

The Past Week in Action 24 August 2020

Highlights:

- Alex Povetkin climbs off the floor twice in the fourth round to floor and stop Dillian Whyte in the fifth**
- Shawn Porter outclasses Sebastian Formella in an IBF eliminator**
- Joe Smith crushes a worn looking Eleider Alvarez**
- Former WBA secondary title holder Rob Brant gets a victory in his first post-COVID-19 bout**
- Sergio Martinez returns to the ring with a win over Jose Fandino but Yoan Pablo Hernandez's return is sunk by a surprisingly aggressive Kevin Johnson**
- IBF No 1 cruiser Ruslan Fayer is stopped by fellow-Russian Alexei Papin**
- Wins for Vladimir Shishkin, Peter Kadiru, Magomed Kurbanov, Sebastian Fundora and Julian Rodriguez**

MAJOR SHOWS

August 22

Brentwood, England: Heavy: Alex Povetkin (35-2-1) W TKO 5 Dillian Whyte (27-2). Super Middle: Jack Cullen (18-2-1) DREW 10 Zak Chelli (7-1-1). Welter: Chris Kongo (12-0) W TKO 9 Luther Clay (13-2). Heavy: Alen Babic (4-0) W TKO 2 Shawndell Winters (13-4).

Povetkin vs. Whyte

Povetkin climbs off the floor twice in the fourth round to knock Whyte down with a perfect left hook early in the fifth which upsets a few plans and puts Povetkin back into the picture at the top of the heavyweight tree.

Round 1

After a cautious start by both boxers Povetkin was the livelier scoring with some body punches. Whyte stopped Povetkin in

his tracks with a jab but other than that came up short with his punches.

Score: 10-9 Povetkin

Round 2

A close round. Whyte was reaching the target with his jabs but rocked Povetkin with a right cross landed well to the body. Povetkin also went to the body a couple of times but Whyte did the better work in the round.

Score: 10-9 Whyte

Tied 19-19

Round 3

With his longer reach Whyte was find gaps for his jab and landed nicely to the body. He knocked Povetkin off balance a couple of times but Povetkin scored with some hooks.

Score: 10-9 Whyte

Whyte 29-28

Round 4

Whyte scored with two rights and then landed a left hook that saw Povetkin drop to one knee. He was up immediately and after the count Whyte took his time probing with his jab and looking for another opening. That gave Povetkin time to recover and he then did well with body punches and had Whyte on the back foot. With just fifteen seconds remaining in the round as Povetkin moved in Whyte landed a left hook to the temple that put Povetkin down again. Povetkin made it to his feet and at the end of the eight count the bell went before Whyte could land another punch.

Score: 10-7 Whyte

Whyte 39-35

Round 5

They traded punches at the start of the eighth then Povetkin exploded a booming left hook to Whyte's chin. Whyte fell back flat on the canvas with part of his body under the bottom rope and referee immediately signalled the fight was over.

Huge win for the 40-year-old Russian as he collects the vacant WBC interim title. Although he had outboxed Hughie Fury in August his dreary draw with Mike Hunter in December made him look a safe bet as an opponent for Whyte. Whyte is

demanding a return and Povetkin has said he is agreeable. With both Tyson Fury and Anthony Joshua tied up with other business it would make a sensible fight for both Povetkin and Whyte. However this loss is a massive blow for Whyte as winning the WBC interim title would have kept his name right there and made it more difficult for Fury or Joshua to ignore him. A revenge win over Povetkin is the only fight that will get him back to a seat at the heavyweight table but this fight showed that with the heavyweights everything can change with just one punch as the late Tommy Morrison found out against outsider Michael Bentt.

Cullen vs. Chelli

The 6-3" Cullen and Chelli fight to a disputed split draw. Cullen was using his height and reach well over the first two rounds but Chelli was pressing hard. Cullen's jab had raised a nasty swelling around Chelli's left eye in the third. Cullen started the fourth well but late in the round Chelli began to find the range with his own jab and some heavy single shots to take the round and in addition Cullen was cut over his left eye. Chelli continued to get the better of the exchanges in the sixth rocking Cullen with a left hook. Cullen tried to take the fight to Chelli in the seventh and eighth but again the harder punches were coming from Chelli. Cullen was tiring but he started both the ninth and tenth with some good work with his jab but in both rounds Chelli was stronger and outlanding Cullen and looked to have done enough to offset his slower start. Scores 97-93 Chelli, 96-95 Cullen and 95-95. Chelli, 22, was coming off a close points defeat against unbeaten Kody Davies. Cullen had lost on an eighth round stoppage against Felix Cash for the Commonwealth title in November.

Kongo vs. Clay

Good contrast of styles as boxer Kongo and fighter Clay produced a good scrap until Kongo ends things with two lefts in the ninth. Kongo used his longer reach over the first two rounds to score on the outside. Clay was trying to come in

under the jab but was being caught by counters and Kongo was able to smother Clay's work inside with some holding. Clay had more success in the third and fourth as he was jabbing well himself and able to get past Kongo's jab. Near disaster in the fifth for Clay. He was pursuing the retreating Kongo and getting inside. As they traded punches Kongo landed a right to the head and Clay was in deep trouble. He staggered to the ropes and Kongo pelted him with punches Clay was swaying and a stoppage looked possible until Kongo punched himself out and it was Clay on top at the bell. Clay pressed through the sixth with Kongo jabbing and countering well but a right to the head had him hanging on in the seventh only for Kongo to fire back with a left and a right that shook Clay. Kongo boxed well in the eighth putting together some nice combinations and looked to be in front. Clay was shaken by a punch inside in the ninth and then he was sent reeling back by an uppercut. Kongo drove Clay around the ring bombarding him with punches but Clay survived. He then began to take the fight to Kongo again until two left hooks to the head put him down on his back and the towel was thrown in from Clay's corner. Kongo gets his seventh win by KO/TKO and collects Clay's WBO Global belt which will get him a world rating as Clay was rated No 11 by the WBO. Kongo had a successful time as an amateur under his real name Chris Mbwakongo. British-based South African Clay had scored useful wins over Dario Morello and Freddy Kiwitt.

Babic vs. Winters

Babic annihilates Winter. Babic floored Winters with a left hook in the first and continued to clobber him in the second. He landed a series of punches and as Winters slumped to the floor the referee stepped in to save him. The 29-year-old Croat has taken less than seven rounds for his four wins. A former Croatian amateur champion he competed for Croatia at the 2017 European Championships. Winters, 39, lost on a fifth round stoppage against Joseph Parker in February.

Las Vegas, NV, USA: Light Heavy: Joe Smith (26-3) W KO 9 Eleider Alvarez (25-2). Middle: Rob Brant (26-2) W RTD 5 Vitalii Kopylenko (28-3). Super Light: Julian Rodriguez (20-0) W TKO 1 Anthony Laureano (13-1,1ND). Feather: Duke Ragan (1-0) W TKO 1 Luis Alvarado (1-2).

Smith vs. Alvarez

Smith pounds Alvarez to defeat in a one-sided contest as Alvarez looks about ready for retirement.

Round 1

Alvarez made a bright start popping Smith with jabs but that did not last. Smith began to force Alvarez to the ropes and unload with some crude but powerful punches.

Score: 10-9 Smith

Round 2

Alvarez was having trouble staying off the ropes and out of corners. Smith was using a powerful jab and some muscle to trap Alvarez and he was then bombarding Alvarez with wide swinging hooks.

Score: 10-9 Smith

Smith 20-18

Round 3

Alvarez had the better skills but Smith was not letting him use them. He was bullying Alvarez inside and thudding lefts and right against Alvarez's head, Alvarez was being dragged into a brawl and losing.

Score: 10-9 Smith

Smith 30-27

Round 4

Alvarez boxed well for much of this round. He was firing jabs and moving. Smith just kept rolling forward and eventually he forced Alvarez to stand and trade and he was landing some wicked hooks and uppercuts. Alvarez had blood dripping from his nose at the end of the round.

Score: 10-9 Smith

Smith 40-36

Round 5

A punishing round for Alvarez. Too often he was static in front of Smith just covering up and not throwing any punches. Smith was able to tee off on Alvarez with hurtful rights and lefts with Alvarez not even trying to hold or throw much himself.

Score: 10-9 Smith

Smith 50-45

Round 6

Smith started this round slowly allowing Alvarez to work his jab. Once Smith stepped up the pressure Alvarez output dropped and again Alvarez was letting Smith get inside. Smith was loading up on every punch and was landing some vicious uppercuts. Alvarez punch output was dismal.

Score: 10-9 Smith.

Smith 60-54

Round 7

Alvarez boxed a bit more in this one and shook Smith with a right to the head that momentarily unhinged Smith's legs. It was the best shot Alvarez had landed. Later in the round Smith pressed forward and was firing a succession of punches with Alvarez just covering up but Alvarez's early work just gave him the edge.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Smith 69-64

Round 8

That proved a false dawn as Smith was back on top in the eighth. He was throwing more, landing more and landing harder punches. Alvarez briefly came to life putting together some rapid-fire combinations but he was staggered by a left hook late in the round.

Score: 10-9 Smith

Smith 79-73

Round 9

Smith ended this with his first hard punch of the round. He stepped in and detonated a right on Alvarez's chin. Alvarez was already falling back when Smith added a left. Alvarez was flat on his back half out under the bottom rope. He seemed to decide too late to scramble to his feet and was counted out. Losses to Sullivan Barrera and for the secondary WBA title to Dmitry Bivol had pushed Smith down the ratings but his points

win over Jesse Hart and now this crushing victory over Alvarez makes a title shot in 2021 a distinct possibility. For Alvarez it could be the end. He showed little movement and too often stood in front of Smith being deluged with punches and not firing back.

Brant vs. Kopylenko

Brant well on his way to victory when Kopylenko is retired with a large swelling affecting his vision. A lively first round saw both firing their jabs with Brant quickly adding some hooks to the body and matching Kopylenko's jabs to take the round. Kopylenko just could not deal with Brant's jab in the second. Brant was firing quick and accurate shots and Kopylenko was slow and off target. Kopylenko was weak with his jabs in the third and throwing one punch at a time. Brant was drawing the jab and then getting into range and connecting with hooks. Kopylenko missed with a charge and almost went head first through the ropes. At the end of the round Kopylenko had heavy bruising under his left eye. Brant completely outboxed Kopylenko in the fourth and fifth, He was buzzing around popping Kopylenko with jabs then nipping in to land a quick burst of punches with Kopylenko hardly throwing anything in response. The swelling under Kopylenko's left eye had grown and Kopylenko could hardly see so his corner pulled him out. Brant starting again after losing his secondary version of the WBA middleweight title. Two losses in a row for Kopylenko who lost a split decision to Steve Butler in May last year.

Rodriguez vs. Laureano

Rodriguez stops an over aggressive Laureano inside three minutes. Laureano decided to walk through Rodriguez's punches to get inside. Rodriguez was letting fly with bunches of punches to head and body and after just one minute a strong combination dropped Laureano on his rump. He was up at four and after the count he again tried to batter down Rodriguez. He was having some success until a left and a right rocked him and three right floored him again. He beat the count but went

down for a third time under another series of punches and the fight was waived off. The 25-year-old "Hammer Hands" from New Jersey was in theory moving up to ten rounds but instead registered his thirteenth win by KO.TKO.

Ragan vs. Alvarado

Former top amateur Ragan turns pro and scores a quick stoppage win. Southpaw Alvarado just could not cope with the speed of Ragan and a neck-snapping straight right dropped him. He made it to his feet but walked away gazing out over the ropes so the referee waived his hands to signal it was over. Ragan, 22, won two US National titles, a National Golden Gloves title and silver at the PanAmerican Games. He looks a sure bet to make it to the top in the pros. Alvarado just there as a sacrifice.

Los Angeles, CA, USA: Welter: Shawn Porter (31-3-1) W PTS 12 Sebastian Formella (22-1). Welter: Justin DeLoach (19-4) W TKO 1 Livan Navarro (11-1). Super Welter: Sebastian Fundora (15-0-1) W KO 6 Nathaniel Gallimore (21-5-1).

Porter vs. Formella

Porter in another league to Formella and he wins all the way to set up a title chance in 2021.

Round 1

Porter was coming inside quickly behind a double jab and scoring to the body. He had Formella on the back foot. He was exerting plenty of pressure and letting fly with hooks when he caught Formella on the ropes. Formella scored with a nice right late in the round.

Score: 10-9 Porter

Round 2

Porter was trying to overwhelm Formella with fierce attacks connecting with hooks and uppercuts. Formella made some space with his jab but Porter once again was all over him with hooks and uppercuts.

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 20-18

Round 3

Porter was continuing to apply pressure. He is too quick for Formella and is putting together rapid combinations switching to head and body. Formella was trying to get into the fight with good movement and his jab but the swarming attacks from Porter are just too much for him.

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 30-27

Round 4

Formella had a much better round. Porter was on the back foot looking to counter and that was giving Formella a chance to work with his jab. Porter was only attacking in burst and Formella did just enough to take the round.

Score: 10-9 Formella

Porter 39-37

Round 5

Porter upped the pace. He connected with a heavy right to the head and then launched frenzied attacks. He was getting through with punches from both hands and literally chasing Formella around the ring. Plenty of body punching from Porter must take its toll later

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 49-46

Round 6

Formella was not keeping Porter out. Porter was moving in behind a double jab and then throwing punches faster than Formella could block or duck and the German took some serious punishment.

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 59-55

Round 7

Porter rocked Formella a couple of times with rights but Formella was fighting back. Porter was still working hard on the body and after connecting with a big left hooks he had Formella rocking on the ropes at the bell

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 69-64

Round 8

Porter was alternating between boxing on the retreat scoring with counters and full on charges throwing so many punches so quickly that Formella was getting rocked time and again.

Porter's right hand counter over Formella's jab was taking away Formella's confidence in his main weapon.

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 79-73

Round 9

Porter dialled back his activity in this round spending most of the fight on the back foot. That allowed Formella to find the range with his jab and connect with a couple of rights.

Whenever Porter burst into life he was firing punches through Formella's defence scoring with rights to the head and left hooks to the body and doing just enough to take the round.

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 89-82

Round 10

After being fire and fury at the start of the fight Porter was now spending more time looking to draw Formella's lead and springing to the attack. He did that in this round letting Formella come forward behind his jab. Porter was then bursting into life driving Formella back and across the ring with a series of hooks and uppercuts to head and body. To his credit Formella did not crumble but kept taking every chance he got to punch back

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 99-91

Round 11

Porter was content to box his way though most of this round. His hand speed was too much for Formella and Porter pierced his guard continually with jabs. Porter exploded into action a couple of times bombarding Formella with shots from all angles and then settled back to box for the rest of the round.

Score: 10-9 Porter

Porter 109 100

Round 12

Porter handed out more punishment in the last connecting with a blistering right to the head and left hook to the body to

showcase his talent. Formella was under fire but fighting back hard at the end.

Score 10-9 Porter:

Porter 119-109

Official Scores: Judge Lou Moret 120-108 Porter, Judge Pat Russell 120-108 Porter, Judge Zachary Young 120-108 Porter.

The scores tell the story. Formella was never in this fight with a chance at any stage. Porter's hand speed, movement and combination punching were in a different class to Formella. This fight was both for the WBC Silver title and an IBF eliminator. Porter is No 1 with the WBC but this win will only have landed him the vacant No 2 spot with the IBF as Kudratillo Abduqaxorov is already No 1. Having lost to IBF/WBC champion Errol Spence on a split decision in September Porter seems assured of a return with Spence in 2012 for either belt. This was way too high a step up in quality of opposition for the 33-year-old Formella. He showed a strong jab, some good movement and plenty of guts but the truth is that he was outclassed.

DeLoach vs. Navarro

DeLoach gets a much needed win as he destroys Navarro in just over two minutes. Cuban Navarro came out throwing bombs looking to blast DeLoach away. DeLoach tried to box but Navarro's wild attacks had him ducking and dodging. Navarro staggered DeLoach with a right but as he lunged forward he was leaving himself wide open to counters and a booming overhand right to the head sent him down heavily. Navarro made to his feet but was wobbly and when the action restarted DeLoach drove Navarro to the ropes and tagged him with some heavy head punches. Navarro went down on his side and after starting the count the referee saw he was not going to get to his feet and stopped the fight. De Loach, 26, had suffered three defeats in his last four fights against Nathaniel Gilmore, Jeison Rosario and Terrell Williams so he has a chance to rebuild.

Navarro, 29, was remarkably crude for a former Elite level Cuban amateur and paid the price for his carelessness.

Fundora vs. Gallimore

The 6'5 ½" Fundora is a freakish super welterweight. His 80" reach and his southpaw style just add to the problem for his opponents as Gallimore found on the way to a sixth round stoppage loss. At 5'11" Gallimore's tactics were simple he had to hustle Fundora to the ropes and keep him there. He had some success but Fundora was catching on the way in outfighting him inside and spearing him at distance. Gallimore managed to make the second round a brawl and did enough to take the round. Fundora was happy to fight inside with Gallimore in the third and fourth. He was using his height to lean down on Gallimore and in both rounds he was rocking Gallimore with hooks and uppercuts. Fundora battered Gillespie throughout the fifth with Gallimore spending most of the round pinned against the ropes as Fundora unloaded on him with punches from both hands. In the sixth Fundora raked Gallimore with punch after punch until the referee took pity on Gallimore and stopped the massacre. Fundora "The Towering Inferno" gets his tenth win by KO/TKO. Jamontay Clark had some answers to Fundora's height and fought to a controversial draw with Fundora in August (one judge had Fundora winning 98-92) and in Jamaican-born Gallimore he outclassed a fighter who has wins over current IBF super welterweight champion Jeison Rosario and Justin DeLoach. Fourth loss in his last five fights for Gallimore,

20 August

Detroit, MI, USA: Super Middle: Vladimir Shishkin (11-0) W TKO 9 Oscar Riojas (21-14-1). Middle: Timur Kerefov (9-0) W PTS 8 Calvin Metcalf (10-5-1). Shishkin vs. Riojas

In a show staged in the Kronk gym Kronk-based Russian Shishkin has too much of everything for limited but tough Riojas. Shishkin almost ended it early when he staggered Riojas with a solid left hook in the first round. Riojas survived that but was never in the fight. He was shaken again in the second and rocked badly by a big right in the eighth. He was given a brief recovery period after complaining of a punch to the back of the head but that only delayed the end for a couple of more minutes. Shishkin landed a straight right, a candidate for punch of the week, which sent Riojas down heavily. He made it to his feet but was taking more punishment and the referee stopped the fight. Shishkin, the WBC No 10 makes it ten wins by KO/TKO. He was a member of the Russian Boxing Team in the WBS and has a win over tough French world light heavyweight title challenger Najib Mohammedi. Fourth inside the distance loss for Riojas but they have all come against good quality opposition.

Kerefov vs. Metcalf

Kerefov gets unanimous decision over Metcalf. Metcalf tried to pressurise Kerefov but the Russian was scoring with crisp counters and gradually wore Metcalf down. He was putting Metcalf under more pressure over the late rounds but despite being badly shaken in the sixth and carrying a cut Metcalf fought back hard and lasted the full eight round. Scores 80-72 twice and 78-74 for Kerefov. The 30-year-old Russian was an Elite level amateur and is progressing well. Metcalf can still boast he has never lost inside the distance and gave Kerefov eight useful rounds of work.

Bucharest, Romania: Super Welter: Flavius Biea (19-1)

W DISQ 4 Teodoro Nikolov (5-36-4) Biea gets expected win but some confusion over the ending. Bulgarian Nikolov manage to hustle Biea off his game plan with an aggressive start hurting the local fighter with a pair of rights in the first round but it went downhill from there. Biea used his superior skills

and a powerful jab to outbox Nikolov without ever really looking impressive. The referee deducted a point from Nikolov for holding in the fourth and repeatedly warned him for ducking too low and diving in with his head down. When the bell rang to end the fourth the referee just walked to Nikolov's corner and told his team he had disqualified Nikolov for his head work. Seventh win in a row for Biea but all against very mediocre opponents. Now only one win in his last twenty-nine fights for Nikolov.

21 August

Torrelavega, Spain: Middle: Sergio Martinez (52-3-2) W KO 7 Jose Fandino (15-7). Middle: Sergio Garcia (32-0) W PTS 10 Pablo Mendoza (9-5). Feather: Kiko Martinez (41-9-2) W RTD 2 Noe Martinez (23-11-2). Light: Jon Fernandez (21-1) W Ruben Rodriguez (8-5-1). Super Feather: Bernard Torres (12-0) W PTS 8 Alex Cazares (16-12).

Martinez vs. Fandino

Martinez returns to the ring with a stoppage of Fandino. Martinez eased his way into the fight. From the first round he was holding both hands at hip level firing jabs up through Fandino's guard. Fandino staged an occasional attack but Martinez was able to slip them and counter. Fandino spent most of each round with his back to the ropes behind a high guard but Martinez was piercing Fandino's guard with right jabs. Fandino connected with a hard right at the end of the second which fired him up for a short while. Martinez began to put some combinations together over the third and fourth and was easily dodging the occasional swipe from Fandino. The fifth saw Martinez still standing in front of Fandino with his gloves resting on his thighs before slotting punches past Fandino's guard. Fandino showed a lot more aggression and had enough success to make it a close round. Martinez stepped on the gas

in the sixth. For the first time he was staying inside and trading punches. He trapped Fandino in a corner and connected with a couple of body punches, Fandino dropped to a knee but seemed to indicate he thought Martinez's punches were low. He was up quickly and then had his best spell of the fight as he stood and exchanged punches but Martinez drove him to a corner again and landed a series of punches as the round ended. Fandino came forward in the seventh. Martinez chose to stand inside again and exchange punches allowing Fandino to land some clubbing shots. Martinez connected with a series of short left hooks to the body forcing Fandino back and then drove home one more left to the body. Fandino fell to his knees and was counted out. A win for Martinez but one that did not tell us much. Fandino was willing but limited but provided no real measure of how much Martinez has left. At 45 and in his first fight for six years there were some signs of the Martinez of old but not many and unfortunately I think his days of being to compete at the top level are over. Fandino did his job in showing enough resistance to give Martinez a few rounds of work but was way out of his league and now he will go back to his gardening and masonry work having had the honour of being in the ring with a great former champion.

Garcia vs. Mendoza

Garcia much too talented and too big for Mendoza and outpoints the game Nicaraguan. Garcia had height and reach over Mendoza and was able to score constantly with his jab and straight rights. Mendoza showed plenty of fight but had difficulty getting past Garcia's jab and had to walk through some hooks and uppercuts to get into range. When he did get there he was able to land some crisp left hooks to the body. Garcia was on the front foot looking to break Mendoza down mixing straight punches and hooks but he is not really a knockout puncher and Mendoza was never in any serious trouble. As the rounds passed Mendoza was spending more and more time with his back to the ropes but Garcia just could not

totally subdued him and to the end Mendoza was still rumbling forward whenever he could. He made Garcia work for his win which was unexpected in view of Mendoza's lack of experience and his first round stoppage by John Docherty in February. A good workout for Garcia. Scores 99-92, 98-92 and 98-93 for Garcia. The European champion is probably the most accomplished boxer in Spain right now and as WBC No 2 he is hoping for an eliminator against No 1 Erickson Lubin but there is also the possibility of a huge domestic fight with Kerman Lejarraga. For Mendoza, a Spanish-based Nicaraguan, a third loss in a row.

Martinez vs. Raygoza

Martinez gets victory when Raygoza's corner pulls their man out before the start of the third round. The former IBF champion engaged in his usual war with Mexican southpaw Raygoza. They were knocking lumps of each other in the first with a clash of heads looking to have opened a cut on the left eyelid of Raygoza. Martinez bombarded Raygoza with punches in the second and although Raygoza was willing to stand and trade Martinez was taking control. The Mexican did not come out for the third round due to that cut which the referee decided had been caused by a punch giving Martinez the victory. The former IBF super bantam champion has faced the best including Carl Frampton, Leo Santa Cruz, Scott Quigg and Josh Warrington and was stopped in five rounds by Gary Russell in a challenge for the WBC title in May last year. At 34 he shows no sign of even considering retirement. First fight for Raygoza since being stopped in eight rounds by Ryan Garcia in December 2017 and his fifth loss by KO/TKO.

Torres vs. Cazares

Filipino-born southpaw Torres continues to show improvement. He boxed solidly with strong, accurate jabbing and some good body punching. Mexican Cazares was competitive early but then tired and Torres took the unanimous verdict. Torres, 24, is managed by Sergio Martinez and is a Norwegian citizen. As

an amateur he was Norwegian and Nordic champion and represented Norway at the European Under 22 championships. Cazares took Kiko Martinez the full ten rounds in December and has not yet lost inside the distance.

Kissimmee, FL, USA: Light Fly: Axel Aragon (14-3-1) W PTS 10 Saul Juarez (25-12-2). Feather: Henry Lebron (13-0) W PTS 8 Luis Poroza (15-4). Super Light: Omar Rosario (1-0) W PTS 4 Solon Staley (1-5-1)

Aragon vs. Juarez

In an all-Mexican contest Aragon wins his first title as a pro as he easily decisions former world title challenger Juarez. Aragon made a great start buckling Juarez's legs with a right to the head in the first and only the bell deprived Aragon of an early win. Aragon took the second round and then had Juarez in deep trouble again with a right uppercut in the third. Aragon continued to pound Juarez with punches over the fourth and fifth but Juarez just would not crumble. The pace slackened over the sixth and seventh which gave Juarez some breathing space. Aragon was tiring in the eighth from his frantic efforts to put Juarez away and Juarez came on strong over the ninth and tenth but could not put a dent into Aragon's lead. Despite the strong late effort from Juarez the scores were 100-90 twice and 98-92 for Aragon the clear winner. The 20-year-old from Ensenada lifts the previously vacant WBA Fedelatin title. Despite losing a wide decision to Wilfredo Mendez in September Vega was then given a return with Mendez in October last year after Mendez had become WBO minimum champion and in the return contest he lost a narrow technical decision. Juarez has had shots at both the WBC minimum and light fly titles and although he lost his last two fights-to Ganigan Lopez and Jonathan Gonzalez- both were in close decisions.

Lebron vs. Poroza

Puerto Rican southpaw prospect Lebron adds another win as he outpoints Ecuadorian Poroza. A masterful performance from

Lebron as he totally outboxed Porozo. The Ecuadorian has an awkward style and he was looking to confuse and confound Lebron with some rough stuff mixed in. Lebron stayed cool shrugging off a cut over his left eye and never really seemed to or needed to hit top gear. Porozo lost a point in the sixth for punches to the back of the head and never posed a threat to the poised Puerto Rican. Scores 80-71 twice and 79-72. The 22-year-old Lebron , a Puerto Rican Youth and Senior champion and Pan American Youth champion, is being exposed a number of different styles. Porozo was one of Ecuador's most successful amateurs but is finding life tough in the pros being 1-4 in his last 5 fights, all against high level opponents.

Rosario vs. Staley

Top Rank adds another outstanding prospects to their roster in six-time national champion Rosario who won titles at Junior, Youth and Senior level. The 5'10" Rosario towered over the 5'5" Staley and he eased himself into the pro ranks winning every round. Scores 40-36 for Rosario on the three cards. Rosario, 22, was preparing for the Tokyo Olympics but when they were cancelled he decided to turn pro. Staley just someone to sit in the other corner really.

Guerande, France: Middle: David Papot (24-0-1) W PTS 8 Francis Tchoffo (19-17-1). Super Welter: Jordy Weiss (27-0) W PTS 6 Issa Mourzaev (10-14-4).

Papot vs. Tchoffo

Southpaw Papot returns with a win as he takes a unanimous decision over survivor Tchoffo. He floored Tchoffo in the first but Tchoffo used his survival skills from there to disappointing the local fans but to balance that he also gives Papot some ring time. The down side for Papot is an injury, a suspected fracture, to his left hand suffered in the fourth round. Once the hand heals Papot, the WBA No 9, will be looking to fight in the USA where he drew with James McGirt in June last year.

Cameroon-born Tchoffo has never lost by KO/TKO but has been unsuccessful in two shots at the French title.

Weiss vs. Mourzaev

EU champion "Gypsy" Weiss boxes his way to his twenty-seventh victory as he decisions Mourzaev. It was an interesting contest as Mourzaev despite his poor record is a neat boxer. Unanimous victory for Weiss who is hoping to get a shot at the winner of the European title fight between champion David Avanesyan and Josh Kelly. Mourzaev a deceptive 3-9-1 in his most recent outings.

Porto Viro, Italy: Middle: Etinosa Oliha (12-0) W PTS 10

Andrea Roncon (14-5-1). Oliha makes a successful first defence of the national title as he decisions Roncon. Oliha boxed his way to victory. He preferred to fight on the outside with Roncon taking the fight to the champion and pressing hard. There were some fierce exchanges and Roncon although behind was very much in the fight until the strength and accuracy of Oliha opened a huge gap between them. Over the second half of the fight Oliha was in control hurting and slowing Roncon with an array of body punches and vicious uppercuts and despite a big effort from Roncon the champion won by a large margin. Scores 100-90, 99-92 and 98-92. The 22-year-old Oliha is of Nigerian parents. He was a top level amateur compiling a 55-13-2 record and will be looking for a shot at the EU title next year. Roncon had home advantage and was more competitive than the scores indicate but he had never been past six rounds in a fight and that was a big factor here.

Hermosillo, Mexico: Super Feather: Mauricio Lara (19-2)

W TKO 8 Jesus Quijada (16-7-2). Super Bantam: Noe

Robles (24-1) W KO 4 Guillermo Rodriguez (15-3).

Lara vs. Quijada

"Bronco" Lara wears Quijada down and finally finishes him at the end of the eighth round. Quijano was boxing cleverly. He

was finding gaps for his jab as Lara marched in and with Lara swinging wildly at times he was connecting with some hard counters. Lara kept rolling forward and slowly the pressure began to pay off as he was finding the target on a tiring Quijada in the sixth. As Lara began to land with long lefts in the seventh Quijada's earlier composure disappeared and he was rocked late in the round by a right to the head. Quijada was cut on his right eyelid and was inspected by the doctor who gave Quijada the clearance to continue and then smeared something on the cut as if he was Quijada's second. The referee deducted a point from Lara for low punches he had landed in the seventh. It made no difference as Lara submerged Quijada under a torrent of punches until he dropped and the referee stopped the fight. Ten wins in a row for Lara and either 14 or 15 inside the distance. He scored a one round stoppage victory on a show last month when there was no commissioner present so it shows as a No Decision on BoxRec record. Local fighter Quijada loses inside the distance for the first time.

Robles vs. Rodriguez

Robles was too quick for Rodriguez and took control of the fight from the first round. He was connecting with some brutal body punches. Rodriguez was firing some crude counters of his own but Robles walked through them. In the fourth Robles forced Rodriguez into a corner and as Rodriguez shaped to throw a left Robles beat him to the punch with a thunderous right to the head. Rodriguez dipped at the knees and was on his way down when the referee caught him and stopped the fight. That makes it 20 wins by KO/TKO for the 22-year-old local prospect but all against moderate opposition. Rodriguez had won 12 of his last 13 fights and he suffers his first inside the distance defeat.

Tlalnepantla, Mexico: Middle: Juan Carlos Raygosa (17-15-3) W PTS 10 Dauren Yeleussinov (8-1-1).

Surprise result here as Mexican journeyman Raygosa decisions Kazak to win the vacant WBC International title Scores 96-94 twice for Raygosa and 96-94 for Yeleussinov. Yeleussinov was to have fought a couple of weeks ago and when that was cancelled this one was arranged. The plan was for Yeleussinov to get a win and a title but Raygosa tore up the script. Yeleussinov, twice Kazak amateur champion is the elder brother of Olympic gold medallist Daniyar but he is finding it not as easy as expected in the pros having been held to a draw by novice Devaun Lee in 2016

August 22

Magdeburg, Germany: Heavy: Kevin Johnson (35-17-1) W KO 7 Yoan Hernandez (29-2). Light: Heavy: Tom Dzemski (15-0) W PTS 8 Michael Eifert (6-1). Heavy: Peter Kadiru (9-0) W KO 2 Muhammed Ali Durmaz (29-29). Cruiser: Juergen Uldedaj (12-0) W KO 2 Robert Grguric (4-2). Light Heavy: Robin Krasniqi (50-6) W TKO 6 Stanislav Eschner (14-15-1).

Johnson vs. Hernandez

Johnson scuppers Hernandez's plans for resurrecting his career as he steamrollers Hernandez to defeat in seven rounds. The fight was staged at walking pace with Johnson, much the heavier man, coming forward poking out his jab and Hernandez retreating stabbing out his jab and moving inside to land a left hook and then holding. In the second and third Hernandez was unable to stop Johnson marching forward and Johnson was able to pin Hernandez to the ropes landing some heavy clubbing punches with Hernandez doing too much holding. Johnson had Hernandez down twice in the fourth. The first saw Johnson trapping Hernandez against the ropes and Hernandez falling sideward's to the canvas with the referee deciding it was

a slip. Johnson kept up the pressure and after a series of punches Hernandez dropped to the canvas and this time was given a count. After the count Johnson had Hernandez reeling again but ran out of time. A clash of heads in the fifth saw Johnson cut over his left eye. He passed a doctor's inspection and continued to outmuscle a very tired Hernandez who lost his mouthguard as Johnson hustled and harried him. Hernandez was shaken by a right to the head in the sixth and two lefts and a right to the head dropped him in the seventh and he was counted out. Disaster for the 35-year-old former IBF cruiserweight champion and this loss must have crushed any hopes he had of a successful return. I have been very critical of the 40-year-old Johnson in the past but right from the opening bell he fought with a purpose and focus that he has not shown for a long time. He has to be careful as he has earned good money as an imported no threat opponent but if he performs like this the work could dry up.

Dzanski vs. Eifert

Dzanski gets a majority verdict over Eifert in a clash of stalemates. Both of these boxers are members of SES Team Germany so they know each other well and they put on an excellent fast-paced skilful contest. There was never much between them at any stage of the fight. Dzanski used his longer reach to work well with his jab in the first and cracked Eifert with a right cross in the second. Eifert put Dzanski under heavy pressure in the third and connected with some heavy head punches in the fourth and fifth. Dzanski had his jab working again in the sixth as they both showed the effects of the fast pace. A stronger finish by Dzanski saw him take the seventh and he outworked Eifert in the last. Scores 77-76 twice for Dzanski and 76-76. Great little scrap and a pity there had to be a loser. Dzanski, 23, wins the IBF Youth title. He is trained by his father Dirk who boxed professionally and retired with a 27-2 record. Eifert, 22, is a former German Under-22

champion who was a successful competitor in the Bundesliga boxing.

Kadiru vs. Ali Durmaz

No problems for Kadiru here as he disposes of Ali Durmaz in two rounds. Kadiru spent the first round padding after the retreating Ali Durmaz before catching up with him and landing a few punches just before the bell. Early in the second he trapped Ali Durmaz in a corner and threw a bunch of punches. A left hook connected but the others missed and Ali Durmaz dropped to his hands and knees and just stayed there to be counted out. Fourth win by KO/TKO for the 23-year-old from Hamburg but a predictable ending. Ali Durmaz has lost 24 fights by KO/TKO and won 27 the same way so only 7 of his 58 fights have gone the distance. He was 7-1 in his last 8 fights but those seven defeated opponents had just 5 wins between them

Uldedaj vs. Grguric

In his first fight since May 2019 Albanian prospect Uldedaj brushes aside German-based Croat Grguric. After pressing hard in the first round southpaw Uldedaj ended it in the second with a hurtful body punch which sent Grguric down and he was unable to beat the count. The 22-year-old Uldedaj won bronze medals at both the European Junior and Youth Championships. Grguric never in with a chance.

Krasniqi vs. Eschner

Not everyone's return failed in Magdeburg. In his first fight for eighteen months Krasniqi shed some rust with a sixth round stoppage of Eschner. Krasniqi was content to box on the back foot and counter the aggressive Eschner and he shook Eschner with a left hook in the first. Krasniqi's timing was a bit off but he connected with a left hook and a right to the body with Eschner beckoning him to come back with more. Krasniqi did so landing a peach of a left uppercut and a right to the head. Eschner continued to get nailed by uppercuts but he shook off the punishment and was forcing Krasniqi to raise his pace.

They stood and exchanged punches in the fifth with a left hook from Krasniqi knocking Eschner's mouthguard flying. It looked as though Eschner might last to the final bell but a ferocious attack mixing body shots and uppercuts from Krasniqi had him reeling and rocking and the referee made a timely stoppage. The 33-year-old Kosovon-born Krasniqi, a former European champion who lost in light heavyweight title shots against Nathan Cleverly and Juergen Braehmer, was having his first fight since losing his European title against Stefan Haertel in May 2019 and he looked sharp. Eschner showed plenty of determination here. His role is defined by twelve of his fifteen losses coming when facing unbeaten opponents.

Ekaterinburg, Russia: Super Welter: Magomed Kurbanov (20-0) W KO 1 Ilya Ochkin (6-2). Zaur Abdullaev (13-1) W KO 7 Pavel Malikov (16-1-1).

Kurbanov vs. Ochkin

Kurbanov blasts out Ochkin in just 82 seconds. Ochkin had shown he was going to take the fight to Kurbanov and that proved a huge mistake, As Ochkin bundled forward Kurbanov met him with a well-timed short right to the head which sent Ochkin crashing to the canvas and he was counted out.

Kurbanov has put together a run of impressive wins twelve of them coming inside the distance. The local-based "Black Lion", a former World Junior champion, is rated WBA 5/WBO 7/WBC 11 and I anticipate that he will fight for a world title next year. Russian based Kazak Ochkin was way out of his depth.

Abdullaev vs. Malikov

In front of his home fans and in his first fight since losing to Devin Haney for the interim WBC title in September Abdullaev massacres a too gutsy Malikov scoring seven knockdowns. Abdullaev used a strong jab and counters to the body to build an early lead over the first three rounds. Malikov was competitive but lacking the power to match Abdullaev. From the fourth it was just one knockdown after another mostly from

body punches. Malikov was down twice in the fourth, once in the fifth, and three times in the sixth. He showed tremendous courage as he got up each time and fought back but a left to the body in the seventh was the finisher and he was counted out. The Haney fight came much too soon for the 26-year-old Russian and the road to another title shot started here. Malikov was knocked out in eight rounds by former IBO champion Daud Jordan in 2018 but had reinstated himself with points victory over former IBF title challenger Isa Chaniev last October.

Kazan, Russia: Cruiser: Aleksei Papin (12-1) W TKO 6 Ruslan Fayer (25-2). Super Feather: Albert Batygraziev (2-0) W TKO 10 Erzhan Turgumbekov (8-1-1). Super Light: Kharito Agrba (3-0) W PTS 10 Soslan Tedeev (20-2).

Papin vs. Fayer

A minor upset here as Papin returns from his first loss as a pro with stoppage of Fayer. In the opening round Fayer was sharper slotting jabs home and finding gaps for rights. Fayer was busy, busy in the second and third. He was firing quick, light punches, well more light taps than punches, and then bursts of hooks with a bit more power. Papin was coming forward behind a high guard and starting to find the range with some body shots. Fayer continued to throw more and land more than Papin in the fourth and fifth but now Papin was getting past Fayer's light jabs and landing some heavy single shots. Papin rocked Fayer with a right to the head at the start of the sixth. Another hard right to the side of the head sent Fayer tumbling to the floor. He was up at two but was on shaky legs. He walked away from the referee to a neutral corner. The referee followed and asked Fayer to walk forward. Fayer did but the referee was not convinced and waived the fight over. Fayer protested but not with any conviction. Papin had lost a majority verdict against Ilunga Makabu for the WBC Silver title in August last year and now that Makabu is WBC champion

Papin obviously wants a return and deserves one on this showing, Fayer was No 1 with the IBF so he has blown any chance of a fight against whoever wins the long since forgotten WBSS tournament (it has been 14 months since the semi-finals). He wants a return but does not have a strong claim after this loss.

Batyrgaziev vs. Turgumbekov

Southpaw Batyrgaziev has a war with Turgumbekov before winning on a late stoppage, Batyrgaziev took an early lead but over the middle rounds Turgumbekov took control and then Batyrgaziev came on strongly at the finish. He had Turgumbekov hurt but then threw Turgumbekov to the canvas so no count. When the action started again Batyrgaziev landed a series of savage punches and the fight was stopped.

Batyrgaziev has had a meteoric rise. He started in kickboxing but after watching the 2016 Olympics he decided to switch to boxing. He won the Russian champion three years in a row. In 2017 he beat Olympian Vladimir Nikitin and in the 2018 championships he beat European silver medallist Gabil Mammadov. He lost to Cuban Lazaro Alvarez in the quarter-finals of the 2019 world championships but later in the year won his third Russian title. He qualified for Tokyo but then the pandemic intervened. He won a WBA Asian title in his first pro fight. A bright future ahead. Kyrgyzstan boxer Turgumbekov gave Batyrgaziev a harder test than expected.

Agrba vs. Soslan

Southpaw Agrba overcomes injury to outpoint Tedeev. Agrba was well in front after five rounds but then injured his right hand and boxed the second half of the able only to use his left but still took the unanimous decision. The Georgian-born Russian was World University champion and twice won silver at the Russian Championships but lost to England's Pat McCormack in the final of the 2019 European Games. Tedeev had won his last seven fights.

Redditch, England: Light Heavy: Shakan Pitters (14-0) W PTS 12 Chad Sugden (11-2-1). Cruiser: Isaac Chamberlain (11-1) W TKO 3 Anthony Woolery (2-3).

Pitters wins the vacant British title with a wide unanimous points victory over Sugden. Pitters is 6'6" tall and that advantage was one that Sugden was never able to overcome. Pitters was able to work on the outside with Sugden struggling to get close enough to be effective. Pitters is not a big puncher and other than a split lip Sugden was never really in any trouble but he could not apply enough pressure to wear down Pitters. Pitters took no chances mostly sticking to a jab-right cross offence and although he rocked Sugden with a right in the eleventh he was always going to have to go the distance for his win. Scores 118-112 twice and 119-110 for Pitters. The Birmingham fighter scored a useful victory over Dec Spellman for the English title but there are stiffer challenge ahead. Sugden was 7-0-1 in his last eight fights.

Fight of the week (Significance): Alex Povetkin's win over Dillian Whyte has shaken up the heavyweight ranks.

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Tom Dzemski vs. Michael was a close fought entertaining fight.

Fighter of the week: Alex Povetkin for showing his career is not over yet.

Punch of the week: Three good right hand candidates in the driven right from Vladimir Shishkin that dropped Oscar Riojas, the short right from Magomed Kurbanov that put out the lights for Ilya Ochkin and the thunderous right from Joe Smith that finished Eleider Alvarez but the award has to go to the perfect left hook from Povetkin that ended his fight with Dillian Whyte.

Upset of the week: Kevin Johnson was supposed to lose to Yoan Pablo Hernandez but he rubbished the script but again it is Povetkin's win over Whyte that gets the vote.

Prospect watch: Only one fight in the pro ranks but Duke Ragan has the amateur credentials to make him a top prospect.

Observations

Certainly a pick-up in action this week

One comeback sees a degree of success and one a disaster.

Sergio Martinez won but his age was showing and Yoan Pablo Hernandez should put the gloves away again and it is time for Eleider Alvarez to do the same.

Strange to see a doctor smearing a substance over a fighters cut after examining him and clearing him to continue-isn't that the seconds job and one that should not be done when the doctor is just there to assess the cut?

You don't find too many fight records like that of Muhammad Ali Durmaz: 29 wins 27 by KO/TKO, 29 losses 24 by KO/TKO so of his 58 fights only seven have gone the distance.

Good to see a boxing show at the Kronk gym a hallowed venue