

The Past Week in Action 26 July 2020

Highlights:

- Oscar Valdez stops Jayson Velez in ten as he campaigns for a shot at the Super Feather title**
- Vergil Ortiz breaks down and stops Sammy Vargas in seven rounds**
- Joe Joyce crushes Michael Wallisch in three rounds**
- Isaac Dogboe returns and stops Chris Avalos as he moves up to featherweight**
- Edgar Berlanga makes it 14 first round wins at the start of his career as he flattens Eric Moon and Elvis Rodriguez gets his second inside the distance win in less than three weeks**

21 July

Las Vegas, NV, USA: Super Feather: Oscar Valdez (28-0) W TKO 10 Jayson Velez (29-7-1). Light Heavy: Edgar Berlanga (14-0) W KO 1 Eric Moon (11-3). Feather: Isaac Dogboe (21-2) W TKO 8 Chris Avalos (27-8). Welter: Elvis Rodriguez W KO 2 Dennis Okoth (4-4-1).

Valdez vs. Velez

Valdez struggled early to find his range and timing but then ended the bout emphatically halting Velez in the last round. Velez was taking the fight to Valdez in the first reddening Valdez face with jabs and throwing rights. Valdez connected with some hard body shots and did enough to take a close opener. Velez was busier in the second throwing lots of punches with Valdez looking to counter but not throwing much. Velez used his longer reach to score at distance in the third and fourth. He was busier with Valdez on the back foot but landing crisp counters and two left hooks rocked Velez in the fourth. Velez was again forcing the fight in the fifth until just before the bell a wide left hook counter dumped him on his rear. He was up at eight and the bell went before Valdez was able to throw another punch. Velez marched forward in the sixth but

there was very little power in his punches and Valdez was now catching him more often with counters and twice rocked Velez with lefts to the head. Velez fought back and pressured and outworked Valdez throughout the seventh and eighth. He was still being caught by counters but walked through them. Velez had been warned earlier for a low punch and when he landed another at the start of the ninth the referee deducted a point from him. Velez tried to claw back some ground but late in the round he was staggered badly by a left hook and Valdez connected with a series of head punches. Velez stormed forward throwing punches in the last but was raked with counters until an overhand right followed by a left hook put him on the canvas. He made it to his feet at eight but when a right to the head sent him tumbling into the ropes and down the fight was stopped. Second fight at super featherweight for 29-year-old Valdez after relinquishing his WBO super bantamweight title. He is now No 1 with the WBO and the WBC at super feather and will be aiming to become a two-division champion in 2011. Velez made Valdez work hard all the way but tired from the pace he had set himself and suffers his first loss by KO/TKO.

Berlanga vs. Moon

Berlanga against showcases his power as he destroys Moon inside the first round. Moon came out throwing punches but some stiff jabs from Berlanga put him on the back foot. Berlanga hunted Moon around the ring before trapping him on the ropes connecting with two body shots followed by two clubbing rights to the head. Moon dropped to his knees and as he tried to rise he tumbled to the canvas on his side and the referee immediately waived the fight off. Done and dusted in just 62 seconds. Fast? No only the sixth fastest finish for Berlanga who has won all of his 14 fights inside a round. He is ready for tougher tests but at 23 there is no need to rush. Moon was 4-1 in his previous 5 contests but Berlanga just punched too hard.

Dogboe vs. Avalos

Dogboe gets his first win since suffering back-to-back losses to Emanuel Navarette as he finally subdues a tough Avalos in the last round. Despite not having fought for fourteen months Dogboe looked sharp from the start. He was slotting jabs through the guard of Avalos and digging in with some hurtful left hooks with Avalos constantly on the retreat. Avalos did better in the second round. He was standing and trading and scoring inside with hooks from both hands. Dogboe had success with overhand rights and left hooks but looked to have been rattled by a right before the bell. After some early exchanges in the third Dogboe took over with strong jabs and left hooks to the body in a fast-paced contest. Dogboe dominated the fourth with a sustained body attack. When he shifted to the head he twice stung Avalos with overhand rights. Avalos looked to be wilting under the jabs and body shots from Dogboe in the fifth but a low punch from Dogboe saw the referee deducted a point from the Ghanaian. Dogboe continued to hunt Avalos down in the sixth with Avalos tiring and getting caught with jabs and quick rights. Avalos was livelier in the seventh. He was throwing hooks from both hands and then smothering Dogboe's work on the inside. Dogboe launched a savage attack in the last round rocking Avalos with lefts and rights to the head. There was no escape for Avalos and after hurting Avalos with a left hook to the head a thunderous head-snapping right to the head was enough for the referee to step in and save Avalos. The 25-year-old "Royal Storm" is small for a featherweight at 5'4" but he has the backing from Top Rank and good credentials so can be guided to a title shot in 2021 but it remains to be seen if he can make it at featherweight. Former IBF and WBA title challenger Avalos was having only his second contest in three years. He has been in too many hard fights and is unlikely to be able to work his way to a third title chance.

Rodriguez vs. Okoth

Rodriguez racks up his second inside the distance win in the last three weeks. Neither fighter committed themselves to little more than tentative jabs until late in the opening round when Rodriguez landed with a strong southpaw right hook to the body. Rodriguez tracked Okoth around the ring in the second before connecting with a powerful straight left that dropped Okoth on his back. The referee did not bother with a count and it was some time before Okoth was able to get up. The tall, 24-year-old, Dominican southpaw has won inside the distance eight times with the draw being a technical one. He looks special. Second loss by KO/TKO for Okoth who represented Kenya at both the World Championships and the Commonwealth Games.

22 July

Tokyo, Japan: Super Fly: Kenta Nakagawa (19-3-1) W TEC DEC 9 Yuta Matsuo (15-5-2)

Southpaw Nakagawa makes a successful first defence of the national title in his second reign as champion. The secret for Nakagawa was to box at distance and keep the aggressive Matsuo out. The contrasting styles made for an interesting fight with Nakagawa scoring with straight lefts and Matsuo with hooks on the inside. After five rounds two judges had it close at 48-47 for Nakagawa with the third seeing Nakagawa in front 49-46. Matsuo tried to force the pace over the second half of the fight but the quicker hands and greater accuracy of Nakagawa saw him increase his lead. He looked to be on his way to a points victory when a clash of heads in the ninth saw both fighters cut-Nakagawa over his left eye and Matsuo on his forehead. With both fighters shedding blood the fight was stopped and went to the judges cards with Nakagawa winning on scores of 88-84 twice and 88-83. Nakagawa, 34, turned pro in 2004 but was inactive between 2005 and 2011. He returned to action to eventually win the national title in 2016 only to

lose it in 2017 before regaining it again in 2019. Matsuo, 30, was having his second shot at this title.

23 July

Minsk, Belarus: Light: Isa Chaniev (14-3) W PTS 10 Vladyslav Melnyk (11-2). Super Middle: Sergei Gorokhov (10-2-2) W PTS 10 Levan Shonia (15-19). Super light: Gaibatulla Gadzhialiev (7-2-1) W TKO 8 Artem Ayvazidi (12-19-1).

Chaniev vs. Melnyk

Chaniev builds an early lead then holds off a strong finish from Melnyk. Chaniev took control circling Melnyk scoring with jabs and overhand rights and then darting in with a cluster of punches. Melnyk was just not quick enough in countering and his timing was off. Chaniev swept the first four rounds before Melnyk began to score well with hooks in the fifth and did enough to edge the sixth. Chaniev rebounded and used his strength to collect the seventh and eighth. Melnyk battled back and outscored Chaniev over the last two rounds but it was not enough to swing the fight his way. Scores 99-92, 98-93 and 98-94 for Chaniev. A much needed win for the 27-year-old Russian after a loss to Richard Commey for the vacant IBF title and to Pavel Malikov. Ukrainian Melnyk, 21, showed promise and was coming off an impressive win over unbeaten German Edgar Walth.

Gorokhov vs. Shonia

Gorokhov held off an aggressive Shonia in the first round and then used his better skills to pick up the points. A strong but crude Shonia remained competitive and Gorokhov struggled to keep him out although he rocked Shonia a couple of times in the sixth. Shonia just kept motoring forward scoring with clubbing shots inside but Gorokhov was able to pound Shonia with jabs and counters as he boxed his way to victory. Scores 97-93 twice and 96-94 for Gorokhov. Russian Gorokhov fought

two draws with modest opposition in 2020. Eight losses in a row for Shonia who has never been beaten inside the distance.

Gadzhialiev vs. Ayvazidi

Gadzhialiev gets a late stoppage victory over Ayvazidi.

Gadzhialiev worked his way inside using good upper body movement and battered at Ayvazidi's body over the early rounds. Ayvazidi showed some nice skills but he lacked the power to get Gadzhialiev's respect. Gadzhialiev kept changing angles and connecting with some strong hooks and uppercuts mixing his punches cleverly to head and body. Gadzhialiev strayed low in the fourth and lost a point but a left to the ribs put Ayvazidi down in the fifth and after the eight count a right to the body floored him for the second time but he fought back to make it to the bell. Ayvazidi put in a brave effort in the sixth taking the fight to Gadzhialiev but was being caught with rights to the head and left hooks to the body. In the seventh a tiring Ayvazidi was badly hurt by a punch that landed on his waistline and stepped back in pain Gadzhialiev then landed a right that landed on the left thigh of Ayvazidi. He went down and the referee stopped the fight. Although Russian-born the 29-year-old Gadzhialiev fought for Azerbaijan as an Elite class amateur competing at the 2012 Olympics, getting a bronze medal at the World Championships and putting together an impressive 11-3 record in the WSB but he has disappointed as a pro. Sixth loss in a row for Ukrainian Ayvazidi

24 July

Indio, California: Welter Vergil Ortiz (16-0) W TKO 7 Sammy Vargas (31-6-2). Middle: Shane Mosley Jr (16-3) W PTS 8 Jeremy Ramos (11-9). Super Bantam: Hector Valdez (13-0) W PTS 8 Josue Morales (11-12-4)

Ortiz vs. Vargas

Ortiz breaks down and batters a courageous Vargas to defeat in seven rounds. Impressive start from Ortiz. His jab had

reddened the face of Vargas in the first thirty seconds and he continued to pierce the guard of Vargas before connecting with some flashy hurtful combinations later in the round. A good second round from Vargas as he bobbed and weaved under Ortiz's jab and worked inside with hooks and uppercuts. Ortiz just could not find the target with his jab and was on the back foot throughout the round. Ortiz was more accurate with his jab in the third and connected with some vicious hooks. Over the last minute of the round Vargas was again boring in and denying Ortiz punching room. The pace slowed over the first two minutes of the fourth but then Ortiz exploded into action. He rocked Vargas with a left hook and then bombarded him with punches driving Vargas across the ring to the ropes and pinned him there under pressure to the bell. Ortiz took the fifth round off. He was content to smothering Vargas work inside but rarely threw a right, worked only with his jab and allowed Vargas to get in close. Ortiz upped his pace in the sixth. He was using a stiff jab to keep Vargas on the back foot and landing overhand rights. Ortiz launched a furious attack in the seventh. He connected with a series of head punches until Vargas lunged forward and down bringing Ortiz down with him with both ending on the canvas. When they were up Ortiz continued to batter Vargas around the ring until the referee jumped in to save Vargas. Ortiz retains the WBA Gold belt with his sixteenth inside the distance victory. The 22-year-old from Dallas looked a little flat at times but he finished with a real power showing. The WBA Gold title is a dead end. He could be rated No 1 and be the mandatory challenger to Manny Pacquiao but as he sits outside the ratings he can't be the mandatory challenger unless he relinquishes the Gold belt. He is developing into a real threat but is not yet ready for IBF/WBC champion Errol Spence or WBC champion Terence Crawford but will be by late 2021. Canadian-based Colombian Vargas posed some problems for Ortiz early but did not have the punch to match Ortiz and suffers his third inside the distance defeat with

Errol Spence and Danny Garcia the other fighters to have stopped him.

Mosley vs. Ramos

Mosley outboxes Ramos to take a comfortable unanimous decision. The 6'1" tall Mosley made good use of his height and longer reach to outwork Ramos and he swept the first three rounds although Ramos worked hard to get inside and keep the fight close. Mosley went off the boil in the middle rounds but was still doing most of the scoring. He picked up the pace again in the sixth and closed strongly against a tiring Ramos to take the decision. Scores 80-72 twice and 79-73 for Mosley. He has won 6 of his last 7 fights with the loss coming against Brandon Adams in the final of the 2018 Contender series but at 29 he is going no further. Puerto Rican Ramos falls to 2-8 in his last 10 outings.

Valdez vs. Morales

Valdez easily outpoints Morales to make it a double for Dallas. The Texan was able to keep the light punching Morales on the defensive in every round. He was quicker than southpaw Morales forcing the fight all of the way. Morales showed a nice jab and some quick movement but was in survival mode for much of the fight. Valdez tried hard to finish it inside the distance but never really had Morales in any serious trouble and had to settle for winning by decision. Scores 80-72 twice and 79-73 for Valdez but it was difficult to see which round Morales did enough for one judge to award him it. Valdez was coming off a third round kayo of former IBF light fly title challenger Luis Alberto Rios. Morales keeps his record clear of any inside the distance losses.

Castro Urdiales, Spain: Welter: Jon Miguez (12-0) W PTS 10 Zoltan Szabo (27-24). Miguez floors late substitute Szabo twice on the way to a unanimous points victory in the first post-virus show in Spain. Szabo made an aggressive start against the clever boxing of Miguez and did enough to make

the fight even after four rounds. Miguez changed that by flooring Szabo heavily with a left to the head in the fifth. From there Miguez was the boss and he sealed the win by dropping Szabo with a body punch in the eighth. Szabo had fought hard but he was exhausted but survived as Miguez tried to end the fight early. Good performance for the 23-year-old "Goodboy" in a useful learning fight. Szabo was a substitute for a substitute. He came in at just one week's notice and gave Miguez some needed work.

25 July

London, England: Heavy: Joe Joyce (11-0 W TKO 3 Michael Wallisch (20-4).Super Bantam: Chris Bourke (8-0) W PTS 10 Ramez Mahmood (11-1).Middle: Denzel Bentley (13-0) W RTD 6 Mick Hall (15-3).

Joyce vs. Wallisch

Joyce batters Wallisch to defeat inside three rounds. Wallisch tried to stand and trade with Joyce in the opener but was quickly forced onto the back foot as Joyce rammed home jabs. Wallisch landed three consecutive rights to the head but Joyce just shrugged them off and clubbed Wallisch with punches to head and body. Joyce continued to rumble forward in the second. Wallisch was able to find the target with head punches but they just bounced off Joyce who kept bludgeoning Wallisch with shots to head and body until Wallisch dropped to one knee and then sat on the bottom rope. He made it to his feet and Joyce was unable to land any more heavy punches before the bell. A series of thumps from Joyce saw Wallisch drop to a knee at the start of the third. Wallisch got up at eight but some more heavy shots from Joyce made Wallisch fall to his knees and the referee stopped the fight. When Wallisch's best punches just bounced off Joyce the fight was virtually over. Joyce is just so powerful that he steamrollers opponents and so far no one has been able to stand up to Joyce's power. Daniel

Dubois will have been cheered to see how easily the slow Wallisch was able to land rights to the head of Joyce but it remains to be seen whether he can move the mountain. All four of Wallisch's losses have come inside the distance and he is a very ordinary fighter with a cleverly padded record.

Bourke vs. Mahmood

This was a fast-paced close fight between two quick good technical boxers. Bourke staggered Mahmood with a left in the second and attacked hard but Mahmood recovered quickly and forced the fight in the fourth. It continued to be a close fight with neither fighter able to take charge and it was an interesting rather than exciting contest. In the end it was the quality of the counter lefts and body punching from southpaw Bourke which gave him an edge over the jab and higher work rate of Mahmood. Bourke looked to have built a winning lead and despite a late effort from Mahmood he looked a good winner. Referee's score 96-94 for Bourke. An international level amateur Bourke, 25, collects the vacant BBB of C Southern Area belt. Mahmood, 26, was moving down after winning the BBB of C Southern Area feather title last year and will bounce back.

Bentley vs. Hall

Bentley gets the win as Hall is pulled out by his corner due to a swelling around his right eye. Bentley uses a hands-down loose limbed style shooting punches from various angles but also scoring with a fast jab. Hall continually changed direction to throw Bentley off and did some good work with his own jab. Bentley switched to southpaw in the third. Hall found it hard to adjust to that and Bentley was able to connect with a series of left hooks. Both fighters switched guards a couple of times in the fourth. Hall had success with some rights but the eye-catching word was coming in the flashy hooking from Bentley. Hall marched forward in the fifth. Bentley was catching him with quick hooks but Hall kept pressing. He was getting through but there was a swelling around his left eye and

Bentley was catching him with punches from a variety of angles. Hall took heavy punishment in the sixth and now there was a serious swelling under his right eye. He battled hard to the bell and then his corner wisely pulled him out of the fight. The 25-year-old Bentley had only 17 amateur fights but already shows class and has won eleven contests by KO/TKO. Hall's other two losses came against Jack Arnfield and this is only his second fight in three years and he put in a very competitive showing here.

Kobe, Japan: Light Fly: Kenichi Horikawa (41-16-1) W TKO 10 Daiki Tomita (14-2). Horikawa shows that age is just a number as he stops Tomita to win the vacant OPBF title at the age of forty. Horikawa outboxed Tomita who lacked the experience to turn the fight his way. Horikawa worked well with his jab and pierced Tomita's guard with straight rights and then used good footwork to avoid Tomita's lunging attacks. After eight rounds Horikawa was up on two cards 78-74 and 80-72 on the third. If Tomita was hoping Horikawa would fade he was disappointed. In the tenth Horikawa forced Tomita to the ropes and bombarded him with punches with the referee stopping the fight as Tomita dropped to the canvas. Horikawa the oldest pro in Japanese rings had previously lost in a fight for the OPBF minimum title and was 3-6 in Japanese title fights. Tomita, 22, like Horikawa, had also failed in a shot at the OPBF minimum belt but had won the WBO Asia Pacific title in September.

Michoacan de Ocampo, Mexico: Welter: Alejandro Davila (21-1-2) W PTS 10 Lupe Rosales (36-26). Super Welter: Carlos Molina (33-11-2) W PTS 10 Abraham Juarez (16-6).

Davila vs. Rosales

Davila halts experienced veteran Rosales in nine rounds to win the vacant WBC Fecombox title. Davila rebuilding after having a 21-bout unbeaten record ruined by a tenth round stoppage

loss against Mikael Zewski in Canada in November. Rosales, 38, was considered a prospect when he went 25-1 at the start of his career but that was a long time ago.

Molina vs. Juarez

It is also quite a time since 37-year-old Molina was IBF super welterweight champion but he is sticking to East-West home is best. After a string of losses on his travels he gets his fourth win in Mexico over ordinary level opponents with a stoppage of inexperienced Juarez. No happy homecoming for Juarez who has lost fights in Canada, Italy, France and Germany

Augustow, Poland: Light Heavy: Pawel Stepien (14-0-1) W PTS 10 Marek Matyja (17-2-2). In a return contest for the vacant national title Stepien outboxes Matyja and looks a clear winner but has to settle for a split decision. Stepien made a cautious start jabbing to keep Matyja out and scoring with straight rights. Matyja attacked strongly in the third getting inside and occasionally trapping Stepien on the ropes. The accuracy of Stepien's jabs and counters began to have an effect and Matyja was struggling to close the distance. He put in a big effort in the last but was always second best and Stepien stayed cool and worked his way to victory. Scores 97-93 twice for Stepien with the third judge to everyone's amazement turning in a 98-93 card for Matyja. Stepien remains unbeaten but for a guy with five first round victories he was expected to show a bit more aggression. Matyja had drawn in two previous attempts at the national title

Bang Phun, Thailand: Bantam: Nawaphon (49-1-1) W KO 4 Suradech Ruhasirj (6-2)

9A

WBC No 2 Nawaphon halts novice Ruhasirj in four rounds. Nawaphon chose to just walk through Ruhasirj but the fellow-Thai showed a fast accurate jab and constantly connected with rights to Nawaphon's head. However Nawaphon marched

forward landing vicious punches to head and body. In the fourth Nawaphon sent Ruhasirj reeling into the ropes. As Ruhasirj ducked a left he turned his head into a booming right that sent him face down on the canvas and the fight was over. Nawaphon lost on a third round stoppage against Juan Hernandez in a challenge for the WBC flyweight title in 2017. He has scored 13 wins since then but all against unthreatening opposition and I can't see him giving too much trouble to the winner of Nordine Oubaali vs. Nonito Donaire WBC title fight. Third loss in a row for Ruhasirj

26 July

Kariya, Japan: Light Fly: Masamichi Yabuki (11-3) W KO 1 Tsuyoshi Sato (10-2-1). Yabuki wins the vacant Japanese title with first round kayo of Sato. Yabuki floored Sato early with a left hook. Sato beat the count but a right put him down again and he was counted out. All eleven of Yabuki's wins have come by way of KO/TKO. He now wants to challenge the new OPBF champion Kenichi Horikawa who won the ORBF title on Saturday. Sato had won his last nine fights but suffered his second inside the distance loss here.

Fight of the week (Significance): The win by Joe Joyce keeps him on track for a huge fight with Daniel Dubois with honourable mentions to the wins for Oscar Valdez and Vergil Ortiz which will also lead to some big fights

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Nothing stood out

Fighter of the week: Virgil Ortiz for the beating he handed out to a competitive Sammy Vargas

Punch of the week: The right from Nawaphon that flattened poor Ruhasirj was a thunderbolt.

Upset of the week: None. All of the favourites won

Prospect watch: None I haven't already spotted

Observations;

Good to see Golden Boy back on the scene.

The Henry Tanajara vs. Mercito Gesta fell through but this time it was not due to COVI-19 but Gesta suffering from food poisoning.

Fourteen first round wins in a row at the start of his career for Edgar Berlanga but he needs another five to equal the record held by Ty Brunson.

Good to see boxing returning to Spain.