

The Past Week in Action 7 December 2020

Highlights:

- Errol Spence outpoints Danny Garcia to retain the IBF and WBC welterweight titles**
- Eduardo Ramirez, Sebastian Fundora and Josesito Lopes score inside the distance wins on the undercard**
- Billy Joe Saunders outclasses Martin Murray to retain the WBO super middleweight title**
- James Tennyson blows away unbeaten Canadian Josh O'Reilly on the undercard**
- James Dickens beats Ryan Walsh at featherweight and Richard Bolotniks stops serge Michel at light heavyweight to win the MTK Global Golden Contract tournaments in their division**
- Lyndon Arthur outpoints Anthony Yarde in Commonwealth title defence**
- French fighters Kevin Lele Sadjo, Olivier Vautrain, Massi Tachour, Yvan Mendy and Mathieu Bauderlique win on a show in Levallois-Perret**

World Title/Major Shows

4 December

London, England: Super Middle: Billy Joe Saunders (30-0) W PTS 12 Martin Murray (39-6-1). Light: James Tennyson (28-3) W TKO 1 Josh O'Reilly (16-1). Super Middle: Lerrone Richards (14-0) W PTS 8 Timo Laine (28-15).

Saunders vs. Murray

Saunders retains the WBO title with one-sided points victory over a very disappointing Murray

Round 1

Not much action here. Saunders was in centre ring with Murray circling the perimeter. Saunders was throwing jabs but coming up short and Murray was not throwing any punches. There was brief flurry of action late in the round with Saunders landing a hook which was enough to give him the round.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Round 2

They swapped places with Murray holding the centre of the ring and Saunders circling. Murray showed more fire than in the first round but when they traded punches Saunders was more accurate and landed the better shots.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 20-18

Round 3

Saunders round. He was slotting jabs through Murray's defence and cracked Murray with a left hook. Murray was holding off too long with his punches and Saunders jumped in with a couple of combinations and was out before Murray could counter.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 30-27

Round 4

Saunders took this one as well. He was scoring with his right jab and straight left using those punches to pierce Murray's guard throughout the round. He was also scoring with long punches to the body. Saunders connected with two hard straight lefts and as Murray dipped forward Saunders went back and Murray tumbled to the floor but it was not a knockdown

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 40-36

Round 5

It was difficult to understand Murray's tactics. If he stood off Saunders would pick him off all night so in theory he should have been putting plenty of pressure on Saunders to cut off the ring. Again Saunders did all of the work. Murray was occasionally coming forward behind a high guard allowing Saunders to pick his spot and Saunders was connecting with

jabs and body punches and some crisp uppercuts with Murray too slow to counter.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 50-45

Round 6

An improvement from Murray as he came forward throughout the round and landed some hooks to the body inside. However Saunders was still stabbing his jab home and catching Murray with counters on the way in. It was close but Saunders took the round.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 60-54

Round 7

Dominant round from Saunders he shadowed a retreating Murray around the ring popping him with right jabs and then banging straight lefts through to head and body. When Murray tried to come forward Saunders was stopping him in his tracks with counters. He was sticking his jab in Murray's face to blind Murray to the left following behind the jab and was away before Murray could respond.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 70-63

Round 8

Saunders fed Murray more of the right jab straight left sequence at the start of the round and rocked Murray's head with an uppercut. A punch from Saunders went low and Murray was given time to recover and Saunders was given a warning. After that the round descended into a mess of holding and wrestling with the early work from Saunders enough to give him the round.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 80-72

Round 9

Too easy for Saunders. He was able to stand off and pierce Murray's guard with jabs and straight lefts and then step back and connected with left uppercuts. Murray could not score at distance and Saunders was tying him up inside and Murray was looking tired and with no plan B in sight.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 90-81

Round 10

Saunders was boxing with great skill but Murray was making it easy for him by not exerting any pressure. Murray was tending to stand right in front of Saunders behind a high guard and let Saunders pick his spot for his punches with the action becoming one-sided.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 100-90

Round 11

The only question left in this fight is whether Saunders could win inside the distance. Saunders was able to tee-off on Murray but was himself tiring and was too cautious to really open up so no drama in yet another round for Saunders.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 110-99

Round 12

Saunders fired off early in this round but when he saw Murray was not going to crumble he settled for just dancing and launching the occasionally attack. Murray was just looking to survive and made no attempt to swing punches hoping to get lucky.

Score: 10-9 Saunders

Saunders 120-108

Official Scores: Judge Steve Gray 120-108 Saunders.

Judge Marcus McDonnell 118-110 Saunders. Judge

Robert Williams 120-109 Saunders

Second defence of the WBO title for Saunders. His name comes up often enough when big fights at super middle are imminent but never gets the call. He is a very talented boxer but a difficult opponent and capable of indifferent almost boring performances at times so it could be that the big fights will always pass him by. Murray showed all of his 38 years in this fight. He is a former WBA interim champion His four shots at a real world title have resulted in a draw and three losses and with luck he could have won two of those fights so deserves a better legacy than boxing history might award him.

Tennyson vs. O'Reilly

Tennyson overwhelms Canadian O'Reilly. In typical Tennyson style the Northern Ireland banger went straight after O'Reilly throwing left hooks to the body and over hand rights to the head. He hurt O'Reilly with three rights to the head and a big uppercut before sending O'Reilly sprawling on the canvas with another right to the head. O'Reilly looked ready to continue after the eight count but Tennyson jumped on him and put him down with a series of punches. O'Reilly was up quickly but when a right to the head had him staggering the referee stopped the fight. That's six consecutive inside the distance wins for the British champion as he rebuilds after a loss to Tevin Farmer for the IBF title in 2018. He is rated WBO 7/WBA 9/IBF 13 so still has a lot of work to do to get another title shot but always brings excitement. O'Reilly never had a chance to get into the fight. Tennyson just hit too hard for O'Reilly who found the step up in level of opposition too much of a reach.

Richards vs. Laine

Richards grinds out points win over Laine. In his first contest for 13 months Richards seemed to treat the fight as a good opportunity to spend some useful time in the ring. Richards was dictating the action from the centre of the ring with his southpaw jab with Laine initially doing some showy work but without any substance. He never found a way past the strong southpaw jabs of Richards and spent more and more time pressed against the ropes as the fight progressed. Laine switched guards and did plenty of bobbing and weaving but too little punching. With Laine in survival mode and happy to play a supporting role the fight was too one-sided to be entertaining and at times it was target practice for Richards. He showcased his powerful jabs and he varied his work well but never sustained his attacks and virtually allowed Laine to last the distance. Referee's score 80-72 for Richards. Despite impressive domestic wins over Tommy Langford and Lennox Clarke the British and Commonwealth champion has yet to make any impact on the ratings with his only rank being No 14

with the WBO but with Matchroom behind him that should change over 2021. Finn Laine did his bit in going the full eight rounds

5 December

Arlington. TX, USA: Welter: Errol Spence (27-0) W PTS 12 Danny Garcia (36-3). Feather: Eduardo Ramirez (24-2-3) W KO 5 Miguel Flores (24-4). Super Welter: Sebastian Fundora (16-0-1) W TKO 2 Habib Ahmed (27-2-1,1ND). Welter: Josesito Lopez (38-8,1ND) W TKO 10 Francisco Santana (25-9-1). Super Feather: Isaac Avelar (17-2) W PTS 10 Sakaria Lukas (23-1).

Spence vs. Garcia

In his first fight since recovering from serious injuries in a car smash Spence proves too strong for veteran Garcia and batters his way to the unanimous decision.

Round 1

After some early probing by both fighters Spence began to find the body regularly with lefts. He was a bit quicker with his jab and although Garcia landed two looping rights to the head it was those lefts to the body that gave Spence this round.

Score: 10-9 Spence

Round 2

A closer round. It was a battle of jabs early with Spence just having the edge. He was also finding the target with lefts again. Garcia upped the pace at the end of the round and did some useful scoring but Spence was quicker and more accurate. Garcia launched a left hook which landed just after the bell

Score: 10-9 Spence

Spence 20-18

Round 3

Spence was controlling the fight with Garcia on the back foot looking to counter. Again Spence was scoring well to the body with Garcia jabbing quickly and firing little bunches of punches

but Spence did enough to win the round with his solid body punches

Score: 10-9 Spence

Spence 30-27

Round 4

Spence did the scoring at the start of the round forcing Garcia back with a series of right jabs. Garcia then began to throw lead rights and was getting through Spence's guard setting Spence back on heels a couple of times and he also dug in a good right hook to the body and took the round.

Score: 10-9 Garcia

Spence 39-37

Round 5

A competitive fast-paced round. Spence was moving Garcia back with his jab and reaching in to score with long lefts to the body. Garcia was jabbing well and again was finding the gaps for his lead rights. They swapped punches regularly with some good defensive work helping Garcia have a slight edge,

Score: 10-9 Garcia

Spence 48-47

Round 6

Spence ramped up the pressure from the start of this round. His persistence and strong jab had Garcia going back to the ropes where Spence was banging home punches with both hands. Garcia's lead rights were no longer effective and straight lefts from Spence were the punches connecting.

Score: 10-9 Spence

Spence 58-56

Round 7

Spence used his jab and his strength to have Garcia going backwards. Garcia was countering but under too much pressure to really let his hands go. Spence was rolling forward chopping away at Garcia's body. Garcia threw lots of punches late in the round but not enough to swing it his way.

Score: 10-9 Spence

Spence 68-65

Round 8

Spence made a slow start to the round allowing Garcia to come forward firing rapier-like jabs and straight rights. Spence then switched back to his previous approach and from then Garcia

spent most of the round pinned against the ropes as Spence pounded away to his body. Occasionally a right from Garcia would have Spence backing off but not for long and it was Spence's round.

Score: 10-9 Spence

Spence 78-74

Round 9

Total change of tactics from Spence. Now he was on the back foot not throwing much and not exerting any pressure. With the room to box Garcia was snapping home jabs and was again finding gaps for his straight rights. Both fighters scored with a hard cross each but it was a round to Garcia almost by default.

Score: 10-9 Garcia

Spence 87-84

Round 10

Very strange tactics from Spence as he gifted this round to Garcia. He was on the retreat throwing very few punches. Garcia was able to come forward behind his jab and connected with right crosses and even hooks to the body. Spence came to life over the last twenty seconds but that was too late.

Score: 10-9 Garcia

Spence 96-94

Round 11

Spence was back in control in the eleventh. He was coming forward behind his jab forcing Garcia back and connecting with body punches. Garcia was under too much pressure to do any useful work and although Spence went off the boil again late in the round he had done enough to win it.

Score: 10-9 Spence

Spence 106-103

Round 12

Spence walked Garcia down in the last. He was rolling forward pushing out his jab then going to the body with hooks. Garcia kept popping Spence with his jab but Spence walked through it and kept connecting with body shots before they stood and exchanged a flurry of quick punches at the bell.

Score 10-9 Spence

Spence 116-112

Official Scores: Judge Tim Cheatham 117-111 Spence, Judge Barry Lindenman 116-112 Spence, Judge Steve Weisfeld 116-112 Spence.

Spence would have won by a much bigger margin if he had not chosen to coast through the ninth and tenth and it always looked as though he was in command. He retains the IBF and WBC titles and hopefully that might lead to a unification match against Terrence Crawford which would be a great fight to look forward to for next year. A two-division world champion and a 7-2 record in world title fights at 32 Garcia still has more to offer and there are plenty of good fight in the division if he decides to carry on.

Ramirez vs. Flores

Ramirez walks through Flores before stopping Flores late. There was a fast-paced opening round with both busy and both having some success with the quicker Flores just having the edge. In the second Ramirez tried to blow Flores away with a fierce attack and connected with some slashing hooks but Flores saw out the storm. Ramirez worked hard in the third and fourth taking the fight to Flores throughout the rounds firing punches from both hands and connecting with some thumping shots. The first punch Ramirez threw in the fifth was a left hook that sent the charging Flores crashing to the canvas. Ramirez was sure Flores was not going to get up and was already parading around the ring with his arms aloft. Flores did manage to get up but there was blood streaming from his mouth and he stumbled into the ropes and the referee halted the fight. Ramirez had lost to Lee Selby for the IBF feather title in 2017 when he came in as a late replacement. He subsequently scored victories over 24-1-1 Bryan de Gracia and Leduan Barthelemy and is No 5 with the WBC and No 13 with the WBA. After starting out with a 22-bout winning streak things have turned tougher for Flores but somehow the WBA put him high enough to face Leo Santa Cruz for their super feather title in November and he lost on points.

Fundora vs. Ahmed

Fundora was 5" taller than Ahmed but it looked much more in the opening round as Fundora poked Ahmed with a couple of jabs and then a left uppercut that sent Ahmed staggering across the ring to the ropes. Ahmed took some punishment but managed to work his way off the ropes but was shaken by more left hooks. The Ghanaian tried to come forward but he could not get past the long southpaw jabs of Fundora and looked unsteady every time Fundora landed a punch. In the second Fundora launched a fierce attack driving Ahmed back to and along the ropes to a corner. Fundora bombarded Ahmed with punches. The Ghanaian was bobbing and weaving but plenty were landing and the referee stopped the fight over protests from Ahmed. At 6'5 1/2" Fundora, 22, is ridiculously tall and reed-thin for a super welter but he gets some nasty whipping power into his punches and this is his eleventh victory by KO/TKO. The draw was with Jamontay Clark in August last year but he has since scored good wins over Australian hope Daniel Lewis and Nathan Gallimore and is No 7 in the WBA rankings. Ahmed was stopped in six round by Gilberto Ramirez in a challenge for the WBO super middleweight title in 2018 but was 14lbs lighter for this fight.

Lopez vs. Santana

Lopez leads all the way before flooring and stopping Santana in the last. After some early sparring Lopez cut loose with a series of shots to head and body dropping Santana to his knees. Santana arose and traded punches to the bell. Santana tried to take the fight to Lopez but he was too slow and just throwing one punch at a time. Lopez was constantly moving and jabbing and then stringing together some rapid combinations. Santana scored well with left hooks when he managed to get inside but was finding the quicker Lopez a difficult target and being out worked. Santana was plodding forward in a straight line with very little upper body movement making it easy for Lopez to find the target with his jab. Lopez had Santana under pressure

for much of the fifth and rocked him with a left hook in the sixth. Lopez continued to outscore Santana in the seventh and eighth and then shook the oncoming Santana with a right to the temple. Santana stumbled to the ropes and Lopez bombarded him with punches until he dropped to one knee. Santana made it to his feet and the referee had a long hard look before allowing him to continue. There were less than ten seconds remaining in the round but Lopez rocked Santana again with a pair of head punches. A left to the head floored Santana at the start of the tenth and although he got up when Lopez again landed heavily with head punches the referee stepped in to save Santana. At 36 Lopez must rue his lack of activity. After losing to Andre Berto for the interim WBA title he had just one fight each in years 2016, 2017 and 2018. In January 2019 he gave Keith Thurman all the trouble he could handle when losing a majority decision to Thurman for the full WBA title and he battered John Molina to defeat in eight rounds in September. He is rated No 8 by the WBC but in a division dominated by Terrence Crawford and Errol Spence title chances will be hard to come by for fighters such as Lopez. For Santana it is now 5 losses in his last 6 fights and that has been a hard road and it showed on him in this fight.

Avelar vs. Lukas

The strength and aggression of Avelar prove too much for Namibian Lukas. Avelar was coming forward throwing punches with Lukas lacking the power to counter the Mexican effectively. Avelar had Lukas in trouble in the second with Lukas holding to survive. Lukas got into the fight in a small way in the third and fourth and had a big fifth as he rocked Avelar with a left and then piled on right hands that had Avelar staggering. Avelar was back on top after that as the pace told on Lukas but the Namibian found enough in the last round to again rock Avelar. Scores 98-92 for Avelar on the cards of the three judges. The 23-year-old "Little Canelito" Avelar was coming off two straight losses so badly needed to win here.

Lukas had been high in the WBO rating but a spell of inactivity from December 2017 to May 2019 cost him his place and at 36 he has a limited future.

2 December

South Kirkby, England: Feather: James Dickens (30-3) W PTS 10 Ryan Walsh (26-3-2). Light Heavy: Ricards Bolotniks (18-5-1) W TKO 10 Serge Michel (11-2). Super Light: Harlem Eubank (11-0) W PTS 10 Daniel Egbunike (6-1).

Dickens vs. Walsh

In a clash of two of the UK's world rated featherweights Dickens takes the unanimous decision and wins the MTK Global featherweight tournament. There was never much between these two over the early rounds. Both are quick and clever though not heavy punchers. If anything Walsh probably built a small lead early with his more eye-catching combinations but southpaw Dickens showed solid defence and accurate counters. Dickens was eating into any lead Walsh had by the fifth and Walsh switched to southpaw in the sixth but without a great deal of success. Dickens was busier and more accurate over the seventh and eighth and withstood some strong pressure from Walsh in the ninth. Walsh put in a big effort in the last and did enough to shade it but it was not enough to swing the fight his way. Scores 98-93, 97-94 and 96-94 all for Dickens who was defending his WBO European title. The 29-year-old from Liverpool is the IBF No 3 (2) but with Josh Warrington as champion, Kid Galahad as No 1 and No 2 vacant there has to be a good chance that Dickens could fight for the IBF title next year. However with Walsh No 1 with the WBO this win should open the door for Dickens to look for a shot at the WBO title instead so plenty of options for him. His victory in the tournament guarantees him a two-year, five-fight contract with six figure purses. The loss is a huge blow for Walsh. After

almost thirteen years as a pro to be poised to fight for a world title and then have his hopes crushed by this loss must hurt and at 34 time is running out for him to rebuild.

Bolotniks vs. Michel

Latvian Bolotniks wins the MTK Global Golden Contract light heavyweight tournament and retains the WBO European title with stoppage of German Michel. Over the first four rounds the more mobile Michel looked to have the edge but things change in the fifth. A body punch had Michel hurt and although he fought back a big right had him in deep trouble against the ropes which were all that held him up. As a result he was given a standing count and never really recovered. Bolotniks keep pressing and Michel was spending more and more time trapped against the ropes. The German just did not have the power to keep Bolotniks out and was rocked again in the seventh and eighth and it seemed as though Bolotniks might end it in the ninth but Michel survived that crisis. It looked as if Michel might make it through the last round but he was floored with just ten seconds left in the fight and his corner threw in the towel. The 30-year-old Bolotniks has been the surprise package of the tournament. At one stage in his career he was 11-5-1 but in subsequent fights and through the tournament he has put together a seven-fight winning run including victories over 18-0 Sergei Ekimov, unbeaten Steven Ward, Hosea Burton and now Michel . He was No 9 with the WBO before this Michel fight and with the WBO title vacant it is a quite fluid situation so a title shot next year is a possibility. Like Dickens he is guaranteed a two-year, six-fight contract with purses of six figures. A life changer. Russian-born Michel was a top flight amateur representing Germany at the Rio Olympics but this inside the distance loss plus an earlier stoppage by Ryan Ford may be an accurate measure of his ceiling.

Eubank vs. Egbunike

Eubank wins this English title eliminator on points over Egbunike (Danny Darko). Egbunike had a good first round

finding the target with some heavy rights. Eubank was rolling from the second. He was quicker than Egbunike and busier and moved into a good lead. Egbunike came back into the fight in the sixth but the rounds were very even. Eubank rebounded to edge the seventh doing some clever defensive work and countering well. With the fight close they fought hard over the closing rounds. Egbunike surged strong at the end but it was just not enough to overcome Eubank's work in the first half of the fight. Referee's score 97-94 for Eubank. Harlem is the nephew of Chris Eubank Snr and won 22 of his 33 amateur fights. Southern Area champion Egbunike can rebound from this loss.

**Brisbane, Australia: Heavy: Justis Huni (2-0) W TKO 4
Arsene Fosso (3-1). Middle: Isaac Hardman (8-0) W PTS
10 Tej Pratap Singh (16-5-3,1ND). Welter: Ben Kite (18-
4-1) W PTS 10 Danny Kennedy (9-2-1).**

Huni vs. Fosso

Australia prospect Huni successfully retains the national title with stoppage of Fosso. Huni was much quicker than the 16lbs heavier Fosso. Fosso came out looking to trade punches with Huni but found himself getting pounded with jabs and uppercuts although he did manage to give Huni a bloody nose. Huni controlled the fight in the second being too fast for Fosso changing angles and landing hard head punches. Fosso just could not get a toe-hold in the fight as Huni dominated at distance and inside. Huni handed out more punishment in the third and the referee warned Fosso at the start of the fourth that he needed to show more or he would stop the fight. Huni made the stoppage an easy decision as he again rattled heavy right off Fosso's head until the referee came in just as Fosso's corner were preparing to throw in the towel. The 6'4" Huni who is of mixed Dutch, Swedish and Tongan heritage, again showed some impressive foot speed for such a big guy and also that he has real power. Huni has already qualified for the rescheduled

Olympics to be held in Tokyo in August. The plan is for him to stay busy with talk of fights in February and March then with 41-year-old former World title challenger Alex Leapai in May and Lucas Browne, also 41, in July with the Browne fight seemingly already signed. Cameroon boxer Fokou Fosso, 37, is a former African Championship gold medal winner and World Championship bronze medallist. He travelled to Australia to compete at the 2018 Commonwealth Games but was one of five Cameroon athletes to abscond and holds a refugee bridging visa at this time. He also competed at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in the 91kg (200lbs) division but was 255lbs for this fight with Huni.

Hardman vs. Singh

Hardman wins the Australian title from champion Singh with a majority decision featuring quite a variation in the scoring. This really was a case of Hardman throwing more and Singh throwing less but with greater accuracy. That's the type of fight that often leads to the judges holding different views. It was certainly a tough fight with many of the fans as well as the judges seeing it differently but it is the judge's opinion that counts and they came up with scores of 98-92 and 97-93 for Hardman and 96-96. 24-year-old new champion is a former MMA exponent who moved over to boxing after a knee injury cut short his MMA career. He has the splendid nickname of "Headsplitter". Hardman also collects the IBF Australasian and WBO Oriental belts. Indian-born southpaw Singh, 34, was making the second defence of the national title and was 7-0-1,1ND going into this fight.

Kite vs. Kennedy

Kite retains the Australian title in his first defence as he halts challenger Kennedy in the last round. This was the best fight of the night as they traded punches throughout a gruelling scrap. First one and then the other would seem to be on top only for the fight to swing the other way and both were rocked at times but as the fight progressed the 37-year-old Kennedy was

under more and more pressure. After being shaken himself by a right to the head Kite broke through in a big way in the ninth. A right sent Kennedy spiralling along the ropes and Kite followed him and then drove him to the canvas with another right. Somehow Kennedy made it to his feet and to the bell. In the tenth another right put Kennedy down on his back and as he tried to rise his corner threw in the towel. Now 13 wins in a row for 30-year-old Kite who was 5-4-1 at the start of his career. Kennedy is from Jersey in the Channel Islands and turned pro in Britain. He is now 2-2- in fights in Australia.

Tokyo, Japan: Minimum: Masataka Taniguchi (13-3) W TKO 10 Hizuki Saso (12-7-2).

Outstanding performance from southpaw Taniguchi as has too much skill for limited Saso and wins the vacant Japanese title with late stoppage. From the moment in the first round when Taniguchi floored Saso with a straight left it ceased to be a contest. With his superior skills Taniguchi swept the first five rounds being 50-44 in front on all three cards at the half way mark. Saso bravely tried to roll forward to put pressure on Taniguchi but that just resulted in more punishment. After Taniguchi scored with a succession of punches at the start of the tenth the referee had seen enough and stopped the fight. Taniguchi is 5-1 in his last 6 fights with the loss being a points defeat by Vic Saludar for the WBO title in February last year. Taniguchi, 26, is with the Watanabe Gym of former world champion Jiro Watanabe and was 55-19 as an amateur. He is currently No 3 with the WBO. Second stoppage loss for Saso and this was his first time at ten rounds,

Los Angeles, CA, USA: Welter: Brian Ceballo (12-0) W PTS 10 Larry Gomez (10-2). Super Welter: Brandon Adams (22-3) W TKO 2 Sanny Duversonne (11-3-2). Welter: Gor Yeritsyan (14-0) W TKO 6 Mahonri Montes (36-10-1).

Ceballo vs. Gomez

Ceballo showcases his considerable skills in outpointing a game Gomez. It was clear from the first round that Ceballo had quicker hands and faster movement than Gomez. He speared Gomez with lightning jabs and put together a couple of impressive combinations. Gomez pressed hard over the second and third and had some success with left hooks but Ceballo was too quick for him on the offensive and too clever on the defensive. Ceballo took the fourth dominating the action with his jab and putting together some flashy combinations. Gomez fought hard enough to edge the fifth despite losing his mouthguard twice. Ceballo took control again in the sixth and connected with two hard right crosses in the seventh and eighth as he began to take the fight to Gomez. That produced a stirring finish as they traded punches over the last two rounds with Gomez losing a point in the tenth after spitting out his mouthguard again. Scores 98-90, 98-91 and 96-93 for Ceballo. The 26-year-old Puerto Rican is a former US National champion, National Golden Gloves winner and National PAL gold medallist. He paraded some outstanding skills here marking him as one to watch. Gomez- from Fullmer country West Jordan Utah-had outpointed 18-0 Brian Mendoza in November so a reasonable level test for Ceballo.

Adams vs. Duversonne

Adams blows away lanky Duversonne in two rounds. Duversonne took the opening round as he was on the front foot forcing Adams back with his longer reach and letting his punches go. Adams was under pressure but looked dangerous with the occasional right. In the second Adams drove Duversonne into a corner and never let him out. Adams was scoring with scorching body punches and hooks to the head. Duversonne tried to punch with him but a left had Duversonne badly stunned and he stopped punching back and with Adams landing more heavy punches the referee stopped the fight. In his last fight in June last year an over-matched Adams took a

solid beating over twelve rounds from Jermall Charlo in a challenge for the WBC middleweight title. This is a good first step on his road to recovery. Floridian Duversonne suffers his third loss in a row and his first inside the distance.

Yeritsyan vs. Montes

Yeritsyan gets his third win in the USA as he halts Montes. Confident start from Armenian Yeritsyan. Boxing on the back foot he held his left at hip level shooting jabs up and through the guard of Montes. With his slow plodding pace the Mexican was making it easy for Yeritsyan to land consistently as he came forward behind a high but very porous guard. As the fight progressed Montes managed to close the distance occasionally but Yeritsyan was still sticking him with the jabs and bring his right into play more. Montez was cut over his left eye in the fourth and Yeritsyan began to put his punches together in bunches. Montes just walked onto punch after punch in the fifth with no defence in sight and when Yeritsyan landed a series of head punches in the sixth the referee stepped in just as Montes dropped to one knee. The 25-year-old Yeritsyan has won 12 of his fights by KO/TKO. He fights out of Freddie Roach's Wild Card gym. In the amateurs he was Armenian champion, a bronze medallist at the European Youth Championships and had a win over Brian Ceballo. Montes, 31, went 25-0-1 at the start of his career but has had too many tough fights against opponents such as Egidijus Kavaliauskas, Jamal James and Chris van Heerden and looked a totally shot fighter.

4 December

Lodz, Poland: Cruiser: Mateusz Masternak (43-5) W TKO 7 Jose Ulrich (17-4). Super Welter: Kamil Gardzielik (11-0) W PTS 8 David Bency (14-19-1,2ND). Light Heavy: Marek Matyja (18-2-2) W PTS 6 Ondrej Budera (13-19-1).

Masternak vs. Ulrich

Masternak breaks down and halts Ulrich. A composed Masternak eased his way into the fight scoring with some good left hooks in the first. Ulrich tried to go on the attack but Masternak was taller with a longer reach and had no problem in blocking or dodging the Argentinian's efforts and scoring with counters. He was almost using the contest as just useful ring time allowing Ulrich to take the lead and then choosing his moment to open up and take control. He handed out punishment over the third and fourth. Ulrich only just got through the fifth as Masternak connected with hard rights and he was rocked again in the sixth. In the seventh a left hook sent Ulrich into a corner and as Masternak bombarded him with punches Ulrich dropped to a knee and did not protest when the referee waived the fight off. The 33-year-old former European champion now intends to take a break and will then try to qualify for the postponed Tokyo Olympics. Fourth consecutive defeat for former Argentinian champion Ulrich.

Gardzielik vs. Bency

Gardzielik gets routine and uninspired win over Bency. The Pole towered over little Bency and was able to use his jab to control the action. Gardzielik began to use his right more in the third and connected with a succession of rights in the sixth. Bency worked hard throwing lots of hooks. He has no real power but is an experienced survivor. Gardzielik finished strongly but Bency had no trouble in lasting the distance. Scores 80-72 on the three cards for Gardzielik a former Polish Junior, Youth and Senior champion. Spanish-based Nicaraguan Bency drops to 0-9 in his last 9 fights.

Matyja vs. Budera

Matyja outboxes Budera and emerges with the unanimous decision. Matyja worked his jab well from the first and was mixing in some good body shots. Budera was slower and just not throwing enough punches. Matyja was able to find gaps for his jab and landed some crisp straight rights but the fight

never really caught alight and lacked any highlights. Scores 59-55 twice and 60-54 for Matyja. The EBU 14 rated Matyja was coming off a loss in July to unbeaten Pawel Stepien for the vacant Polish title. Czech Budera is 1-6 in his last 7 contests.

Miami, FL, USA: Light Heavy: Yunieski Gonzalez (20-3) W KO 2 Alex Theran (22-5). Super Feather: Luis Melendez (9-1) W TKO 2 Mario Lozano (18-5-1). Feather: Neslan Machado (17-0,1ND) W PTS 6 Angel Contreras (10-3-1). Super Welter: Damian Bonelli (24-8) W PTS 6 Derriek Cuevas (23-1-1).

Gonzalez vs. Theran

Gonzalez disposes of Theran inside two rounds. Gonzalez went to work early on Theran banging home shots to the body from both hands. Theran looked fleshy and slow and was just prodding with his jab which Gonzalez walked through. He consistently forced Theran into corners and unloaded punches to head and body. In the second there was more pressure and more body punches from Gonzalez. Twice rights to the ribs put Theran down. He made it to his feet on each occasion.

Gonzalez then landed a low blow and Theran was given some recovery time. When the action resumed he tried to trade punches but a right to the head put him down on his back and he was counted out. The 35-year-old "Cuban Monster" Gonzalez won his first 16 fights but then losses to Jean Pascual, Vyacheslav Shabranskyy and Olek Gvozdyk cost him his place in the pecking order. This victory wins him the WBA Fedelatin title and he promptly called out Artur Beterbiev-be careful what you wish for Yunieski. Theran failed to make the weight for this fight and when I said he looked fleshy he turned pro at 160lbs and was 189lbs for this fight.

Melendez vs. Lozano

Plenty of pushing and probing in the first round before Melendez let some punches go before the bell. There was frantic action in the second. Melendez hurt Lozano early with a

left hook. With Lozano on the ropes Melendez threw some body punches. Lozano dropped his guard to complain of a low punch and Melendez took advantage of that to score with more punches as Lozano dropped to the floor. Lozano was still complaining when he got up but as he rushed forward he was met by a left hook that put him face down on the canvas and the fight was halted. Seven wins on the trot for Melendez and his fourth inside the distance win in a row, three of them coming in the first round. Argentinian Lozano suffers his fourth inside the distance loss in consecutive fights all of the losses coming inside three rounds.

Machado vs. Contreras

Cuban Machado remains unbeaten with points decision over Mexican Contreras. Due to injuries and the pandemic this was Machado's first fight since March 2019 but he had too much skill and talent for the limited Contreras. Scores 60-54, 59-55 and 58-56 for Machado. He is with MTK Global and had three fights in Britain in 2018. Contreras had won his last three fights.

Bonelli vs. Cuevas

An upset here as Bonelli takes split decision over Cuevas. Cuevas was on a long unbeaten streak with a few reasonable names on his list of victims and Bonelli had lost his seven fights. Bonelli proved a tough opponent. Cuevas was the better boxer but Bonelli alternated between laying against the ropes and driving forward throwing punches wildly. Bonelli warned about punches to the back of the head and was confusing Cuevas with his tactics. He was sometimes willing to hide behind a high guard against the ropes letting Cuevas try to find gaps and then driving forward throwing wild swinging punches. Bonelli was warned for punches to the back of the head and Cuevas was being dragged into a maul too often. Bonelli continued to land punches to the back of the head and was deducted a point in the fourth. When he found some space Cuevas scored well with his jab and left hooks to the body but

by the last he seemed totally exhausted and well beaten. Scores 58-56 twice for Bonelli and 58-56 for Cuevas. The 42-year-old Bonelli did not turn pro until he was 35 and will have been delighted to break his losing streak. Big set-back for Puerto Rican Cuevas who just never came to terms with the wild and unpredictable attacks of Bonelli.

Rome, Italy: Super Feather: Haithem Laamouz (17-1) W PTS 12 Mario Alfano (15-2-1).

Laamouz wins the vacant European title with points decision over Italian Alfano. With less than two minutes of ring time in the last 20 months Laamouz made a slow start but once he shed some rust he was able to use his longer reach and better skills to keep the aggressive Alfano out. Alfano pressed hard but Laamouz's jabbing and a tight defence frustrated the attacks of the local fighter. Alfano kept taking the fight to Laamouz and had more success as Laamouz tired but he was countering well with hooks inside and had built a good lead and ended a deserving winner. Scores 116-112 twice and 115-113 for Laamouz as he makes history for boxing in Malta. Laamouz fought in England as an amateur and then turned pro in Australia. He won the Australian title but returned to Malta after losing his title on a majority decision against Gaige Ireland in 2018. A shoulder injury and COVID-19 led to inactivity from March 2019 until October this year when he knocked out Slaveya Stefanov in 66 seconds. Alfano, 29, lost his unbeaten record when being outpointed by Lavisas Williams in the USA in June 2019 but won the Italian title in August this year,

5 December

London, England: Light Heavy: Lyndon Arthur (18-0) W PTS 12 Anthony Yarde (20-2). Super Bantam: Chris Bourke (9-0) W TKO 2 Michael Ramabeletsa (18-18).

Arthur vs. Yarde

Arthur gets a split decision over Yarde in a close technical battle. Arthur was looking to use his height and longer reach to keep Yarde on the end of his jab and that worked for him in a low action first round. Arthur continued the same approach in the second and third also dropping a right cross over Yarde's guard. Yarde kept prowling after Arthur but was having trouble getting past Arthur's jab. Yarde did better in the fourth being able to get in close and landed a right his best punch so far. There were no fiery exchanges to liven the pace which suited Arthur and not Yarde. Arthur had used his right very little and there were time when it was the natural punch to throw but Arthur kept it stuck against his chin. There was a suggestion he had injured the hand but that was not confirmed. Instead it was Yarde scoring with good rights in the fifth and sixth but he was simply not throwing enough punches. Arthur edged a low action seventh but Yarde upped his pace in the eighth coming forward with more purpose but never really shaking Arthur. In the ninth Arthur finally threw a hard right and then managed to outbox Yarde at distance. At that point Arthur seemed to have built a good lead but Yarde showed urgency in the tenth and in the eleventh with Arthur holding to contain Yarde's attacks. They stood and exchanged punches briefly in the last for the first time in the fight with Yarde getting the better of the trading but it was a question as to whether he had done enough to cancel out Arthur's early lead. Scores 115-114 twice for Arthur and 117-111 for Yarde. Arthur was defending the Commonwealth title and he also wins the vacant WBO Inter-Continental title. The 29-year-old Arthur was rated IBF 6(5)/WBO 6 and will be hoping for promotion. Yarde was aiming to build towards another shot at a title after being stopped in eleven rounds by Sergey Kovalev for the WBO title in August last year but he has the backing to work his back into contention.

Bourke vs. Ramabeletsa

Bourke scores second round stoppage victory over Ramabeletsa . Ramabeletsa began by throwing long rights to the body of southpaw Bourke but Bourke showed quick hands and was scoring with straight lefts and countering with left hooks. In the second Bourke scored with two lefts to the head and then connected with a lightning quick left hook that sent Ramabeletsa tumbling along the ropes and down. When Ramabeletsa got up Bourke blazed away with punches rocking Ramabeletsa a couple of times and Ramabeletsa dropped to a knee. He managed to get up but the referee completed the eight count and stopped the fight. Bourke, 26, the BBB of C Southern Area champion, showed impressive hand speed as he registered his sixth victory by KO/TKO and wins the vacant WBC International title. English champion Ramabeletsa had won 6 of his last 8 fights and this is only his second loss by KO/TKO.

Levallois-Perret, France: Super Middle: Kevin Lele Sadjo (15-0) W PTS 10 Ronny Landaeta (17-3). Cruiser: Olivier Vautrain (18-3-1) W TKO 7 Aboulaye Diane (14-2-1). Super Light: Massi Tachour (15-4) W PTS 12 Giuseppe Carafa (12-4-2). Light: Yvan Mendy (46-5-1,1ND) W PTS 8 Miguel Antin (19-6). Light Heavy: Mathieu Bauderlique (20-1) W TKO 2 Beibi Berrocal (17-7,1ND).

Sadjo vs. Landaeta

Sadjo makes a successful second defence of the WBA Inter-Continental title but has to go the distance for the first time. Sadjo tried to blow away Landaeta in the first round and Landaeta was struggling. In the second under more pressure Landaeta lost a point for holding. Sadjo continued to take the fight to Landaeta but the Venezuelan-born Spaniard used his experience to stay in the fight. Sadjo's pace dropped over the seventh and eighth which gave Landaeta a toe-hold but Sadjo came on strong again over the last two rounds and Landaeta did a good job in lasting the distance. Scores 97-92, 99-90 and

98-91 for Sadjo. The 30-year-old "Phenomen" did not start boxing until he was 24 when an ankle injury killed his football hopes . Landaeta, a former EU champion, lost to Robin Krasniqi for the EBU title in 2018.

Vautrain vs. Diane

Tall southpaw Vautrain wins the vacant French title with stoppage of Diane. The 6'3" Vautrain used his longer reach to score at distance and Diane just never really managed to overcome that edge of Vautrain's. When he did try to work his way inside he was caught with solid counters and was badly rocked by an uppercut in the third. The accuracy of Vautrain's jab worsened the cut and had Diane bleeding heavily from the nose. When a left hook staggered Diane in the seventh the referee made a well-timed stoppage. Vautrain, a former French amateur champion, had lost on points to Dylan Bergeron for this same title in January but had been 10-1 before that. Diane was 9-0-1 going in

Tachour vs. Carafa

Tachour wins the vacant EU title with unanimous verdict over Italian Carafa. Over the early rounds Carafa was competitive willing to stand close and try to outfight Tachour with the Frenchman's strength giving him the edge. Over the seventh and eighth Tachour had Carafa under heavy pressure with right hooks causing bruising around the left eye of Carafa. In the eighth and ninth Carafa used clever boxing to frustrate Tachour but over the closing rounds Tachour's aggression was slowing Carafa and although the rounds were close Tachour had done enough to win clearly. Scores 16-112 twice and 117-112 for Tachour. The Algerian-born former undefeated French champion has turned his career around with eight consecutive victories. Carafa, the former Italian super feather and WBC Mediterranean lightweight champion, might be better going down a weight.

Mendy vs. Antin

Mendy has a much tougher night than expected against Argentinian Antin. Mendy started well enough but then seemed to go off the boil with Antin often outscoring and outworking Mendy over the second half of the fight. Mendy had to fight hard to stay ahead against a not very threatening opponent but it was reported later that Mendy had injured his right hand which handicapped him over the late rounds. Scores 79-73, 78-74 and 77-75 for Mendy. The 35-year-old "Lion" has won and lost in fights against Luke Campbell and the defeat against Campbell is the only loss he has suffered in his last 16 fights. Antin is 2-6 in his last 8 fights.

Bauderlique vs. Berrocal

Easy night for Bauderlique as he floors Berrocal twice with the Colombian's corner throwing in the towel. The 31-year-old former Olympic bronze medallist is rated WBA10/IBF 13(12)/WBC 14 and will be looking to make his move next year. Four consecutive defeats for Berrocal.

Maclodio, Italy: Bantam: Vincenzo Picardi (3-0) W PTS 10 Gianluca Conselmo (6-2).

Like Domenico Valentino Picardi is one of the mainstays of Italian amateur boxing who has left it too late to turn pro. However, even at 37 he was too much for the eleven year younger Conselmo and easily retained the Italian title in his first defence. These two had been teammates in the Italian international team but there the resemblance ended. Picardi fired fast and accurate punches whilst slipping those from Conselmo. Picardi was working well with body punches getting past Conselmo's guard and rattling his ribs. Picardi attacked hard in the seventh and eighth trying to get the fight over but when Conselmo did not fall Picardi settled for outboxing the challenger over the last two rounds. All three judges scored it 100-90 for Picardi. It would take quite a few pages to list the amateur achievements of Picardi since he won his first Italian title 17 years ago and has competed in all of the major

international tournaments including the World and European Championships and won a bronze medal at the 2008 Olympics. With a couple more wins he would be eligible to fight for the European title. No one expected Conselmo to win this one but at 26 he seems certain to eventually get another shot at the national title.

Warsaw, Poland: Cruiser: Michal Cieslak (20-1,1ND) W KO 6 Taylor Mabika (19-7-2). Super Welter: Przemyslaw Runowski (19-1) W RSF 4 Michal Syrowatka (22-4).

Cieslak vs. Mabika

Cieslak gets win over Mabika who sits out the count after injuring his right shoulder. Cieslak led all the way without really impressing. He found Mabika a slippery opponent but with the strength of his jab and his heavy rights he was winning the rounds. He was tending to throw his punches in singles with Mabika occasionally coming to life with quick attacks. Cieslak was starting to find the target with heavy punches in the seventh when Mabika suddenly backed out of the action after throwing a right and knelt on the canvas. He was shaking his right arm but climbed to his feet only to go down on one knee under an attack from Cieslak and was counted out. Cieslak lost on points to Ilunga Makabu for the WBC title in January. French-based Gabonese Mabika falls to 0-5-1 in a run of six tough fights.

Runowski vs. Syrowatka

Runowski crushes a sliding Syrowatka in four rounds. Runowski took his time breaking Syrowatka down. He upped his pace in the third and it was obvious the end was near. A thumping right sent Syrowatka flying into the ropes in the fourth and as Runowski piled on the punches the referee stopped the fight just as Syrowatka's corner were ready to pull their man out of the fight. Runowski lost his unbeaten tag when he was floored three times and outpointed by Josh Kelly in April last year but had registered a routine win in December and is No 4 in the

EBU ratings. Only the second inside the distance loss for Syrowatka but he has gone back a long way from when he scored an upset stoppage of Robbie Davies in 2018

Ekaterinburg, Russia: Super Feather: Ruslan Kamilkov (9-0-1) W PTS 10 Nikita Kuznetsov (11-2-2). Super Feather: Evgeny Chuprakov (23-3) W PTS 8 Sardor Muzaffarov (4-4). Super Bantam: Vladimir Nikitin (4-1) W PTS 8 Oleksandr Yegorov (20-4-1). Middle: Meiirim Nursultanov (14-0) W pts 8 Ilya Balandin (4-3-1). Welter: Fazliddin Gaibnazarov (9-1) W PTS 8 Manuk Dilantyan (11-5-1).

Kamilkov vs. Kuznetsov

Kamilkov collects the vacant WBO Inter-Continental title with wide unanimous decision over Kuznetsov. After a slow start to the fight Kamilkov proceeded to boss the action with his superior skills and higher work rate. Kuznetsov tried to put Kamilkov under pressure late in the fight but Kamilkov's dominance was never really threatened. Scores 99-91 twice and 98-92. The 32-year-old Kamilkov came to the pros with plenty of experience behind twice winning silver in the Russian championships in putting together a 45-16 record. Second loss in a row for Kuznetsov.

Chuprakov vs. Muzaffarov

Local fighter Chuprakov given a tough night by Uzbek Muzaffarov and has to come from behind to take a majority verdict. The visitor got off to a good start forcing Chuprakov onto the defensive and getting the better of the exchanges. Chuprakov took over in the later rounds as Muzaffarov tired and in the end Muzaffarov was just looking to last the distance. Scores 78-74 and 77-75 for Chuprakov and 76-76. Chuprakov has fallen away quite a bit since losing to Masayuki Ito for the WBO super feather title in 2018 and is 3-2 against modest opposition. Muzaffarov is 3-4 in fights in Russia.

Nikitin vs. Yegorov

No real problems for Olympian Nikitin but not a very impressive performance. Nikitin was too quick and set too high a work rate for former European title challenger Yegorov. Nikitin had Yegorov under strong pressure late in the fight with Yegorov wilting and only lack of power from Nikitin allowed him to last the distance. Things turned a little nasty late with both fighters being deducted a point for infractions of the rules. Nikitin a wide winner on all three cards. The 30-year-old Rio bronze medallist beat Michael Conlan in Rio but Conlan gained revenge with a win over Nikitin in December. Nikitin was 121 ³/₄ lbs for this so may be aiming to move down to super bantam. Ukrainian Yegorov was 20-1-1 before losing to Luca Rigoldi for the EBU super bantam title in September last year but is now 0-2 since then.

Nursultanov vs. Balandin

Kazakh prospect Nursultanov continues to make progress. The USA-based Nursultanov handed out steady punishment to Balandin over the early rounds ramming home strong jabs and connecting with heavy straight rights. Balandin withstood the punishment and Nursultanov took his foot of the gas allowing Balandin some success over the sixth and seventh rounds but Nursultanov again scored heavily in the last and was a clear winner taking the unanimous decision. The 27-year-old Oxnard-based Nursultanov was a national champion as an amateur and put together an impressive 12-1 record in the WSB. Russian Balandin lacked the experience to really trouble Nursultanov.

Gaibnazarov vs. Dilantyan

Gaibnazarov floors and outpoints Dilantyan. Despite his gold medal in Rio Gaibnazarov has yet to impress as a pro. He had too much skill for the limited Dilantyan but allowed himself to be dragged into too many clinches in a messy fight. He put Dilantyan down with a body punch in the third but never really kicked on from there and seemed to settle for boxing his way to a wide decision. The 29-year-old Uzbek lost twice to Vasyil

Lomachenko in amateur tournaments but scored wins over Jose Carlos Ramirez and Gary Antuanne Russell. Armenian Dilantyan had won 7 of his last 8 fights.

Bang Phun, Thailand: Light: Apichet Petchmanee (8-0) W PTS 8 Musheg Adolan (7-3). Super Fly: Phongsaphon (11-1) W KO 4 Kompayak (60-11).

Petchmanee vs. Adolan

Petchmanee gets repeat win over Russian Adolan but an injury to Adolan's left arm is the deciding factor. Petchmanee had been floored twice and just scrape passed Adolan on a majority decision in October. Petchmanee outboxed Adolan in the first but when Adolan began to roll in the second ramming home heavy punches he had Petchmanee struggling to stay upright. Petchmanee used his better skills to edge the third in what looked like being a repeat of their first fight. Unfortunately in the fourth Adolan was suddenly one-armed. His left arm was of little use and Petchmanee was able to dominate the rest of the fight with Adolan only able to score with occasional rights. Scores 79-73 for the Thai from each of the judges. Second defence of the WBC Asian title for Petchmanee who holds two wins over former world title challenger Chonlatarn. Thai-based Adolan had scored seven inside the distance wins in a row before his first loss to Petchmanee

Phongsaphon vs. Kompayak

The youth and strength of Phongsaphon prove too much for Kompayak (Suriyan Satorn). For two rounds Kompayak gave the 20-year-old Phongsaphon all the trouble he could handle but those two rounds took more out of Kompayak than they did out of Phongsaphon and Kompayak was already fading by the start of the third. He fought hard during the third but in the fourth had nothing left and was driven to his knees by an attack from Phongsaphon and counted out. Phongsaphon had his first pro fight in Japan and lost but has won eleven since then and was defending his WBC Asian title. At 38, 5'0 ½" tall

and 1-6 in his last seven contests the former WBA interim champion Kompayak may be near the end of the road.

Sydney, Australia: Super Welter: Wade Ryan (17-9) W PTS 10 Troy O'Meley (11-1).

Ryan proves persistence pays off as he wins the Australian title with a split decision over champion O'Meley. There was never much between them in this fight. O'Meley was cut but it did not hamper his performance. Southpaw Ryan had a slight edge in reach and that was enough to make the difference. Scores 97-94 and 96-94 for Ryan and 96-94 for O'Meley. This was Ryan's third shot at winning a national title and he also wins the IBO International belt. He has the distinction of having floored Tim Tszyu before losing on points to him in 2017. O'Meley is 27 so has time to rebuild.

**Wavre, Belgium: Super Light: Antoine Vanackere (15-1) W PTS 10 Brayon Mairena (10-19-1) . Light: Miko Khatchatryan (11-0) W TKO 1 Joseafat Reyes (8-13-1).
Vanackere vs. Mairena**

Vanackere wins the vacant Belgian title with unanimous decision over third-rate Nicaraguan loser Mairena. Scores 100-88, 100-90 and 99-91. The 25-year-old southpaw has a seven-bout winning streak going. Spanish-based Mairena, 24, has now lost his last 19 fights. What a ridiculous national title fight. Because there is such a lack of depth of boxing in Belgium it is allowable to have a non-Belgian contest the title but importing a Spanish-based Central American who has lost his last 18 fights and never fought in a ten round fight to contest your national title is a disgrace and shows no respect whatsoever for the national title. It would be better to just appoint Vanackere champion than go through with this farce.

Khatchatryan vs. Reyes

Khatchatryan also picks up a vacant Belgian title as he stops Mexican Reyes in the first round. Sixth win by KO/TKO for 25-

year-old Khatchatryan. A former Belgian amateur champion Khatchatryan competed at both the European Union and European championships and has made good progress. Spanish-based southpaw Reyes is 1-10 in fights in Europe so another poor excuse for a title fight.

San Juan, Puerto Rico: Super Light: Danielito Zorrilla (14-0) W KO 2 Rodolfo Puente (19-4-2). Light Fly: Oscar Collazo (2-0) W TKO 2 Kevin Cruz (0-1).

Zorrilla vs. Puente

On a Miguel Cotto promotion-the first show in Puerto Rico since the pandemic struck- Zorrilla knocks out little Puente in two rounds. The 27-year-old Zorrilla makes it 11 wins by KO/TKO. Colombian Puente has lost 3 of his last 4 fights but what they were doing putting then 5'9" Zorrilla in with the 5'0" small Puente as a match beats me.

Collazo vs. Cruz

Big things are expected from Collazo and this was not the fight to test his potential as he overwhelmed novice Cruz. The 23-year-old Newark-born southpaw Collazo turned down the chance to go to the Olympics to sign with Cotto and Golden Boy but the pandemic brought his campaign to a stop in February after just one fight.

Fight of the week (Significance): Errol Spence's win over Danny Garcia keeps the hopes of a unification fight with Terrence Crawford a possibility. Honourable mention to Billy Joe Saunders who has spent too long outside with his nose pressed against the shop window of big fights.

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Plenty of action and quality boxing in Spence vs. Garcia

Fighter of the week: Errol Spence as he rebounds from serious injury to retain his title.

Punch of the week: The left hook from Eduard Ramirez that sent Miguel Flores flat on the canvas was special.

Upset of the week: Lyndon Arthur was an outsider against Anthony Yarde but came out a winner

Prospect watch: Kazakh middleweight Meirim Nursultanov 14-0 is coming along nicely

Observations

Billy Joe Saunders sees his name come up often in the context of big fights but he never draws the winning ticket. Unbeaten for eleven years but still finds himself running down the blind alley labelled WBO title.

Good to see boxing restarted in Puerto Rico with the first small show under Miguel Cotto's banner but more to come.

Finding opposition that doesn't look bizarre for the 6'5" Super welterweight Sebastian Fundora must be difficult but if Miguel Cotto can put 5'0" tall Rodolfo Puente in with 5'9" Danielito Zorrilla then as the song says "Anything Goes"

I can understand the problem of keeping a national title alive if there are too few fighters to compete for them. That's the situation in some weight categories in Belgium but if you accept a fighter who has lost his last 18 fights as suitable it raises the question of how bad a fighter would have to be to get turned down?