

The Past Week in Action 8 November 2020

Highlights:

Devin Haney retains the WBC world lightweight title with wide unanimous decision over Yuriorkis Gamboa

-Junto Nakatani stops Gielmel Magramo in eight rounds to win the vacant WBO flyweight title

-In heavyweight fights Luis Ortiz dismisses Alex Flores in 45 seconds, Frank Sanchez stops Brian Howard in four rounds, and Chinese hope Zhilei Zhang knocks out Devin Vargas in four and Phillip Hrgovic stops Rydell Booker in five rounds

-Unbeaten Russians Roman Andreev, Magomed Kurbanov, Evgeny Romanov and Evgeny Tischenko all win inside the distance in Ekaterinburg

World Title/Major Shows

November 6

Tokyo Japan: Fly: Junto Nakatani (21-0) W TKO 8 Gielmel Magramo (24-2).

Nakatani wins the vacant WBO title with stoppage of a brave Magramo in a one-sided fight.

Round 1

The scale of Magramo's task was immediately apparent as Nakatani was taller with a long reach and was also a southpaw. With Nakatani's long legs and wide stance the Japanese fighter was able to step beyond Magramo's reach and counter the Filipino as he came forward. Nakatani was piercing Magramo's guard with right jabs and then connected with a straight left that knocked Magramo back on his heels and to the ropes and then followed with a series of punches.

Score: 10-9 Nakatani

Round 2

A confident Nakatani chose to stay inside and trade punches and a right to the head staggered Magramo. Nakatani alternated between fighting inside and outpunching Magramo and staying outside scoring with his jab. Magramo broke through with some sharp uppercuts late in the round but was again eating jabs.

Score: 10-9 Nakatani

Nakatani 20-18

Round 3

A more competitive round. Magramo was swarming forward applying pressure for the whole three minutes and was landing hooks inside. Nakatani was also scoring inside and put together a series of punches that forced Magramo back and did enough to win the round.

Score: 10-9 Nakatani

Nakatani 30-27

Round 4

Magramo continued to march forward but he was paying a price. As he came forward Nakatani was scoring with hooks, uppercuts and straight punches and then landing heavy left hooks to the body inside. Magramo had some success with hooks but not much.

Score: 10-9 Nakatani

Nakatani 40-36

Official Scores: Judge Masahiro Nopda 40-36 Nakatani, Judge Biney Martin 40-36 Nakatani, Masakazu Murase 40-36 Nakatani.

Round 5

Nakatani totally controlled this one. As Magramo advanced he was raking Magramo with punches and then outscoring Magramo on the inside. With the height disparity Magramo was having to take three or four steps to get inside and was being countered all the way.

Score: 10-9 Nakatani

Nakatani 50-45

Round 6

As in the third Magramo pressed for the whole three minutes. Again he was being caught with punches on the way in and had only limited success inside with Nakatani landing some solid

body punches. Magramo was warned for coming in with his head down but Nakatani could also have been warned for pushing Magramo's head down.

Score: 10-9 Nakatani

Nakatani 60-54

Round 7

A big round for Nakatani. He refused to let Magramo come inside dodging Magramo's rushes and connecting with accurate punches at distance. Late in the round he scored with a series of punches that had Magramo floundering.

Score: 10-9 Nakatani

Nakatani 70-63

Round 8

Nakatani was loading up on his punches and Magramo was being forced to back out of the exchanges by some vicious body punches and lefts to the head. Nakatani connected with a succession of punches and Magramo slid face down on the canvas. He made it to his feet but the referee completed the eight count then waived the fight off.

At 5'7" Nakatani is tall for a flyweight and Magramo was never able to figure out a way to stay inside long enough to be effective. With 16 wins by KO/TKO Nakatani also has a respectable punch. He started out weighing 104lbs so is climbing through the weights and at 22 a move to super fly and beyond is possible. Magramo, 26, had won his last seven fights inside the distance but as hard as he tried here the physical handicaps against Nakatani were too much for him. He can regroup and look for another title shot.

7 November

Hollywood, FL, USA: Light: Devin Haney (25-0) W PTS 12 Yuriorkis Gamboa (30-4). Heavy: Zhilei Zhang (22-0) W KO 4 Devin Vargas (22-7). Heavy: Phillip Hrgovic (12-0) W TKO 5 Rydell Booker (26-4).

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Haney vs. Gamboa

Haney retains the WBC title (that's the real one not the ridiculous franchise one) with a comfortable points victory over Gamboa but doesn't really make any kind of statement in his win.

Round 1

Gamboa's problems were quickly apparent. He was giving away too much height and reach, had slower hands. Not a lot of scoring in the round but Haney connected with jabs to the body and a pair of combinations.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Round 2

Haney hardly needed to use his right. With his reach and hand speed he was able to stick Gamboa with jabs at distance and even his best punch was a left to the jaw. When Gamboa came forward he was having to lean in a long way and leaving himself open to counters.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 20-18

Round 3

Gamboa opened the round by getting inside and scoring with some hooks. Haney then took over and put Gamboa on the back foot. He was still scoring well with the jab but certainly using his right in this one scoring with some blazing right crosses.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 30-27

Round 4

Haney was working well with the jab and putting together some fast combinations when Gamboa stretched and left himself open. His speedy footwork allowed him to get forward into range to score then out before Gamboa could counter.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 40-36

Round 5

It was jab time again from Haney as he worked his jab to head and body and connected with some straight rights. Gamboa managed to get close enough to connect with a couple of hooks but Haney's movement had him swishing air.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 50-45

Round 6

This was a close round. Gamboa stepped up his attacks getting inside to land some hooks and he held and smothered some of Haney's work. Haney's output dropped but he did enough scoring with his jab to just take the round. Haney

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 60-54

Round 7

Haney boxed his way through this one just controlling the fight with his jab. He was circling a static Gamboa spearing him with the jab and occasionally mixing in a combination. Gamboa has a sliver of success when he briefly pinned Haney to the ropes but was just too slow.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 70-63

Round 8

There was bit more action in this one as they stood and traded punches for a while. Haney landed a sharp left hook that hurt Gamboa and did the same with a right later in the round. Haney continued to do the majority of the scoring and Gamboa was holding a lot trying to stay inside and smother Haney's work.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 80-72

Round 9

Another round for Haney. Gamboa had no answer to Haney's jab and was being caught by right crosses. The Cuban did put together one nice sequence of punches but otherwise just had to eat jabs. Haney was winning but was not sustaining any of his attacks and the fight was too one-sided to be entertaining.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 90-81

Round 10

Haney boxed rings around Gamboa and finally began to put his punches together a bit more. Gamboa could not match Haney's speed in the centre of the ring and was too slow to cut the ring off so was having a frustrating night.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 100-90

Round 11

Haney made a purposeful start to the round coming forward behind his jab and looking to land his right. Gamboa was diving inside and holding. He took that too far clinging to Haney and refusing to let go and finally the referee deducted a point from Gamboa*.

Score: 10-9* (10-8) Haney

Haney 110-98

Round 12

Haney showed some real fire in the last standing and trading punches and scoring with some fierce hooks and uppercuts. Gamboa was getting the worst of the exchanges and started holding again with Haney losing a bit of impetus but he managed to break free and was again unloading some heavy punches to the bell.

Score: 10-9 Haney

Haney 120-109

Second title defence by Haney but he never really got out of second gear and didn't really need to. He is hugely talented and still only 21 so will be a huge factor in the future of the division. The sort of question the stupid "franchise" title throws up is whether Luke Campbell and Ryan Garcia are fighting an eliminator to challenge for the world title or the franchise title? Haney twice beat Garcia in the amateurs but that was a long time ago. Javier Fortuna is No 1 with the WBNC but as Dillian Whyte found out being No 1 with the WBC carries no real significance as you are not automatically the mandatory challenger. Let's hope things get clearer in 2021. Gamboa was a huge star in the amateurs and blazed a trail to world titles at featherweight. He then lost his way and has not been the same fighter since losing to Terrence Crawford in 2014. At 38 his career as a top line fighter is effectively over whether he fights on or not.

Zhang vs. Vargas

Zhang crushes Vargas in four rounds Zhang had huge physical advantages over Vargas and he made good use of them in the first. He tracked Vargas around the ring being surprisingly

mobile and doing a good job of cutting off the ring and scoring heavily with body punches. Vargas was more competitive in the second. He stood and traded with Zhang finding gaps for quick punches but they just bounced off Zhang. The Chinese fighter scored heavily late in the round and Vargas fired back with a burst of punches. Zhang connected with thudding body shots in the third and although Vargas again found gaps he could not match Zhan's power and looked very tired. Vargas was shaping to throw a right in the fourth when Zhang beat him to it and exploded a thumping right cross that had Vargas tumbling back and ending up face down on the canvas. He tried to rise but just slumped back to the canvas and was counted out. The 6'6", 37-year-old Chinese southpaw has 15 wins by KO/TKO but is yet to really face a testing opponent. This was only his second fight in two years so he needs to be more active. He competed at the highest level as an amateur representing China at the 2003 and 2005 World Championships before winning a bronze medal in both the 2007 and 2009 Championships. He took a silver medal at the 2008 Olympics but lost to Anthony Joshua in London in 2012. When he signed him back in 2014 Dino Duva described as the next Klitschko but that prophecy remains unfulfilled. Vargas, 38, represented the USA at the 2004 Olympics but his pro career has been disappointing.

Hrgovic vs. Booker

Hrgovic feeds on an overmatched Booker. Hrgovic made a steady start in the first jabbing the tubby Booker who although a lot smaller was 6lbs heavier. Hrgovic began to put his punches together well and scored with straight rights. Booker just played the part of a punch bag in the second as Hrgovic unloaded some heavy hits until a series of punches dropped Vargas to his knees in the last few seconds of the round. He was able to get up and return to his corner. Just target practice for Hrgovic in the third and fourth. Booker threw an occasional leaping left hook but other than that he played the nail to

Hrgovic's hammer and survived some huge shots. Between rounds the referee warned Booker he would stop the fight unless Booker showed more and when a very short show of aggression from Booker died out and Hrgovic connect with some head punches the referee halted the one-sided spectacle. The 28-year-old Croatian "Stone Man" has ten wins by KO/TKO. He showed improvement particularly in firing combinations but he is still a bit slow. He needs some more testing opposition. Right now he is doing his bit in supporting senior citizens with 5 of his last 6 opponents ranging in age from 38 to 41. Booker, 39, lost on points to James Toney in 2004 and was then out of the ring and in jail for 14 years under some questionable circumstances. Since returning he is 4-3 with points losses against Jermaine Franklin and Kubrat Pulev so Hrgovic is the first guy to beat him inside the distance.

Los Angeles, CA, USA: Heavy: Frank Sanchez (16-0) W TKO 4 Brian Howard (15-4). Heavy: Luis Ortiz (32-2,2ND) W KO 1 Alex Flores (18-3-2). Heavy: Michael Polite Coffie (11-0) W TKO 2 Joey Abell (35-11,2ND). Heavy: Carlos Negrón (22-3) W KO 2 Rafael Rios (11-3). Sanchez vs. Howard

Sanchez overpowers Howard with some impressive punching. Howard scored with a good right early in the first but Sanchez responded with a quick burst of punches and then kept Howard on the back foot with some strong jabs. Sanchez spun Howard around with two punches in the second. Howard connected with a an uppercut inside but Sanchez was finding the target with his jab and some body punches. In the third Sanchez had done most of the scoring before staggering Howard with a right hook inside. He landed two more punches as Howard stumbled back across the ring and down. He was up at four and the bell went after the eight count was completed. Sanchez sent Howard to the canvas with a left hook at the start of the fourth.

Again Howard was up quickly but Sanchez leapt on him and put him down with two heavy head punches. Howard got up and took the fight to Sanchez but when he went down again from two rights the referee stopped the fight. The 28-year-old Cuban makes it twelve inside the distance wins. He is rated WBO 10/WBA 14 and has solid power and is rapidly becoming a factor in the heavyweight division. He is a former Cuban champion at 91kg. It is claimed he was 214-6 as an amateur despite having suffered at least eleven losses but he beat Erislandy Savon which not too many have and he is certainly a danger man. Howard, 40, got the high profile fight on the back of a 66 second blow out of Carlos Negrón in August 2019 but he was not in the same class as Sanchez.

Ortiz vs. Flores

Ortiz disposes of Flores with farcical ease. Ortiz was not looking to hang around. He quickly forced Flores to the ropes with a right jab and landed a couple of good punches. Flores moved away and Ortiz followed taking him to the ropes and landing a stiff right jab to the body. Ortiz looked surprised as Flores went down and although Flores just made it to his feet he stumbled and the fight was stopped after just 45 seconds. So easy for Ortiz as he gets win No 27 by KO/TKO. Ortiz is No 3 with both the WBC and WBA and with Anthony Joshua and Tyson Fury both looking to face each other next year at 41 time is not on the Cuban side. Whenever Flores tries to move up he loses early with both Charles Martin and Joseph Parker having stopped him within four rounds.

Coffie vs. Abell

Coffie gets a win over Abell who injures his right bicep during a knockdown. Not much action in the first as Coffie was on the back foot just looking to counter but not throwing much. Abell was a bit more aggressive and got through with a couple of hooks. Abell forced Coffie to the ropes in the second but Coffie landed a brutal left hook to the body and a right to the head and Abell went down. He arose to one knee then stood up but

indicated to the referee that he had injured his right bicep and was unable to continue. Eighth win inside the distance for the 6'5" 34-year-old Coffie. He was 267 ¾lbs (121kgs) for this fight and has been as high as 282lbs so a big guy. He spent eight years in the US Marines and did not turn pro until he was 31. Abell, 39, has been a pro for 15 years and is way past his best. Whenever he moves up he loses inside the distance having been stopped by both Kubrat Pulev and Tyson Fury but just occasionally he pulls off an unexpected win.

Negron vs. Rios

Not much of an advert for heavyweight boxing this was a scrappy confused bout with no skill on show from either boxer. After taking the first round Negron both landed and absorbed some meaty stuff as they just threw wild punches at each other. Negron finished one series of punches with a blow to the back to the head which put Rios down. It was an obvious foul and Rios was given a period of recovery time but did not look happy as the fight continued. Negron scored with some sweeping hooks and again landed a punch to the back of the head which saw Rios drop to his knees. He got up and the fight should have been stopped then but the referee did not do his job and let the fight continue with Negron landing more big head punches before the referee finally jumped in. Puerto Rican Negron makes it 18 wins by KO/TKO. He is 6'6" tall but he is also 63lbs heavier than when he first turned pro and that showed around his waist. Rios had won his last nine fights but against abysmal opposition.

4 November

Los Angeles, CA, USA: Welter: Eimantas Stanionis (11-0) W TKO 9 Justin DeLoach (19-5). Middle: Chordale Booker (15-0) W PTS 8 Sanny Duversonne (11-1-2). Stanionis vs. DeLoach

Lithuanian hope Stanionis hunts down and stops DeLoach. DeLoach made good use of his 5" height advantage and longer reach to score in the early action, Stanionis was tracking DeLoach behind a high guard but DeLoach was finding gaps. DeLoach continued to outscore Stanionis but Stanionis was pressing harder and harder and DeLoach didn't have the punch to keep Stanionis out. As DeLoach tired Stanionis was closing the distance and he staggered DeLoach with a heavy right late in the seventh with DeLoach badly shaken and hanging on to last to the bell. Stanionis was pressing hard in the eighth. DeLoach was moving slower and punching less and Stanionis was starting to land some heavy punches. Stanionis caught up with DeLoach in the ninth and put him down with a left hook to the ribs. DeLoach was up at seven then Stanionis bombarded him with punches until he went down again. He arose and the referee made him walk around a bit before letting the fight continue and when two rights to the head had DeLoach stumbling the fight was stopped. The 26-year-old Stanionis gets his eighth win inside the scheduled distance. He was an Elite level amateur winning the Lithuanian title in 2013, 2014 and 2015, scored a victory over Jeff Horn, won a silver medal at the European Union Championships, a gold medal at the European Championships and competed at the Rio Olympics. DeLoach's career continues in free fall as he has dropped from 17-1 to 2-4 with losses in important fights.

Booker vs. Duversonne

Southpaw Booker just edges past Duversonne on a split decision. This was a fast-paced competitive fight where both fighters had their moments of domination. Booker used his pressure tactics to take the first two rounds with Duversonne taking the next two by boxing at distance where his longer reach gave him the edge but there was plenty of close-quarters stuff in all four rounds. Duversonne's jabs had Booker's mouth dripping blood in the fifth as he again scored well with Booker fighting in bursts. Duversonne also had the better of the sixth

as he rocked Booker with uppercuts. Duversonne looked close to stopping Booker in the seventh as he had him reeling around the ring under a storm of blows. At a crucial point Booker lost his mouthguard and the time to replace it enabled him to hang on to the bell. Booker had more left and he outmailed Duversonne in the last. Scores 77-75 twice for Booker and 77-75 for Duversonne who looked worth at least a draw. Booker, a former US National champion, was having his first fight since beating Wale Omotoso in May 2019 whereas Duversonne, who suffered his second loss in a row, was having his second fight in less than four weeks.

7 November

Ekaterinburg, Russia: Light: Roman Andreev (24-0) W KO 2 Pavel Malikov (16-3-1). Super Welter: Magomed Kurbanov (21-0) W TKO 2 Dmitry Mikhaylenko (23-7). Heavy: Evgeny Romanov (15-0) W KO 2 Siarhei Liakhovich (27-9). Cruiser: Evgeny Tischenko (8-0) W KO 2 John McCallum (12-2).

Andreev vs. Malikov

This was the most anticipated fight of the night and it turned out to be short but entertaining. In the opening round Andreev was taking the fight to Malikov stabbing out jabs and then putting together some quick-fire combinations. There were plenty of fierce exchanges. Malikov was throwing less but he landed a couple of heavy punches and Andreev's face was covered in blood from a nose bleed at the end of the round. They went back to war in the second. Andreev was working well with his jab but both were connecting with explosive punches to head and body. Andreev's face was again covered in blood and a right from Malikov sent him staggering back. As they traded punches Andreev connected with a left hook to the head and then an overhand right that sent Malikov down on his back and he was counted out. Exciting and brutal whilst it

lasted. Andreev has been a pro for twelve years and has scored 24 wins 17 inside the distance but does not seem to have progressed far and at 34 time is against him. He is No 14 (12) with the IBF which is a long way from a title fight. Malikov, also 34, suffers his second bad kayo loss in a row having been floored six times and knocked out in seven rounds by Zaur Abdullaev in August.

Kurbanov vs. Mikhaylenko

Kurbanov dismisses Mikhaylenko inside two rounds. Kurbanov bossed the first round tracking Mikhaylenko around the ropes and scoring with jabs and some clubbing rights to the head. When Mikhaylenko did come forward Kurbanov just brushed aside his attacks. Mikhaylenko was trying to weave his way inside in the second when a body punch had him turning away from the action and walking to a corner. The referee indicated the fight should continue and Kurbanov bombarded Mikhaylenko until Mikhaylenko managed to get out of the corner. Kurbanov attacked again and a wicked left to the body again saw Mikhaylenko retreat into a corner and although he stayed on his feet he was bent double and not able to continue. The 25-year-old Kurbanov "The Black Lion" is rated WBA 4/WBO 7/WBC 12 and has 12 wins by KO/TKO. He is a former World Junior champion. Right now it seems that 2021 might be a bit early but I can see him fighting for a world title in 2022. After winning his first 21 fights it has been a slippery slope for Mikhaylenko and he will probably continue to slide.

Romanov vs. Liakhovich

Romanov bullies and batters a shot Liakhovich inside two rounds. Liakhovich was trying to keep Romanov out with a weak jab in the first and Romanov was able to connect with rights over the top of Liakhovich's jab. Just before the bell he pinned Liakhovich to the ropes and blasted him to head and body. Romanov continued to put pressure on Liakhovich in the second sending him to the ropes and bombarding him with punches. Liakhovich fought his way off the ropes a couple of

times but when he was forced back there again Romanov unloaded with some solid thumps and Liakhovich slumped to his knees and made no attempt to beat the count. Eleventh inside the distance win for the 35 year-old Romanov. He was a top line amateur and included a third round kayo of Deontay Wilder back in 2008 in his victories. He was European and World Junior champion and won the Russian title in 2009. He dropped boxing in 2010 and did not fight again until he turned pro in 2016. At 6'0" and around 220lbs the new WBC weight category would be just right for him. Belarusian Liakhovich, 44, was WBO champion for a brief few months but is now 2-6 in his last eight fights and did not look good here.

Tischenko vs. McCallum

Tischenko wins the vacant WBO European title with inside the distance victory over McCallum. Since he was giving away so much in height and reach McCallum was forced to try and bundle his way inside to hustle Tischenko out of his stride. Tischenko was mainly on the back foot scoring with his jab and throwing long southpaw lefts to the body. Tischenko was dealing easily with the rushed attacks of McCallum in the second and used a series of jabs to drive McCallum into a corner before connecting with a rib-busting left to the body that saw McCallum drop to his knees. He managed to get up but not quite before the referee had counted ten. The 6'5" 29-year-old Russian gets his seventh win by KO/TKO. Formerly a policeman in ST Petersburg he had a stellar time as an amateur winning a gold medal at the Olympics in Rio, twice taking gold at the World championships, and getting gold medals at European Youth, Under-23 and Senior level. Impressive but he may have to try his luck in the USA to lift his profile. Englishman McCallum had won his last five fights but was out of his depth here just not being big enough to compete with Tischenko.

Bruschal, Germany: Super Welter: Slawa Spomer (12-0) W PTS 10 Philipp Wiesenhofer (9-4-1). Spomer wins the vacant BDB German title with points victory over Wiesenhofer. Spomer towered over the feisty little Wiesenhofer and although he handed out serious punishment in every round he could not stop Wiesenhofer. Spomer staggered Wiesenhofer with a right late in the third and constantly landed brutal body punches and rights to the head. After taking the punishment Wiesenhofer would plough forward again almost running and pumping out wild punches. Spomer did some showboating in the late rounds but is not quite quick enough for that and was rattled with some head punches and bled from the nose. When he took things series he was much too good for the limited Wiesenhofer and won every round. Competent performance by Spomer but he will struggle as he moves up. Wiesenhofer had won 7 of his last 8 fights but 6 of his victims had only two wins between them and the other victim had lost twice as many as he had won.

Windhoek, Namibia; Super Feather: Jeremiah Nakathila (20-1) W TKO 2 Immanuel Andeleki (8-7). Welter: Mikka Shonena (17-0) W PTS 6 Ebenestus Kaangundue (6-5). Super Light: Harry Simon Jr (12-0) W PTS 4 Rafael Lita (2-3).

Nakathila vs. Andeleki

On the first boxing card in Namibia since the onset of COVID-19 and in all-Namibian bouts Nakathila wipes out Andeleki in two rounds. Nakathila could not pin down Andeleki in the first but an overhand right put Andeleki down in the second. He struggled to his feet but was unable to continue. The 30-year-old "Low Key" holds the WBO Global title and has 15 wins by KO/TKO. Andeleki loses inside the distance for the fourth time.

Shonena vs. Kaangundue

Shonena displayed a lack of punching power as he failed to stop overmatched Kaangundue. He scored heavily in every

round but Kaangundue refused to fold. Scores 59-55 twice and 60-54 for Shonena. He is the WBO African champion. Fourth loss in a row for Kaangundue.

Simon vs. Lita

Simon gets a unanimous decision over novice Lita but in a poor and listless performance. Scores 39-37 twice and 40-36 for Simon the 23-year-old son of the former undefeated WBO middleweight champion. Third consecutive loss for Lita.

Tokyo, Japan: Middle: Takeshi Inoue (16-1-1) W Nath Nwachukwu (6-0-2). In a substitute main event former WBO title challenger Inoue wins a unanimous verdict over Nwachukwu. Inoue took charge early in the fight with fast accurate jabbing. The inexperienced Nwachukwu finally worked his way into the fight in the fourth and a clash of heads saw Inoue cut and marked on his forehead. Inoue seemed to lose his way a little after that clash but then his experienced and his better boxing skills steady him and he emerged a bloody but deserving winner. Scores 79-73, 78-74 and 78-75 for Inoue but a pyrrhic victory because of the cut. This is his fourth win since an unsuccessful challenge to Jaime Munguia for the WBO super welter title in January 2019. Nwachukwu was All Japan Rookie of the Year in 2018. This was his first eight round fight and his inexperience showed here

Irapuato, Mexico: Welter: Jose Luis Rodriguez (12-2-2) W Alejandro Chavez (12-4). This was Rodriguez's fight all the way to the delight of his home town fans. With a more varied attack and a tighter defence he had Chavez on the back foot and under pressure with Chavez showing only occasional bursts of aggression before going on the retreat again. Rodriguez landed some hard head punches at the start of the fifth then switched to the body and dug in a left hook which sent Chavez down on his knees and he was counted out. Rodriguez, 22,

wins the interim WBC Fecombox title and gets his sixth consecutive victory. Chavez had won his last three fights.

Bang Phun, Thailand: Feather: Amnat Ruenroeng (21-4) W PTS 8 Pungluang (54-9). Fly: Thananchai (11-1) W KO 4 Pigmy Kokietgym (61-14-2). Bantam: Nawaphon (50-1-1) W TKO 4 Yutthichai (10-11).

Ruenroeng vs. Pungluang

Both of these former world champions have seen better days but they put on an entertaining and competitive eight round fight. Ruenroeng boxed on the back foot raking the oncoming Pungluang with counters and then standing and exchange with both fighters landing heavy shots. This was no exhibition match and both fighters showed flashes of temper with the referee asking them to clean things up. Ruenroeng did all of the good work for the early rounds and then when he tired over the last three rounds tied Pungluang up inside and did enough to hold on to his lead. Scores 77-75 twice and 78-74 for Ruenroeng. He is a former IBF flyweight champion who learned to box whilst in jail and was released so he could follow a professional career. At 40 he is unlikely to fight for a title again but in August he gave Srisaket a hard time in losing a ten rounder. Pungluang, 31, a former WBNO bantamweight champion, is on the down slope and with this loss his recent record is 2-6.

Thanachat vs. Pigmy

Thanachat retains the WBC Asian title with victory over oldie Pigmy Kokietgym. Pigmy has a wealth of experience but that was no substitute for the 6" height difference and the youth of Thanachat. The younger man was able to score well at distance with Pigmy just too slow to get close enough to work inside. Thanachat showed good skills a fast jab and variety in his punches switching smoothly from head to body. Pigmy just kept rolling forward smiling through the counters he was eating. That ended in the fourth when a left hook to the body dropped him to his knees. He was up at eight but another left

hook to the body sent him down again and he was counted out. Thananchat looked very useful. He is 20 and after an early defeat has won ten on the bounce eight by KO/TKO including a victory over formerly world rated Kompayak. Pigmy (Wicha Phulaikhao) had his best days as a minimumweight losing twice in challenges for the WBA title but at 5'1" and 39 his days of making 105lbs are behind him.

Nawaphon vs. Yuttichai

Easy win for Nawaphon as he stops Yuttichai in four. Nawaphon kept the fragile-looking Yuttichai under pressure before putting him on the floor with a right to the head in the third. He floored Yuttichai again later in the round with another right and when Yuttichai went down from a body punch in the fourth the fight was stopped. The 29-year-old Nawaphon was halted in three rounds by Juan Hernandez in a challenge for the WBC flyweight title in 2017 but has rebounded with 14 wins including a stoppage of Ruenroeng. He is No 2 with the WBC at bantam so is in line for a shot at the winner of Nordine Ouabaali's defence against Nonito Donaire. Tenth inside the distance loss for Yuttichai

Bonita Springs, FL, USA: Super Welter: Cornelius Bundrage (37-6,1ND) W RTD 4 Antoine Elerson (4-26-2)

Bundrage returns to action with a win as he forces a fourth round retirement on a seriously overmatched Elerson. Elerson was 7" taller than the 5'6" Bundrage but that is not much good to you if you can't box. Bundrage had no problem getting inside and weakening Elerson with body punches and Elerson retired at the end of the fourth round. This was the first fight for over three years for the former IBF super welterweight champion as he gives it another try at the advanced age of 47. Now 20 losses by KO/TKO for poor Elerson.

Rock Hill, SC, USA: Super Light: Alberto Palmetta (15-1) W TKO 5 Saul Corral (31-15). Argentinian southpaw Palmetta breaks down and halts Corral in five rounds. Palmetto got off to a flying start flooring Corral in the first. Corral survived but took severe punishment over the next three rounds with the referee close to stopping the fight a couple of times. Corral stayed around until the fifth but was still taking a beating and the referee stepped in to save him. Palmetta moves to nine consecutive wins inside the distance. He was a leading light for Argentina in the amateurs winning bronze medals at the South American Games and the Pan American Games. Corral has won just 3 of his last 9 fights,

Fight of the week (Significance): Devin Haney's winning title defence keeps alive the hope for some interesting bouts at lightweight

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Too many fights were one-sided and even though it only lasted into the second round Roman Andreev vs. Pavel Malikov did provide some fireworks.

Fighter of the week: Devin Haney for his title defence

Punch of the week: Two punches on the show in Ekaterinburg were impressive with the right from Andreev that finished Malikov outstanding and Magomed Kurbanov's body punch that ended his fight with Dmitry Mikhaylenko brutal but I will go for the powerhouse straight right from China's Zhilei Zhang that flattened Devin Vargas

Upset of the week: None.

Prospect watch: Lithuanian welterweight Eimantas Stanionis (11-0) did an impressive job in stopping Justin DeLoach

Observations

Good to see boxing return to Namibia with more shows planned.

Not so good to see a gym in Japan closed due to COVID-19.

A heavyweight weekend with five heavyweight fights on the show in Los Angeles, two in Hollywood and another in Ekaterinburg and not one of them went the distance. Phillip Hrgovic is in danger of losing his "Stone Man" nickname and getting tagged the "The Pensioner Puncher" if he keeps fighting "seasoned" opponents. A (Evgeny) Romanov in Ekaterinburg-Lenin will rest uneasy in his grave.