

The Past Week in Action 21 December 2020

Highlights:

- Saul Alvarez becomes a four-division champion with wide unanimous decision over Callum Smith to unify the WBA and WBC titles**
- Gennady Golovkin returns to action and retains the IBF and IBO middleweight world titles as he forces a retirement against Kamil Szeremeta**
- Ilunga Makabu makes successful defence of the WBC cruiserweight title with knockout of Olanrewaju Durodola**
- Gilberto Ramirez continues his light heavyweight campaign with tenth round stoppage of Alfonso Lopez**
- Reymart Gaballo wins the interim WBC bantamweight title with hotly disputed points win over Emmanuel Rodriguez**
- Albert Puello retains the interim WBA super light title with kayo of Christian Coria**
- Carlos Gongora give Ecuador a champion as he halts Ali Akhmedov in the twelfth round to become IBO super middle champion**
- The IBO welterweight title remains vacant after a clash of heads ends the fight between Jaron Ennis and Chris van Heerden in the first round resulting in a No Decision**
- Tim Tszyu continues his march to the top with first round victory over Bowyn Morgan**
- Gamal Yafai wins the European super bantam title with points victory over champion Luca Rigoldi**
- IBO cruiserweight champion Kevin Lerena eases his way back with stoppage of Patrick Ferguson**
- The two Sergio's Martinez and European Champion Garcia win in Spain**
- Felix Sturm returns to the ring for the first time in almost five years with points victory over Timo Rost**

-Craig Richards wins the British light heavyweight title with stoppage of champion Shakan Pitters
-John Ryder, Mike Hunter, David Light, Frank Sanchez and Gary Antonio Russell all record wins.

World Title/Major Shows

18 December

Hollywood, FL, USA: Middle: Gennady Golovkin (41-1-1) W RTD 7 Kamil Szeremeta (21-1). Super Middle: Carlos Gongora (19-0) W KO 12 Ali Akhmedov (16-1). Super Middle: John Ryder (29-5) W PTS 10 Mike Guy (12-6-1).

Golovkin vs. Szeremeta

Golovkin floors Szeremeta four times before the challenger from Poland decides he has had enough and retires at the end of the seventh round.

Round 1

Both jabbing at the start probing for openings. Both fired rights but Golovkin was finding the range with the right and with left hooks to the body. With just seconds remaining in the round Szeremeta threw a lazy left and Golovkin came up inside and connected with a left hook to the head that sent Szeremeta to the floor. He was up quickly and walked back to his corner after the eight count.

Score: 10-8 Golovkin

Round 2

Golovkin was aiming to land with his right at the start of the round and Szeremeta was jabbing strongly. A right from Golovkin made Szeremeta buckle at the knees but the Pole steadied himself and went back to jabbing. Golovkin finally found a gap and connected with a hard right that had Szeremeta staggering forward and going down. He was up at three then tried to stay inside and hold but was rocked by another right before the bell.

Score: 10-8 Golovkin

Golovkin 20-16

Round 3

Szeremeta boxed steadily behind his jab in the third. He was countering well evading Golovkin's rights. It looked as though it would be a good recovery round for Szeremeta but Golovkin shook him connecting with a left uppercut and a right to the head.

Score: 10-9 Golovkin

Golovkin 30-25

Round 4

Golovkin was advancing throwing punches and putting Szeremeta under pressure. Szeremeta responded with a heavy right to the head but Golovkin continued to find openings and a right to the side of the head followed by a left hook dropped Szeremeta. Again he was up quickly and made it to the bell without any further trouble.

Score: 10-9 Golovkin

Golovkin 40-34

Round 5

Golovkin was trying to put Szeremeta away firing plenty of jabs, landing left hooks to the body and connecting with clubbing rights to the head. Szeremeta stuck to his jab and landed a couple of uppercuts and Golovkin's punch output dropped as he was going for big single shots.

Score: 10-9 Golovkin

Golovkin 50-43

Round 6

The pace slowed in the early part of the round which allowed Szeremeta to get on the front foot and score with his jab. Golovkin connected with some uppercuts and then put together a series of punches before the bell.

Score: 10-9 Golovkin

Golovkin 60-52

Round 7

Eight points behind after six rounds is not a nice place to be but things worsened when after landing some heavy rights to the head Golovkin actually sent Szeremeta back and down on his rump with two left jabs. To his credit although getting caught with more punches Szeremeta boxed his way to the

bell. He would have not done that against a younger Golovkin who would have bombarded Szeremeta with punches until he dropped. Now Golovkin was firing four or five punches and then taking a step back and regrouping before attacking again.

Score: 10-8 Golovkin

Golovkin 70-61

Szeremeta retired after the end of the seventh.

Golovkin was defending the IBF and IBO titles for the first time since taking a close verdict over Sergiy Derevyanchenko in October last year. He still has fast hands and top level power but some of the fire seemed to be missing and at 38 he looks to be passed his peak. Other than a third fight against Saul Alvarez or a clash with unbeaten Jaime Munguia there does not seem to be any big pay days out there. Former undefeated European champion Szeremeta had performed well in European matches but his rating flattered him as there was a total absence of any world class opposition on his record. He will start again but may not have what it takes to win a world title.

Gongora vs. Akhmedov

Ecuadorian Gongora outlasts Akhmedov and comes from behind to score a last round victory. After a slow first round Akhmedov went to work in the second. He was piling forward behind his jab and forcing Gongora to fight on the back foot. He was crowding hard and the balding Gongora was struggling to keep Akhmedov out but his wealth of experience from around 300 amateurs fights meant he was always finding ways to slot in counters. Gongora stayed in the centre of the ring over the middle rounds and that led to plenty of heavy exchanges with Gongora rocking Akhmedov in the eighth. Akhmedov was still doing most of the throwing and the landing and had built a good lead. They traded punches through a hectic ninth which seemed to go Gongora's way and Akhmedov had a gash under his right eye. The tenth saw Gongora in charge and he was the one landing the harder shots with Akhmedov's output dropping. Feeling the fight might be getting away from him Akhmedov put in a huge effort in the eleven but

Gongora was never troubled and Akhmedov looked exhausted. Akhmedov attacked hard in the last but as they exchanged punches a left uppercut dumped him on the floor. He got up but was still much very unsteady and another left uppercut sent him down flat on his back and he was counted out. Big win for Gongora, 31, which nets him the IBO title which was vacant. His fourteenth by KO/TKO. Kazakh Akhmedov, 25, was favourite here but he now has plenty of work to do to get back into the world ratings.

Ryder vs. Guy

Ryder gets unanimous decision over an overcautious Guy. From the outset Ryder was prowling after Guy who circled the perimeter of the ring lunging forward occasionally with a series of wild flapping punches. Ryder was doing what clean scoring there was but was not doing much of a job of cutting off the ring. When Guy did lunge forward he was holding and doing very little work so there were no highlights at all over the ten rounds. Ryder did up his pace over the last three rounds pressing harder and cutting down the ring forcing Guy to stray from the ropes to exchange punches and when that happened Ryder was able to land heavily with right hooks. The result of all this was a boring fight which is the last thing Ryder wanted as he needed to impress to get big fights in the USA. Scores 100-90 and 99-91 and a very different 96-94 all for Ryder. He had given Callum Smith a hard time in losing on points to Smith for the WBA title in November and he may find it hard to get another title shot. Guy, 39, was in reasonable form having outpointed Denis Douglin and lost a split decision to Demond Nicholson.

Galveston, TX, USA: Light Heavy: Gilberto Ramirez (41-0) W TKO 10 Alfonso Lopez (32-4). Heavy: Michael Hunter (19-1-1) W KO 4 Shawn Laughery (10-4). Ramirez vs. Lopez

In his second fight at light heavy Ramirez outboxes and outpunches Lopez before ending the fight in the tenth round. In the first round it was Ramirez shadowing a retreating Lopez but from the second Lopez decided to stand and trade with Ramirez. It was obvious that Ramirez had the faster hands and was more controlled with his punches. Lopez was relying on little bursts of punches without a great deal of power. Ramirez began to pile up the points with his jab and quick hooks to head and body. Lopez had some success when he could wrestle Ramirez to the ropes and try to pound him with hooks but Ramirez had no trouble outfighting Lopez inside. Lopez forced Ramirez to the ropes a couple of times in the fourth but when they moved to the centre of the ring Ramirez was using his faster hands to plaster Lopez with punches. Lopez continued to try to bully Ramirez against the ropes in the fifth and sixth but Ramirez was finding the target with his jabs and hooks and often turning his way off the ropes and banging home punches as Lopez was now the one pinned there. Ramirez was in total control in the seventh and in the eighth a tiring Lopez was shipping some heavy punishment. By the end of the ninth it was target practice for Ramirez as he teed-off on Lopez and dug in vicious body shots. Lopez had swellings around both eyes and the referee asked the doctor to examine Lopez before the start of the tenth. Lopez gave it one last shot at the start of the tenth as he walked forward throwing punches. He was walking into some punishing counters and was already stumbling when a volley of punches ending with a big right to the head sent Lopez down on his back with the referee just waiving the fight ended. Ramirez wins the NABF title. The former undefeated WBO super middle champion is No 1 in the WBC cruiser ratings so a fight with the unbeaten Russian Artur Beterbiev, who also holds the IBF belt, should not be too hard to make in 2021 although he is not rated by the IBF at this time. He is also No 4 with the WBA so may prefer going after Dmitry Bivol or Jean Pascal the holder of the WBA secondary

title . Lopez proved tough and durable but never really threatened Ramirez's domination.

Hunter vs. Laughery

Ring time more important than impressing as Hunter knocks out Laughery after an indifferent showing. Neither fighter looked in good shape with Hunter slow and southpaw Laughery even slower. Hunter floored Laughery in the first with a succession of head punches and had him in trouble again later in the round. Hunter constantly switched guard to no real effect but he had Laughery under fire again at the end of the second. The third was a slow prodding rather than punching round. A low punch from Hunter hurt Laughery in an exchange and then Hunter cut loses with a bombardment with Laughery going down on one knee and Hunter adding a punch when Laughery had a knee on the floor. Laughery just watched the count without making any attempt to get up. Wins over Martin Bakole and Sergey Kuzmin and a draw with Alexandr Povetkin have seen Hunter ranked in the top ten by the WBA, WBC and WBO so he is on the fringes hoping somehow to get a title shot. Laughery strictly backwoods circuit level.

Uncasville, CT, USA: Welter: Jason Ennis (26-0,1 ND) ND 1 Chris van Heerden (28-2-1,1ND). Bantam: Reymart Gaballo (24-0) W PTS 12 Emmanuel Rodriguez (19-2). Welter: Brandun Lee (21-0) W TKO 3 Dakota Linger (12-5-2). Bantam: Gary Antonio Russell (18-0) W TEC DEC 7 Juan Carlos Payano (21-5).

Ennis vs. van Heerden

The vacant IBO title remains vacant as a clash of heads in the first round sees van Heerden suffer a bad cut over his right eye. Ennis came out throwing punches trying to blow van Heerden away and it looked as though he might succeed, He was connecting with punches to head and body. van Heerden was looking flustered as the punches came thick and fast and he was rocked on a couple of occasions until with about twenty

second remaining in the round they clashed heads.

Disappointing end for both boxers but in the time the fight lasted things looked good for Ennis so he will be hoping to get another shot at the IBO title but van Heerden will need quite a bit of recovery time from such a serious cut.

Gaballo vs. Rodriguez

Gaballo wins the interim WBC title with hotly disputed split decision over Rodriguez in a clash of contrasting style with the aggression of Gaballo and the skills of Rodriguez. Gaballo was coming forward putting pressure on Rodriguez but Rodriguez was boxing slickly slipping Gaballo's punches and slotting home counters, Gaballo did a little bit better in the second using his jab more and scoring with a good right but was still being outboxed. The third was close with Rodriguez again having the edge due to his accurate leads and counters and he knocked Gaballo off balance with a right in the fourth but had suffered a cut over his left eye in a clash of heads. Both had good spells in the fifth but a late finish from Rodriguez that saw him rock Gaballo with a right gave him the edge. Gaballo pressed hard with hooks to the body in a close sixth which could have been scored either way and he connected with enough rights to take the seventh. In the eighth Gaballo was throwing plenty and exerting pressure with Rodriguez keeping things tight and countering and moving. Gaballo continued to storm forward in the ninth but as he marched in during the tenth a stiff jab had him staggering back unsteadily. He was hurt but Rodriguez failed to follow-up on his success. Gaballo continued to hunt Rodriguez down over the last two rounds but had difficulty finding the target on the slippery Rodriguez and was being caught by accurate counters as Rodriguez boxed his way to what seemed a clear victory. Scores 116-112 and 115-113 for Gaballo and 118-110 for Rodriguez. My view leans a lot closer towards the last score than the other two but it is the score from the judges that decide a fight and they obviously saw a lot more in Gaballo's aggression than the skills and countering

of Rodriguez and the Philippines have another champion. Quite a bit of shuffling before this fight came about. Rodriguez was to have fought Nonito Donaire but Donaire tested positive for COVID-19 so Gaballo came in instead. That coincided with the WBC declaring bantamweight champion Nordine Oubaali "champion in recess" due to testing positive for COVID-19 so this fight then became for the interim WBC title. Gaballo, 24, had scored wins over Stephon Young, Yeison Vargas and Kongfah but was only No 26 in the WBC ratings. Rodriguez was having his first fight since losing his IBF title on a second round kayo against Naoya Inoue in May 2019. Hopefully he will get another title shot as he was so unlucky here.

Lee vs. Linger

Linger showed he came to fight as he rocked Lee with a right to the head in the first twenty seconds. Lee then took over forcing Linger back with his long leads and then pounding on Linger with hooks. Linger was crude with his attacks in the second and Lee was scoring easily with his jab and countering the wild swinging attacks from Linger but Linger looked dangerous on occasion. Lee had shaken Linger with a couple of head punches in the third when the referee stepped in and stopped the fight. It looked a premature stoppage with neither fighter quite sure why the fight had been stopped. Lee now has 19 inside the distance wins including 13 in a row. He has a few wins over reasonable level opposition but is ready to move up. Linger was crude with a capital "C" but game enough. He has lost 4 of his last 5 but two of the losses were majority decisions

Kinshasa, DRC, Cruiser: Ilunga Makabu (28-2) W TKO 7 Olanrewaju Durodola (34-8).

Makabu vs. Durodola

Makabu remains WBC champion as he floors and stops Durodola in the seventh round.

Round 1

Lots of caution in the opener. Both fighters really just probing with their jab and a pair of body punches from Makabu were enough to give him the round

Score: 10-9 Makabu

Round 2

Durodola had a good round. He ploughed forward driving Makabu to the ropes and throwing lots of punches. His accuracy was low but he was throwing and landing more than Makabu.

Score: 10-9 Durodola

TIED 19-19

Round 3

A better round for Makabu. He was much more active reaching the taller Durodola with southpaw jabs and landing with strong body punches. Durodola had some success when he pinned Makabu to the ropes but even inside Makabu was the one landing the better punches.

Score: 10-9 Makabu

Makabu 29-28

Round 4

Makabu. He was getting his jabs home and scoring with left hooks and firing hard lefts to the head. When Mabao dropped his pace Durodola was able to rumble forward with some success but was being caught by counters.

Score: 10-9 Makabu

Makabu 39-37

Round 5

After a bright start Makabu fell away in this round. Durodola was marching forward throwing punches and although many were off target he was connecting with rights to the body. Makabu was on the back foot chucking hard counters but not enough.

Score: 10-9 Durodola

Makabu 48-47

Round 6

Makabu's best round. He was finding gaps for strong jabs and scoring with clubbing lefts to the head. He was landing heavy at one time getting through with four consecutive lefts and just before the bell he wobbled Durodola with a left.

Score: 10-9 Makabu

Makabu 58-56

Round 7

Both were landing heavy shots in the eighth when Makabu connected with a straight left that sent Durodola staggering back and another left sent him into a corner and down.

Durodola made it to his feet but when the referee asked him to step forward he did not do so and the referee waived his arms to end the fight.

First defence for Makabu and 25th win by KO/TKO. Durodola was competitive all the way but Makabu's power proved too much for him. His mandatory challenger is Thabiso Mchunu who he knocked out in eleven rounds back in 2015. Nigeria Durodola, 40, was ridiculously flattered by his No 3 rating by the WBC and has usually been stopped inside the distance whenever he meets a quality opponent but he fought hard here until those two lefts from Ilunga.

19 December

San Antonio, TX, USA: Super Middle: Saul Alvarez (53-2-1) W PTS 12 Callum Smith (27-1). Heavy: Frank Sanchez (17-0,1ND) W TKO 7 Julian Fernandez (14-3).

Alvarez vs. Smith

Alvarez takes wide unanimous decision over Smith to win the WBA title and as the WBC agreed this could be for their vacant title he now holds both belts.

Round 1

Both fighters were cautious. Smith was on the back foot stabbing out his jab with Alvarez coming forward behind a high guard. Smith's jab was coming up short and Alvarez was not throwing many punches but a couple of body punches just gave Alvarez the edge.

Score 10-9 Alvarez:

Round 2

Smith was on the back foot jabbing again. Alvarez blocking most of Smith's punches and came forward quickly to score to the body. That fired Smith to a response and he advanced behind his jab getting through with some following punches and just did enough to earn the round.

Score 10-9 Smith

tied 19-19

Round 3

These rounds so far had been close as neither fighter was letting their hands go. It was the same in this one as Smith was stabbing his jabs without conviction and Alvarez was unable to hunt Smith down effectively. A few body punches from Alvarez were enough to give him the round.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 29-28

Round 4

Alvarez started to let his punches fly in this round and was cutting the ring off more effectively. He was quick with his jab and able to land to the body and connect with rights to the head. Smith was still relying heavily on the jab and trying some uppercuts but Alvarez was doing more scoring.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 39-37

Round 5

A good round for Smith. He was throwing plenty of jabs and then putting together hooks and uppercuts and working for the full three minutes. Alvarez had some success when he did manage to catch up to Smith but was outlanded.

Score: 10-9 Smith

Alvarez 48-47

Round 6

Another close round. Alvarez upped his pace and was doing better at cutting down on Smith's space. He was not throwing a lot of punches but he was accurate and putting real power in those he was landing. Smith was still going back and sticking to the jab which Alvarez was blocking or dodging.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 58-56

Round 7

Smith started the round well with plenty of jabs and some crisp uppercuts. Alvarez then began to press harder and Smith was having trouble keeping him out and Alvarez was landing hard body punches, straight rights and uppercuts.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 68-65

Round 8

Alvarez was relentless. He kept marching forward pressurising Smith forcing him to the ropes and then clubbing him with hooks to the body. A right uppercut had Smith hurt and he had almost abandoned his jab.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 78-74

Round 9

Clearer round yet for Alvarez. He was hunting Smith around the ropes pounding him with hooks to the body and head. Smith was not moving as much or jabbing as much and when he did fire a burst of punches Alvarez was weaving around them and then landing punches of his own.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 88-83

Round 10

Hunting time again for Alvarez. He kept trapping Smith against the ropes and landing series of rib-bending hooks and straight rights. Smith was really just looking to survive and was bleeding heavily from his nose and cut over his right eye with little movement left in his legs and no snap in his punches.

Score : 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 98-92

Round 11

Smith sparked briefly at the start of the round jabbing again and connecting with a couple of uppercuts but gradually Alvarez forced him back to the ropes. Alvarez harassed and harried Smith loading up on body punches and clubbing rights to the head and was just walking through Smith's punches.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 108-101

Round 12

Alvarez landed some brutal body shots in the last. Smith fired briefly a couple of times but was soon driven back to face more crunching lefts and rights but managed to stay the distance.

Score: 10-9 Alvarez

Alvarez 118-110

Official Scores: 119-109, 119-109 and 117-111 for Alvarez.

Apart from a few early rounds Smith was never really in this fight with a chance. Alvarez just walked Smith down and beat him to the body to break Smith's resistance. It was too one-sided to be a thriller. The WBC will now want him to face either Avni Yildirim or David Benavidez but in the end who he fights next will be for Alvarez and DAZN to decide. This victory make Alvarez a genuine four-division champion as the version of the WBA title he held was the secondary title. Smith has options and I would give him an excellent chance against any super middleweight except Alvarez.

Sanchez vs. Fernandez

Sanchez was throwing bombs at the outset with Fernandez skipping around the ring getting caught occasionally and firing a few jabs. Sanchez was landing some booming head punches in the second with Fernandez looking badly shaken but he moved and clinched to get through the round. Sanchez continued to bring some pain to Fernandez in the third and fourth but Fernandez managed to stay out of serious trouble and at the end of the fifth was against the ropes taunting and goading Sanchez to do his worst. Fernandez managed to get through the sixth with quick footwork and was actually taking the fight to Sanchez at times. A little success was dangerous and a too confident Fernandez was going back with his hands down with a thunderous right sent him flying into the ropes and another sent him out through the ropes onto a ringside table with blood pouring from his nose. The referee immediately ended the fight. Thirteen inside the distance wins by the 28-year-old Cuban who is No 7 with the WBO. Mexican Fernandez paid the price for overconfidence. He has previously

lost inside the distance to Tom Schwarz and Arslanbek Makhmudov

16 December

Sydney, Australia; Super Welter: Tim Tszyu (17-0) W TKO 1 Bowyn Morgan (21-2,1ND). Super Feather: Paul Fleming (26-0-1) TEC DRAW 3 Bruno Tarimo (25-2-2). Super Light: Darragh Foley (19-4-1) W PTS 10 Ty Telford (6-1-1).

Tszyu vs. Morgan

Tszyu destroys Morgan inside a round. After a couple of probing jabs Tszyu connected with a chopping right hand. Morgan went down to his knees but the referee decided Tszyu had pushed him down so did not apply a count. Morgan looked unhurt but Tszyu landed with more rights to the head and then exploded with a burst of punches getting through with uppercuts and rights to the head to send Morgan to the floor. Morgan was up quickly but after the count Tszyu connected with a single clubbing right that sent Morgan down on his side with his head out under the ropes and the referee immediately waived the fight over after just 114 seconds. Impress power show from the 26-year-old Tszyu who retains the WBO Global title with his thirteenth win by KO/TKO. Dad Kostya won the IBF super light title in his fourteenth fight. Tim is a bit behind Dad but if as being suggested WBO champion Patrick Teixeira is unable to travel due to COVID-19 regulations in Brazil and can't make his mandatory defence against Brian Castano then the WBO may either strip Teixeira and put Tszyu in with Castano for the vacant title or leave Teixeira as champion and have Tszyu and Castano fight for the interim title. New Zealander Morgan looked a genuine test having won his last fourteen fights but was blown away.

Fleming vs. Tarimo

Disappointing end as the fight is stopped after three rounds due to a cut suffered by Fleming on his forehead above his right eye. Australian-based Tanzanian Tarimo (he did box as Bruno Vifuaviwili when he first arrived in Australia) was giving Fleming real trouble with his all-out aggression before they clashed heads. First fight in two years for southpaw Fleming. Tarimo has lost only one of his last 21 fights which came when he won and then lost in fights against Billel Dib.

Foley vs. Telford

Foley's deeper experience saw him take a split decision over Telford. Neither had defence on their mind and set about knocking lumps off each other from the opening bell. Both were shaken on numerous occasions and Telford knocked Foley through the ropes but Foley climbed back and fought back. It was excitement all the way and a pity there had to be a loser. Scores 97-93 and 95-94 for Foley and 96-93 for Telford. Kent-born southpaw Foley collects three belts as the WBA Oceania, IBF Pan Pacific and IBO Asia Pacific titles were all vacant. Local hope Telford had drawn with Jack Brubaker in May and his performance here boosted his standing further.

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Minimumweight: Erick Rosa (2-0) W PTS 10 Byron Castellon (15-14-3,1ND). Super Light: Juan Zegarra (16-0,1ND) W Jovanie Santiago (13-0-1).

Rosa vs. Castellon

Flashy young southpaw Rosa outpoints more experienced Castellon. Rosa was too quick for Castellon and had the Nicaraguan under pressure for the whole fight sometimes he was overconfident and too showy and took chances and that let Castellon have some success but not a lot as Rosa was a few level above Castellon when it came to skill and hand speed and was a comfortable winner. Scores 99-91, 98-92 and 97-93 for Rosa who retains the WBC Latino and WBA Fedelatin belts that he won in his first pro fight. A former Dominican Youth

champion and Independence Cup gold medallist he is being fast-tracked to a world title shot next year and is already rated No 14 by the WBA. Castellon had lost a split decision to current WBA No 2 Byron Rojas last year.

Santiago vs. Zegarra

Santiago too strong for Zegarra and wins inside a round. Santiago quickly forced Zegarra onto the defensive and was connecting with left hooks to the body. Zegarra fired back until a right to the body saw him go down on one knee and he was counted out. Ten wins by KO/TKO for Puerto Rican Santiago who was defending the WBA Fedelatin title. Peruvian southpaw Zegarra had won his last twelve fights.

Astana, Kazakhstan: Super Middle: Aidos Yerbossynuly (15-0) W TKO 3 Issah Samir (19-1).

Kazakh Yerbossynuly halts Samir in a confused ending. Yerbossynuly was in control from the start and over the first two rounds was landing strong rights to the head and left hooks to the body. Samir is really only a middleweight and was slow carrying 7 ½lbs more than in his last fight but showed some fire at times. In the third after Yerbossynuly had scored with some heavy punches Samir tried to hold. Yerbossynuly swung him round and into the rope. With Samir side on to him Yerbossynuly reached around and connected with left hooks to the body and a right to the head. As Samir dropped to his haunches Yerbossynuly landed a right to the head. Samir got up and complained about the punches then ignored the referee stalking up and down beside the ropes whilst the referee counted to eight and with Samir still refusing to acknowledge the count the referee waived the fight over. A confused ending but Yerbossynuly was on his way to a win. He retains a whole slew of titles in the WBC Asian, WBA International and WBO Global. First fight outside Ghana and first fight for 16 months.

Los Angeles, CA, USA: Welter: Eimantas Stanionis (12-0) W TKO 9 Janer Gonzalez (19-4-1). Middle: Eumir Marcial (1-0) W PTS 4 Andrew Whitfield (3-1).

Stanionis grinds down Gonzalez on his way to a ninth round stoppage. Nothing flashy about the Lithuanian. He just walks forward through whatever punches come his way and responds with clubbing rights and left hooks to the body. Gonzalez was forced to fight going back as nothing he threw was stopping the forward march of Stanionis. The Lithuanian also has a very useful jab which he used to set Gonzalez up for his hooking attacks. Gonzalez was finding plenty of gaps and landing some strong punches but he began to wilt under the relentless pressure from Stanionis. The fight had gone out of Gonzalez by the eighth and two rights crosses and a right uppercut saw him drop to one knee. He was up quickly and the bell went as the eight count was completed. He tried to punch with Stanionis in the ninth but when a right to the head sent him down on one knee again the referee stopped the fight. A 2016 Olympian Stanionis chewed up Justin De Loach in the same fashion last month and looks ready to break into the ratings. Colombian Gonzalez gets his fourth loss in a row.

Marcial vs. Whitfield

Marcial turns pro with a routine points win over inexperienced Whitfield. Nothing spectacular for Marcial as he wins all four rounds to launch his pro career. A former World Junior champion who collected a bucket full of medals the Philippines has high hopes for the 25-year-old who will be competing at the Tokyo Olympics next year. Whitfield no threat but stayed the distance comfortably

17 December

Milan, Italy: Super Bantam: Gamal Yafai (18-1) W PTS 12 Luca Rigoldi (22-2-2) . Light: Devis Boschiero (49-6-2) W PTS 10 Samuel Gonzalez (22-8).Super Welter:

Mirko Natalizi (9-0) W TKO 3 Manuel Largacha (9-10-6). Super Light: Sandor Martin (37-2) W PTS 8 Nestor Maradiaga (8-9-1).

Yafai vs. Rigoldi

Yafai outpoints Rigoldi to win the European title. Yafai made a confident start taking the first three rounds. He took control if the centre of the ring was quicker than the champion slotting home straight rights and connecting with left hooks. Southpaw Rigoldi found his rhythm in the fourth finally putting Yafai under pressure. Yafai did better in the fifth but Rigoldi upped his pace in the sixth scoring with strong lefts. The action swayed to-and fro. With one fighter and then the other in control with Yafai picking up enough rounds to keep his early lead intact. A fiery tenth probably went Rigoldi's way but Yafai kept finding the target to counter the champion's attacks and Rigoldi just could not claw back Yafai's early lead. Scores 116-112 twice and a very harsh 119-109 for Yafai. The 29-year-old new champion is the younger brother of former WBA super fly champion Khalid and is a former Commonwealth and WBC International champion. His only defeat is a points loss to world title challenger Gavin McDonnell in 2018. Rigoldi, 27, was making the third defence of the European title. Previous wins over 42-4-1 Jeremy Parodi and 20-1-1 Oleksandr Yegorov show he has the talent to bounce back from this loss.

Boschiero vs. Gonzalez

Boschiero was to have fought an important bout against Francesco Patera but the Belgian was smitten down by COVID-19 and Venezuelan Gonzalez came in as a substitute. Gonzalez had been fighting at super light so was bigger and stronger than Boschiero. Undeterred by that Boschiero employed his usual aggressive tactics and outworked Gonzalez over the first two rounds. Gonzalez showed improvement from the third boxing on the outside and connecting well with his jab. The rounds were close with Boschiero landing the cleanest punches but Gonzalez was strong over the late rounds and it was a

difficult fight to score. The judges came up with two cards of 96-94 for Boschiero and 96-94 for Gonzalez who did enough to deserve a draw. At 39 there is still plenty of life left in former European champion Boschiero. Milan-based Gonzalez suffers his third consecutive loss but put up an excellent performance when coming in so late.

Natalizi vs. Largacha

Largacha certainly came to fight rumbling forward throwing punches and putting Natalizi under pressure over the first two rounds. Natalizi constantly changed guards and landed heavy shots to head and body on the aggressive Panamanian but Largacha kept coming and they just stood and threw punch after punch late in the second. Largacha continued to storm forward in the third. He landed some good shots but was rocked continually by head punches from Natalizi and finally a burst of punches from Natalizi had Largacha ready to fall and the referee stopped the fight. Sixth stoppage win for 25-year-old prospect Natalizi a former Italian amateur champion and successful member of the Milan Thunder WSB team. Spanish-based Largacha's recent form is 1-6-3 but he entertained in this one.

Martin vs. Maradiaga

Just a light run out for talented Martin. In his first fight for a year he showcased his considerable skills against novice Maradiaga. Much of the time it was target practice for Martin as he scored heavily with class punches to head and body. At times it looked as though Maradiaga might wilt from the body shots. It was really only over the last two rounds that Martin upped his pace looking to stop Maradiaga but the young Nicaraguan held on and Martin's lack of a big punch forced him to settle for a unanimous decision. The 27-year-old southpaw from Barcelona is awaiting a date for his defence of the European title against Enoch Poulsen but also has his eyes on a WBA eliminator against Lewis Ritson.

Puerto Colombia, Colombia: Welter: Gabriel Maestre (3-0) W KO 1 Daniel Vega (16-5-1). Super bantam: Jose Sanmartin (31-5-1) W PTS 10 Ricardo Roman (14-11-3). Welter: Jeovanis Barraza (22-1) W RTD 4 Jose Feria (24-10-1). Feather: Franklin Manzanilla (19-6) W TKO 3 Jose Alfaro (9-9-3). Super Feather: Angel Rodriguez W KO 4 Derlinson Buriel (9-9-1). Bantam: Yoel Finol (3-0) W PTS 6 Javier Martinez (12-5).

Maestre vs. Vega

All over in 38 seconds as Vega collapses after a series of punches from Maestre. Three left hooks to the body in succession had Vega backing up and he was already starting to sink when Maestre connected with a right to the head sending Vega down and out-a bit too easily. A pity that the 34-year-old Maestre has waited so long to turn pro. He scored victories over Rosniel Iglesias, Carlos Adames, Brian Ceballo, Alex Besputin and Brian Castano and took gold medals at the PanAmerican Games and the South American Championships but if he is to succeed as a pro he will have to rush to the top and take risky fights. Mexican Vega has four inside the distance defeats.

Sanmartin vs. Roman

"El General" Sanmartin easily handles Mexican Roman outclassing him over ten rounds. Scores 98-92 twice and 100-90. The only loss Sanmartin has suffered in his last twelve fights was a twelfth round kayo by Emanuel Navarrete in 2018. Roman has a victory over former WBO flyweight champion Julio Cesar Miranda but was well beaten here.

Barraza vs. Feria

Colombian Barraza wins against fellow countryman Feria on a fourth round retirement. The 25-year-old from Barranquilla has 15 inside the distance wins but was stopped in two rounds by Gabriel Maestre in two in July last year. Feria's inside the distance losses move to double figures with this being his tenth.

Manzanilla vs. Alfaro

Venezuelan Manzanilla much too much for Alfaro. Manzanilla was connecting well to the body over the first two rounds before a left to the ribs sent Alfaro down and he was counted out. A win over 32-2 Julio Ceja in 2018 landed a title shot for Manzanilla but he lost on points to Rey Vega for the WBC title in February 2019. A second round loss against Azat Hovhannisyan in September last year meant this was a must win fight for Manzanilla who gets his eighteenth inside the schedule. Alfaro was 2-0-2 which was good form for him but he loses any time he tries to move up.

Rodriguez vs. Buriel

Rodriguez finishes fellow Venezuelan Buriel in the fourth round. After dominating the first three rounds with his long reach a cracking left hook to the body sent Buriel down on his hands knees with his head resting on the canvas and he could not rise. The only loss suffered by 33-year-old Rodriguez came early in his career against Carlos Diaz who is currently 29-1. Buriel has five inside the distance losses

Finol vs. Martinez

Finol gets in some ring time after a year of inactivity. He was able to comfortably outbox Martinez without impressing too much as Martinez proved a tricky customer. Scores 60-54 twice and 59-55. Venezuelan Finol, 24, won a bronze medal at the Rio Olympics and scored wins over Cubans Yosvany Veitia and Robeisy Ramirez so plenty expected from him. There is a tragedy in the family background as his brother-in-law the late former world champion Edwin Valero murdered Finol's sister. Colombian Martinez had been 10-1 in his last 11 fights.

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Super Light: Alberto Puello (18-0) W KO 6 Cristian Coria (29-8-2). Super Bantam: Luis Nunez (10-0) W TKO 4 Giovanni Gutierrez (10-2-1). Feather: Tomas Rojas (52-19-1,1ND) W DISQ 10 Ranfis Encarnacion (17-2). Super Fly:

Norberto Jimenez (30-9-5) W PTS 8 Marvin Solano (23-5). Feather: William Encarnacion (19-1) W PTS 6 Donny Garcia (16-9).Light: Alfredo Santiago (13-1) W TKO 1 Tony Gomez (13-7-1).

Puello vs. Coria

Puello retains the interim WBA title with sixth round knockout of Coria. Puello towered over Coria and that meant Coria had to come forward to score. Within the first minutes Puello connected with a right and a left and Coria's knees dipped and one knee touched the canvas so the referee gave Coria a count but he was not badly shaken and survived the round. Puello controlled the action in the second scoring to the body with hooks. Coria had to reach so far that his punches had lost any power by the time they arrived at Puello. Coria just could not get past Puello's jab or anywhere near him in the third and fourth. Puello was picking Coria off with jabs but having to punch down was making Puello inaccurate much of the time. Both fighters spent more time missing than hitting in a cagey fifth. Puello was landing lefts to the body in the sixth and at the end of the round-which seem to run a few seconds over- a left to the body dropped Coria to his knees and he was counted out whilst trying to make it to his feet. First defence for Puello and his tenth inside the distance victory. Coria, 38, had earned his title shot with an upset stoppage of 24-1 Joel Diaz in his last fight in February 2019.

Nunez vs. Gutierrez

Nunez floors and halts Gutierrez in three. Gutierrez was firing lots of punches but the measured, accurate punching was coming from Dominican Nunez. He was working well with his jab and finding the range with some crisp body punching and he had Gutierrez in trouble with a right to the head late in the third. Gutierrez dropped to a knee under a burst of punches in the fourth but was not badly hurt. Nunez took Gutierrez to the ropes and unloaded with punch after punch until the referee stepped in to stop the fight with Gutierrez complaining that he

was unhurt- but then should have punched back. Nunez, 21, wins the vacant interim WBA Fedelatin title. He is a former Dominican and Pan American Youth champion and claims an 85-5 amateur record. Nicaraguan Gutierrez had lost his unbeaten record in a points defeat to 22-1 Mike Plania in Miami in December.

Rojas vs. Encarnacion

Encarnacion is disqualified for landing a deliberate blow to the back of the head of Rojas that sent the Mexican face down on the canvas and disgracefully Rojas both the referee and the doctor failed to respond quickly enough to get him treatment. The first two rounds saw both fighters looking to stay inside and work to the body with Encarnacion the stronger trying to wear down the 40-year-old Rojas. The fight opened out in the third which suited Rojas who was outboxing Encarnacion. In the fourth a straight southpaw left to the head floored Encarnacion. He beat the count and then bobbed, weaved and held to survive before banging an elbow into the mouth of Rojas at the bell. Encarnacion went crazy in the fifth he butted Rojas, used neck holds and twice wrestled Rojas to floor then they still exchanged punches after the bell. More rough stuff from raging Encarnacion in the sixth and seventh and in the eighth he wrapped his arms around the neck of Rojas from behind and dragged Rojas to the floor. Finally the referee deducted a point from Encarnacion for holding. Encarnacion did some good work in the ninth outpunching Rojas inside. The knockdown and the point deduction became irrelevant in the tenth. As Rojas twisted away from a clinch he had his back to Encarnacion. Encarnacion had his right ready to land a punch to the back of the head of Rojas. He paused for a split second and then deliberately struck Rojas on the back of the head. Rojas slumped to the canvas with a groan. Whilst Rojas was lying face down on the canvas in obvious distress the referee standing beside Rojas instead of signalling for help for Rojas decided to grab Encarnacion's hand and signal to the three

judges he was deducting a point from Encarnacion. Meanwhile Rojas was lying face down at the referee's feet writhing on the floor with no sign of any medical help. It was Rojas' corner man who entered the ring and went to help him. He and the referee decided to turn Rojas on to his back and then 30 seconds since Rojas had hit the floor a doctor finally arrived. Only after that did the referee decide to disqualify Encarnacion. Disgraceful. No update on Rojas.

Jimenez vs. Solano

After a slow start Jimenez finishes strongly to get the decision. Solano boxed intelligently over the early rounds. Plenty of movement plenty of jabs and switching his attack from head to body. Jimenez was finding it difficult to walk Solano down. Solano's problem was a lack of power and eventually Jimenez was able to pile on the pressure-while landing punches to the back of Solano's head in the second, third and fourth rounds for which all he received was a finger-wagging. Solano was throwing loads more punches than Jimenez but by the fourth he was just flapping his arms with little power or accuracy and Jimenez was scoring the cleaner shots. Jimenez lost a point in the sixth. With Solano's chin resting on his shoulder Jimenez performed a violent upward movement of his shoulder snapping Solano's head back and then less than thirty seconds later deliberately landed three consecutive punches to the back of Solano's head with Solano sinking to his knees. No warning to Jimenez then or when he again landed two punches to the back of Solano's head. The early pace told on Solano and his work rate dropped over the seventh and eighth with that being enough to get Jimenez the unanimous decision. Jimenez lost a wide points decision to Khalid Yafai in a challenge for the WBA super fly title in June last year then drew in Dubai with Aliu Bamidele Lasisi last March. Nicaraguan Solano outpointed world title challenger Dewayne Beamon in November last year.

Encarnacion vs. Garcia

In his first fight since having his unbeaten streak ended in July last year Encarnacion takes unanimous decision over Garcia. Encarnacion constantly marched forward behind a stiff jab with Garcia rarely able to get on the front foot or offer and real resistance as Encarnacion boxed his way to a unanimous verdict. The 32-year-old Dominican had registered a couple of useful wins but was knocked out in four rounds by inexperienced Nicaraguan Giovanni Gutierrez. After going 16-1 the wheels really came off for Garcia who is now 0-8 in his last 8 fights.

Santiago vs. Gomez

Santiago blitzes Gomez with two knockdowns in the opening round. Santiago was throwing long sweeping punches with both hands and found the target quickly. A Series of left and right hooks floored Gomez heavily. He managed to get up but looked shaky. Santiago connected with a right and two left hooks and sent Gomez crashing down against the ropes. Again a very befuddled Gomez was allowed to continue and a barrage of hooks and uppercuts brought the stoppage. Santiago,26, was in the ring for the first time since losing on points to Devin Haney for the WBC lightweight title. At 5'11" he is tall for his division and although he showed considerable power here this is only his sixth win by KO/TKO. Venezuelan Gomez had won his last six fights.

General Santos City, Philippines: Super Fly: K J Cataraja (12-0) W TKO 1 John Mark Apolinario (20-14-3). Feather: Joel Santisima (20-3) W KO 2 Marjon Piencenaves (6-2-1). Minimum: Marvin Jerusalem (16-2) W KO 2 Jayson Francisco (5-3).

Cataraja vs. Apolinario

Cataraja beats Apolinario inside the first round. Cataraja attacked strongly firing left hooks to the body then switching to throw rights to the head. Twice Apolinario fired back driving Cataraja across the ring until Cataraja stepped in with a vicious

left hook to the ribs and Apolinario went down on one knee in obvious pain and was counted out. Eight inside the decision finishes in his last nine fights for WBO No 12 Cataraja.

Apolinario has won only two of his last ten fights.

Santisima vs. Piencenaves

Santisima has too much power for a competitive Piencenaves who managed to box his way through the first round. In the second a left hook to the body sent Piencenaves down. He scrambled to his feet just before being counted out but a left hook sent him into and almost through the ropes and he was unable to get up before the ten count. Seventeenth wins inside the distance for Santisima and first fight since being stopped in eleven rounds by Emanuel Navarrete in a challenge for the WBO super bantam title in February. Second consecutive loss for Piencenaves.

Jerusalem vs. Francisco

Jerusalem finishes Francisco in two rounds with a not always legal body attack. In the first Jerusalem was attacking the body with hooks but one landed very low. Francisco sat on the canvas in his corner waiting for the referee to disqualify Jerusalem. Four minutes later with no sign the referee intended to disqualify Jerusalem Francisco finally climbed to his feet and resumed fighting but twice more in the round he complained about Jerusalem going low. A left to the body floored Francisco again in the second. Jerusalem then connected with a series of head punches before landing another body punch that saw Francisco go down again indicating the punch low and although he struggled to his feet he was too late. Jerusalem, the WBC No 2, was No 1 and waiting for a shot at champion Wanheng but with the Thai losing his title to Petchmanee on a very close decision Wanheng has been installed as No 1 by the WBC. Third inside the distance loss in his last four fights for Francisco.

Los Angeles, CA, USA: Super Welter: Charles Conwell (14-0) W RTD 9 Madiyar Ashkeyev (14-0).

Plenty of pressure from Colwell from the start. He was rumbling forward denying Ashkeyev any space and working him over against the ropes. Ashkeyev tried to establish his jab but just could not keep Colwell out or match him inside where it got rough at times. Ashkeyev had some success when he managed to fend off Conwell's attacks and do some scoring at distance but Conwell was remorseless and was digging in body shots in the seventh and eighth with Ashkeyev starting to flag. They traded punches through the ninth with Conwell landing some punishing shots late in the round and after the bell a bruised and battered Ashkeyev was pulled out by his corner. Conwell gets his eleventh win by KO/TKO in the second defence of the USBA title and he also collects the WBC United States belt. He was a National Golden Gloves champion and competed at the 2016 Olympics. As an amateur he scored victories over Edgar Berlanga, Chordale Booker, John Docherty and LeShawn Rodriguez. Ashkeyev just found Conwell too strong.

18 December

Zavalla, Argentina: Super Light: Gustavo Lemos (25-0) W TKO 2 Jakmani Hurtado (13-8-1).

Lemos remains unbeaten as he floors and stops Hurtado. Lemos had Hurtado under pressure in the first and an early ending was on the cards. In the second a left hook to the ribs and a right to the head had Hurtado collapsing to the canvas. He made it to his feet and took the fight to Lemos until a right to the head saw him lurching across the ring with the referee stepping in and wrapping his arms around Hurtado to save him from any more pain. Home town fighter Lemos, 24, collects the IBF Latino belt. He has won his last six fights by KO/TKO. Bolivian Hurtado is 1-4 in his last five outings.

Managua, Nicaragua: Super Fly: Keyvin Lara (29-3-1) W PTS 9 Ricardo Bandon (14-3,1ND).

Lara takes decision over Bandon in a competitive clash of Nicaraguans. Lara was the better boxer and Bandon was the busier. Lara rocked Bandon with rights in the fifth and sixth and had built a lead. Bandon kept pumping out punches. He was not always accurate and had to eat counters from Lara but the volume of his punches help him to cut into the lead Lara had built. They both tired at the end with Bandon the stronger but he had not done enough to cancel out Lara's early work. Scores 88-84 and 88-86 for Lara and 88-85 for Bandon. Lara continues his good run with 13 wins in his last 14 fights and collected the vacant WBA Fedecentro title. Bandon had won his last four fights.

Mandaue City, Philippines: Fly: Christian Araneta (19-1) W TKO 1 Roland Jay Biendima (15-7-1). Super Feather: Tomjune Mangubat (12-2-1) W RTD 3 Raymond Empic (7-6). Super Bantam: Carl Jammes Martin (16-0) W PTS 10 Richard Rosales (14-14-2). Super Bantam: Albert Pagara (33-1) W PTS 8 Virgil Puton (18-15-2).

Araneta vs. Biendima

Araneta lives up to "The Bomb" nickname as he destroys Biendima with one punch. Araneta was looking for a chance to counter as Biendima came forward putting Araneta under pressure. The chance came late in the first and Araneta fired home a flashing southpaw left hook that sent Biendima down flat on his back and the referee did not even bother to count. After going 17-0 Araneta, 25, was beaten on a fourth round retirement by 20-1 Mexican Daniel Valladares in Mexico in September last year when he suffered a reoccurrence of a shoulder injury. He is rated No 7(5) by the IBF. Second loss in a row for Biendima

Mangubat vs. Empic

Pressure from Mangubat gives him victory as Empic retires after three rounds. Easy night for Mangubat and a much needed wins as he had gone 1-2-1 in his four prior contests. This is his tenth win by KO/TKO. One win in his last five fights for the inexperienced Empic.

Martin vs. Rosales

Prospect Martin hands out a solid beating to Rosales but was extended the full distance for his win. The brilliant young southpaw chose to spend the first two rounds on the back foot letting Rosales march forward behind a high guard. From the third Martin was the one coming forward. With his much faster hands he was peppering Rosales with punches switching from head to body and putting together fast and accurate combinations. Rosales often resorted to backing to the ropes or into a corner and letting Martin blast away looking to catch Martin with one big right counter. That never happened but neither was Martin able to put Rosales in serious trouble and he settled for a points victory. Scores 100-90 twice and 98-92 for Martin. For the 21-year-old "Wonder Boy" this is only the second time he has been taken the distance in his 16 fights. Eighth loss in his last nine fights for Rosales.

Pagara vs. Puton

After sixteen months without a fight and 7lbs heavier Pagara was badly in need of some action so he was not looking to end this one too early. It was almost little more than sparring for Pagara who controlled the fight but occasionally allowed Puton some success without taking any risks. Pagara was happy to get eight rounds under his belt. Scores 78-74 twice and 79-73 for Pagara. He will be looking to rebuild into a contender to make up for the loss to Cesar Juarez when he was in line for a title shot back in 2016. Only one win in his last ten fights for

**Pionki, Poland: Heavy: Marcin Siwa (22-0) W TKO 2
Morgan Dessaux (6-8).**

Siwa disposes of Dessaux in two rounds. Siwa took the first round in which each scored with some good punches. In the second a left to the chin had the tall Frenchman in trouble and Siwa connected with a right to the head that saw Dessaux drop to one knee. After the count Siwa hunted Dessaux and the Frenchman went to the floor after a series of head punches. He again beat the count but was taking more punishment and the referee stopped the fight. Tenth victory by KO/TKO for Siwa but after 22 fights Siwa is still only going eight rounds against very modest opposition which seems to indicate a lack of confidence by his management. Dessaux suffers his sixth inside the distance defeat.

Belgrade, Serbia: Light Heavy: Marko Nikolic (27-0) W RTD 3 Ermin Avdic (12-9). Light Heavy: Nikola Sjekloca (37-5-1) W TKO 4 Bosko Mistic (20-14).

Nikolic vs. Avdic

Fireman beats policeman as local fire fighter Nikolic floored Avdic with a right to the head in the third and the Bosnian policemen did not come out for the fourth. The 31-year-old Serb holds the WBC Mediterranean title and has 12 wins by KO/TKO. In his last fight in September Nikolic scored a win over Frenchman Patrick Bois-also a policeman! Avdic has lost his last three fights by KO/TKO. He came in as a very short notice substitute reportedly because the intended opponent Farouk Daku tested positive for COVID-19.

Sjekloca vs. Mistic

Just a light workout for seasoned pro Sjekloca as he stops Mistic in four rounds. Now 42 the former WBO super middle title challenger was inactive in 2019 but has scored two low level wins this year. Third loss in a row for Bosnian-born Croat Mistic.

Kagiso, South Africa: Welter: Thulani Mbenge (17-1) W KO 4 Mziwoxolo Ndwayana (18-6-2).

Mbenge floors and beats a feisty Ndwayana. Mbenge used his longer reach to control the fight. Ndwayana kept trying to work his way inside but Mbenge was countering well and Ndwayana was having trouble getting past Mbenge's jab. A right from Mbenge put Ndwayana down in the third but it was decided he had only slipped. They were trading punches in the fourth when a series of rights from Mbenge dropped Ndwayana in a corner. Although Ndwayana just beat the count the referee waived to signal he had counted him out. Second win for Mbenge since losing his IBO title on points against Sebastian Formella in July last year. Former South African champion Ndwayana was stopped in two rounds by Ryan Martin in England in November last year.

Wilsonia, South Africa: Light: Lusanda Komanisi () W KO 6 Siphenathi Qampi (7-9).

Komanisi finds Qampi a handful is rocked a couple of times and has trouble finding the target before flattening Qampi with a right that dropped him into the ropes and down on his back. First fight in 15 months for the former South African and IBO champion. Qampi just a 4 and 6 round fighter so he performed above expectations here

Kiev, Ukraine: Super Light: Aram Faniian (19-1) W KO 5 Yuriy Vishnyakov (6-1).

Faniian given a good test by unbeaten Vishnyakov before finishing him with a strong combination in the fifth. Sixth consecutive win for the 23-year-old Ukrainian who wins the WBO Oriental belt with only his third quick win. Faniian too big a leap for Vishnyakov.

Kiev, Ukraine: Super Welter: Dmytro Mytrofanov (10-0-1) W PTS 10 Asinia Byfield (14-4-1).

Mytrofanov takes unanimous verdict over Byfield. The British fighter was at his best when he was able to box on the outside

using his longer reach. Mytrofanov did his best work inside. Both fighters had their periods of ascendancy and there was never much of a gap with good body punching and home advantage giving Mytrofanov the edge. Scores 99-92 , 99-94 and 96-94 for Mytrofanov with the first two scores almost an insult to Byefield's contribution to the fight. Oxnard-based Mytrofanov takes the vacant WBO Oriental title. Byfield is 0-3-1 this year but with three of those fights in the other guys back yard.

Redditch, England: Light Heavy: Craig Richards (16-1-1) W TKO 9 Shakan Pitters (14-0).

Richards wins British title as he floors champion Pitters twice on the way to a ninth round stoppage victory. The 6'6" Pitters had much the longer jab and tried to keep the fight on the outside. He jabbed well but Richards has quick hands and was landing his share. Richards upped his pace in the third scoring with rights and put Pitters down with a right cross in the fourth. Pitters beat the count and largely due to wild punching from Richards made it to the bell. Pitters worked his way back into the fight over successive rounds. He was boxing well in the ninth when a right from Richards unhinged his legs. Richards drove him across the ring and landing rights and then connoted with a huge left that sent Pitters down. He got up but he was very unsteady and the referee stopped the count to waive the fight off. Richards wins the British title at the second attempt having failed in a challenge against Frank Buglioni previously. Ninth victory by KO/TKO for the new champion. Pitters were making the first defence of the title.

19 December

Hamburg, Germany: Super Middle: Felix Sturm (41-5-3,1ND) W PTS 10 Timo Rost (10-1-2). Heavy: Jose Larduet (5-0,1ND) W TKO 1 Marcos Aumada (21-10).

Sturm vs. Rost

Sturm returns to the ring after being inactive since February 2016. After a first round weighing-up Rost and showing Sturm still had power in his jab Sturm step up his pace round after round. Rost lacked the skill or power to test Sturm but he was strong enough not to crumble and the ten rounds of action were exactly what Sturm needed, Scores 100-90, 100-93 and 99-91 for Sturm. The former two-division world champion is not out of trouble, Sturm spent eight months in custody and was sentenced to three years for tax evasion and assault. Sturm has appealed so his future is unknown. Rost did his job.

Larduet vs. Aumada

Cuban Larduet gets another first round victory as he crushes Ahumada. Larduet shook Aumada with a right to the head and as Ahumada lurched forward another right to the head followed by a booming left hook threw Ahumada to the floor on his back and the fight was over. Third consecutive first round blow out for the 30-year-old Larduet. Fourth consecutive loss for Aumada against unbeaten fighters.

Kempton Park, South Africa: Heavy: Kevin Lerena (26-1) W TKO 5 Patrick Ferguson (17-3-1). Cruiser: Johnny Muller (22-9-2) W PTS 10 Akani Phuzi (11-1) . Super Welter: Roarke Knapp (11-1-1) W KO 1 Simon Dladla (6-1). Welter: Jabulani Makhense (11-0) W PTS 10 Mardochee Kuvesa Katembo (13-4-1). Super Fly: Ricardo Malajika (7-0) W PTS 10 Rofhiwa Nemushungwa (12-7-2).

Lerena vs. Ferguson

After ten months out Lerena is much too good for Ferguson. Lerena was not just looking to put in some ring time. He took the fight to Ferguson immediately and had him in some trouble from a successions of lefts and rights but Fergus fired back late in the round. Ferguson was forced to box on the back foot in the second and did well until late when a fierce attack from

Lerena had him in trouble again. Ferguson boxed well in the third scoring with jabs and hooks and outscoring Lerena. The problem was that he lacked power whereas every punch Lerena threw spelt danger for Ferguson. In the fourth Ferguson had his left in Lerena's face for much of the round but that had nuisance value and little else as Lerena just shook them off. Ferguson was still sticking his jab in Lerena's face in the fifth. It was like prodding a wasps nest with a stick-do it often and you are going to get stung big time. Lerena unleashed a right uppercut that stiffened Ferguson's legs and Lerena drove him to the ropes and was unloading punch after punch, pausing to look for the referee to step in but when that did not happen he landed some more punches until finally the referee took action. The IBO champion has won his last fifteen fights including victories over Dymtro Kucher, and Firat Arslan as well as Johnny Muller the only fighter to have beaten him. He is No 2 with the WBA. Floridian-born Ferguson had won his last three fights and had fought in five different countries in his last six fights. He showed nice skills but not much power.

Muller vs. Phuzi

Muller shows there is still plenty of fight in him after eleven years as a pro as he decisively unbeaten Phuzi to win the WBA Pan African title. Muller scored a first round knockdown and dominated from there Scores 98-91 twice and 97-92. Muller was 2-5 going in so this will have given him a boost. Phuzi had scored wins over Wilberforce Shihepo and Vikapita Meroro and was defending the Pan African title for the third time.

Knapp vs. Dladla

Impressive power show from Knapp as he knocks out Dladla in 118 seconds. Ninth win by KO/TKO for 22-year-old Knapp who becomes IBO Youth champion. Sowetan Dladla, the South African champion has scored five inside the distance victories but was blown away by Knapp.

Makhense vs. Katembo

Makhense makes successful defence of his WBA Pan African title with unanimous decision over Katembo. Scores 98-92 twice and 96-94 for Makhense who is No 1 in the South African super light rankings. Congolese fighter Katembo had beaten Obodai Sai and taken Thulani Mbenge the distance.

Malajika vs. Nemushungwa

Malajika wins his first pro title as he outpoints more experienced Nemushungwa to collect the vacant Pan African title. Scores 97-93 twice and 98-92 for Malajika former South African Youth champion in the amateurs. Nemushungwa is now 1-3 in recent action but has been matched tough.

Torrelavega, Spain: Middle: Sergio Martinez (53-3-2) W TKO 9 Jussi Koivula (24-8-1). Super Welter: Sergio Garcia (33-0) W TKO 6 Gregory Trenal (12-6-2). Light Heavy: Oscar Ahlin (20-2) W KO 6 Ondrej Budera (13-20-1). Feather: Bernard Torres (13-0) W PTS 8 Costin Ion (8-3-2).

Martinez vs. Koivula

In the second outing since his return to the ring Martinez stops Finn Koivula on a stoppage due to a cut. Martinez took control of the centre of the ring and although a bit slower than in times past he still showed his plentiful skills. It was good to see him moving well with no after effects of the knee injury he had suffered in his fight with Miguel Cotto in 2014 which forced his retirement. Koivula is strong but limited but he was competitive enough to deserve some respect from Martinez. A punch from Martinez in the eighth caused a cut on the Finn's left eyelid and as the injury worsened in the ninth the fight was stopped. With his second fight in four months at 45 Martinez is taking a few tentative steps to assess how far he can go with the aim of a middleweight title fight within the next two years at the most. Third tough fight in a row for Koivula who had lost on points against Jordy Weiss for the EU title and been stopped in two rounds by Conor Benn.

Garcia vs. Trenel

With the defence of his European title falling by the wayside Garcia ended up fighting late replacement Frenchman Trenel. Garcia used his long reach to work on Trenel on the outside but occasionally took the fight inside and was superior to Trenel. Garcia slowly wound up the pressure and was scoring heavily in the fourth with his corner urging him not take chances but continue to box at distance. Trenel had to take more punishment in the fifth and was crumbling when the referee decided to save him in the sixth. Garcia was to have defended his title against Dylan Charrat but Charrat withdrew and replacement Andranik Hakobian pulled out with an injury so Trenel came in. Garcia is No 2 with the WBC so a challenge against Jermell Charlo should happen in 2021 but he would like to fit in a European title defence early next year. Trenel's time in the spotlight was brief as last year he was a first round victim of Edgar Berlanga.

Ahlin vs. Budera

Swedish "Golden Boy" Ahlin stops Czech Budera. Ahlin boxed well with Budera not able to match him. The fight lacked highlights as Ahlin was in total control. In the sixth Ahlin had Budera in pain after a left to the body and a barrage of punches then floored Budera and he was counted out. Ahlin has 18 wins by KO/TKO but is being very carefully matched after early losses to Bernard Donfack and Patrick Mendy. Budera is 1-6 in his last 7.

Torres vs. Ion

Torres continues his 100% record but only just. He had more skill than Romanian Ion but Ion used his aggression to offset that. It was close but Torres greater accuracy gave him the edge, Scores 78-76 twice for Torres and 77-76 for Ion. Philippines-born Norwegian Torres in part of the Maravilla stable. Spanish-based Ion had lost only one of his last 11 fights.

Auckland, New Zealand: Cruiser: David Light (17-0) W PTS 10 Mose Auimatagi (14-2-2).

Light continues to make progress as he floors and outpoints Auimatagi in defence of his WBO Oriental title. Scores 100-89 for Light on all three cards. The 29-year-old "The Great White" , the WBO No 6, has wins over Mark Flanagan and Trent Broadhurst but really needs to move to higher quality opposition in 2021 to get a title fight. "Iron" Auimatagi 25 is really just a super middle, He was 198lbs for this fight but was 167 ½ lbs when winning the OPBF silver super middle title in June last year.

Bangkok, Thailand: Light Heavy: Tewa Kiram (44-1) W PTS 10 Chaloepporn (21-7).

Teerachai vs. Chaloepporn

Teerachai jumps a few divisions to win the vacant WBA Asian light heavyweight title with a points victory over fellow-Thai Chaloepporn. Teerachai made a good start and built a useful lead with Chaloepporn fighting tough but losing the rounds. Things worsened for Chaloepporn in the sixth when he injured his shoulder. He refused to concede the fight and despite tiring and being floored in the ninth he fought hard to the bell. Scores 99-90, 98-91 and 97-92 for Teerachai (Tewa Kiram). His only loss is an eighth round kayo by Lucas Matthyse for the secondary WBA welterweight title in 2018. Teerachai made a successful defence of the WBA Asian super welterweight title in November so a three-division jump for Teerachai. Chaloepporn holds the WBC Asian silver title. You don't get too many 5'6" light heavyweights.

Russell vs. Payano

Russell gets technical decision over Payano in a messy, untidy and disappointing fight between two southpaws. Over the first two rounds Russell was landing with right jabs and straight lefts. Payano was darting in with quick counters but was untidy

at times. There was too many clinches and too much wrestling in the third and fourth with Russell doing what clean work there was and Payano warned during and at the of the third round for holding. There was some good action at the start of the fifth with both scoring well to the body but then it descended to a brawl again. The sixth was a better round with Russell scoring with his jab and some rapid body punching and staggering Payano with a right hook and Payano connecting with some wide swinging lefts. They were both using their heads as weapons inside and Payano suffered a serious cut over his left eye. At the bell to start the seventh the referee asked the doctor to examine the cut and he ruled Payano unfit to continue so it was decided on the scorecards up to the end of the sixth round. Scores 59-55 twice and 58-56 for Russell. Gary is the middle of the three Russell brother who between them are 62-1 as pros. Payano, a former WBA and IBO champion, has lost three in a row having been beaten by Luis Nery and Denial Roman.

Brussels, Belgium: Super Light: Mohamed El Marcouchi (26-2) W PTS 8 Damien Yapur (16-18-3).

Belgian El Marcouchi takes unanimous decision over Yapur. Scores 80-72, 78-74 and 77-75. The Miami-based El Marcouchi has lost only one of his last twenty-five fights and that was on disqualification but he needs to move up the quality of his opposition as at 32 fighting guys such as Yapur will not advance his career. Argentinian Yapur has lost 10 of his last 11 fights.

Fight of the week (Significance): Any Saul Alvarez fight is significant it remains to be seen where he will go next.

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Carlos Gongora vs. Ali Akhmedov saw plenty of action with a dramatic last round ending

Fighter of the week: Saul Alvarez as he becomes a four division champion

Punch of the week: The right from Frank Sanchez which effectively ended his fight with Julian Fernandez

Upset of the week: None. They all went pretty much as expected

Prospect watch: bantam Gary Antonio Russell 18-0 looks to be aiming to follow in his elder brother's footsteps

Observations

-Australia is the place for ring walks. Last week it was the Flamingo show from Jacob Ng and this week Paul Fleming was accompanied by a team of indigenous Australian in full traditional body markings complete with didgeridoo (A very long wind instrument)

-That's two fights in a row where Serbian Marko Nikolic has beaten a policeman. I just hope he does not park in the wrong place or he could face 15 years in jail-plus a fine.

-Some sanctioning bodies will do anything for a fee. How can two Ukrainians-Aram Fanilan and Yuriy Vishnyakov possibly qualify to contest the WBO Oriental title? Neither of them even come from the East of Ukraine

- It was strange to see Thai Teerachai jump from super welterweight to light heavyweight but equally strange was his opponent his opponent Chaloepong who is just 5'6"!

- It really was bad to see the referee totally ignoring Tomas Rojas who was lying face down on the canvas after being felled by a deliberate punch to the back of the head. The referee was busy holding the arm of Ranfis Encarnacion and indicating to each of the judges that he was deducting a point for the punch whilst almost straddling the body of Rojas so in fact he was not even intending to disqualify Encarnacion!