced who had the 96-94 score. Both were in need of a victory with Webster losing over twelve rounds against Tervel Pulev in December and Clarkson to Israel Duffus in March.

### **Hernandez vs. Coley**

Minor upset as Hernandez rebounds from consecutive losses to take a split decision over fellow-southpaw Coley. This was close to the final bell with Hernandez just outworking the taller Coley. The judge's cards showed two scores of 96-94 for Hernandez and 96-94 for Coley. Denver-based Mexican Hernandez has a couple of useful victories on his record but had been stopped by Israil Madrimov and outpointed by French star Souleymane Cissokho in his last two fights. Californian Coley had won 7 of his last 8 outings.

### **Hill vs. Wilson**

Hill gets unanimous decision over Texas-based Wilson. Scores 78-73, 77-74 and 77-76 for Hill. Good win for the lanky Hill but the scores are deceptive as Hill scored two knockdowns in a fight that saw both fighters rocked on numerous occasions in what was otherwise very closely contested. Hill was moving up to eight rounds for the first time.

## **Simpson vs. Duarte**

No round given but "Truck" Simpson produces a savage left hook to the body that almost cut poor Duarte in half. Fifth win by KO/TKO for the 20-year-old southpaw from West Baltimore. He is one to watch having won a gold medal at the US Silver Gloves Tournament for six year in a row as he grew from 95lbs to 165lbs. He also took gold at the National Police Athletic and the US Under-17 and Under-19 Championships. In the background at just four years of age he had the trauma of watching his father bleed to death from a gunshot wound on the streets of West Baltimore. Brazilian Duarte suffers his tenth loss by KO/TKO.

**Fight of the week** (Significance): Carlos Takam's win should see him get at least one more big payday

**Fight of the week** (Entertainment) Brad Foster vs. James Beech was twelve rounds of quality and exciting action with honourable mention to Andres Cortes vs. Alejandro Salinas in an eight round war

**Fighter of the week:** Jose Zepeda for brushing aside useful Kendo Castaneda to keep himself in the title picture

**Punch of the week:** The left to the body from Lorenzo Simpson which had Alex Duarte writhing on the canvas in agony

**Upset of the week:** No biggie but Andy Vences was a slight favourite over Luis Alberto Lopez

**Prospect watch:** British super welter Hamzah Sheeraz 11-0 who shoed skill and power in halting Paul Kean.

## **Observations:**

Activity picking as between Tuesday and Saturday there were shows in America, Poland, United Kingdom, Australia, Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, Thailand and South Korea.

Inventiveness to the fore as the show in Germany was staged in a car park with the spectators watching the action from their cars and on big screens.

Some different approaches with referees in London wearing masks and those in Nevada not doing so.

No Commission personnel present at the show in Rosarito so again Box Rec will show the fights as No Contest or not record them at all

**Next week:**

**Tuesday 14** Las Vegas Top Rank: Super Feather: Jamel Herring defending the WBO title against Jonathan Oquendo

**Thursday 16** Las Vegas Top Rank Feather: Miguel Marriaga vs. Mark John Yap. Light Felix Verdejo vs. Will Madera

**Saturday 18** Magdeburg, Germany: Heavy; Agit Kabayel vs. Evgenios Lazaridis. Heavy: Peter Kadiru vs. Ruben Wolf.

Spectators will be allowed in for this fight with the approval of the local Health Board and with some social distancing.

Almaty, Kazakhstan, MTK Global: Super Middle: Dauren Yeleussinov vs. Arman Rysbek plus a number of other small shows.