

The Past Week in Action 19 July 2021

Highlights:

Jermell Charlo and Brian Castano fight to a controversial draw in a fight that was supposed to unify the four super welterweight belts- so nothing unified

-Ryad Merhy makes a successful defence of the secondary WBA heavyweight title with eighth round stoppage of Chinese challenger Zhaoxin Zhang

-Lourdes Juarez gets a split verdict over Diana Fernandez in a WBC Female super flyweight title defence

-Former cruiserweight title holder Krzys Wlodarczyk returns with a victory and in domestic action Mattia Faraoni and Vairo Lenti win in Italian title fights, Yves Ulysse stops fellow-Canadian David Theroux and red hot Japanese prospect Ginjiro Shigeoka stops Toshiki Kawamitsu

World Title/Major Shows

16 July

Ciudad Juarez, Mexico: Super Fly: Lourdes Juarez (32-2,1ND) W PTS 10 Diana Fernandez (23-4). Super Light: Bryan Flores (30-2-1) W TKO 4 Otto Gamez (19-6)

Juarez vs. Fernandez

"Lulu" Juarez retains the WBC title with a split decision over local fighter Fernandez. The split decision was a strange one. After Fernandez edged the opening round Juarez took over. She was on the front foot taking the fight to Fernandez landing with power and speed and looked to have swept the next four rounds. Fernandez got back into the fight by taking the sixth but then Juarez staged a strong finish over the last three rounds. The judges scored this 96-95 and 95-94 for Juarez and 96-94 for Fernandez! After a couple of defeats early in her career Juarez is now unbeaten in her last 29 fights. Fernandez

lost a split decision to Lourdes in November 2017 and was beaten by Mariana Juarez, the elder sister of Lourdes, for the WBC female bantam title in 2019.

Flores vs. Gamez

Juarez-based Flores batters Gamez to defeat in four rounds. Flores led all the way before driving Gamez to a corner in the fourth and dropping Gamez with a right with the fight being halted. Flores is 19-0-1 in his last 20 outings but against carefully vetted opposition. Venezuelan's Gamez's recent form has him 1-4 in his last five fights.

17 July

San Antonio, TX, USA: Super: Jermell Charlo (34-1-1) DREW 12 Brian Castano (17-0-2). Light: Ronald Romero (14-0) W TKO 7 Anthony Yigit (24-2-1). Middle: Amilcar Vidal (13-0) W PTS 10 Immanuvel Aleem (18-3-2). Super Welter: Bakhram Murtazaliev (19-0) W PTS 8 Khiary Gray (16-6).

Charlo vs. Castano

A unification fight that does not unify as Jermell Charlo, the IBF, WBA and WBC title holder and WBO title holder Castano fight to a controversial draw.

Round 1

Castano was jabbing well and tried an early right as Charlo was on the back foot. Castano was walking forward behind a high guard and he took Charlo to the ropes and connected with a sharp right to the chin. Charlo continued to retreat and Castano showed quick hands and scored with another two rights.

Score: 10-9 Castano

Round 2

Charlo stood his ground using his longer reach to get through with jabs and fired rights. Castano worked Charlo to the ropes and fired a series of punches but a solid left hook had Castano backing off with Charlo in pursuit firing punches. He had hurt

Castano but then Charlo went on to the back foot again and did not capitalise on that left hook.

Score: 10-9 Charlo

TIED 19-19

Round 3

This round was boring until the last ten seconds. Neither fighter was committing himself merely prodding with jabs. Just before the bell Castano cut loose with a barrage of punches landing two great left hooks the second of which sent Charlo slumping to sit on the bottom rope and nearly going down.

Score: 10-9 Castano

Castano 29-28

Round 4

A good round for Castano. He had Charlo pinned to the ropes for most of the round. He was choosing his moment to dart inside throwing bursts of punches connecting with some good head shots. Charlo was too busy defending himself to counter effectively.

Score: 10-9 Castano

Castano 39-37

**Official Scores: Judge Tim Cheatham 39-37 Castano,
Judge Nelson Vazquez 39-37 Charlo, Judge Steve
Weisfeld 39-37 Castano.**

Round 5

A much better round for Charlo. He jabbed and moved and scored with long rights. He stayed off the ropes and bobbed and weaved under Castano's punches whilst raking Castano with shots from distance.

Score: 10-9 Charlo

Castano 48-47

Round 6

Charlo was jabbing but one punch at a time. Castano was circling Charlo looking for a chance to throw himself in to the attack. He gave up waiting and over the last minute stormed forward throwing punches. Not all landed but Charlo was throwing very little in return.

Score: 10-9 Castano

Castano 58-56

Round 7

Castano's round again. He was swarming forward forcing Charlo to the ropes and throwing punches. He was going for volume rather than accuracy but he was throwing punches and landing some including a sharp left hook with Charlo not firing enough back.

Score: 10-9 Castano

Castano 68-65

Round 8

Charlo was fighting a dumb fight. He was constantly retreating just firing his jab and not putting his punches together. Castano was prowling after Charlo choosing his moment to plunge in and landed some hard overhand rights. If Charlo had a plan there was no evidence of it.

Score: 10-9 Castano

Castano 78-74

Official Scores: Judge Tim Cheatham 77-75 Castano, Judge Nelson Vazquez 78-74 Charlo, Judge Steve Weisfeld 78-74 Castano.

Round 9

Castano was again in control. He was hunting Charlo around the ring launching swinging attacks firing hooks and uppercuts and having success with overhand rights. Charlo was only using his jab and was unable to keep Castano out or to score with his own punches

Score: 10-9 Castano

Castano 88-83

Round 10

This fight was not following the script as Charlo was a heavy favourite but it looked as though some Argentinian fans were going to make serious money. Half way through the round everything changed. Charlo connected with a left hook and suddenly Castano was sent backwards on shaky legs. Charlo chased Castano down and rocked him a couple more times but Castano danced around the ropes and recovered enough to swap punches with Charlo before the bell.

Score: 10-9 Charlo

Castano 97-93

Round 11

This one was close with Castano still coming forward but Charlo jabbing with more purpose. He landed a good right hook and late in the round as Castano was busy firing punches a left hook from Charlo stunned him and sent into hasty retreat with Charlo landing some heavy shots.

Score: 10-9 Charlo

Castano 106-103

Round 12

Charlo finally started using his right. He was jabbing strongly and every jab was followed by a straight right. That helped Charlo dominate most of the rounds with Castano attacking hard before the bell but it was Charlo's round.

Score: 10-9 Charlo

Castano 115-113

**Official Scores: Judge Tim Cheatham 114-114 TIED,
Judge Nelson Vazquez 117-111 Charlo, Judge Steve
Weisfeld 114-113 Castano.***

Judge Weisfeld scored the tenth 10-8 for Charlo.

No one is sure what fight Judge Vazquez was watching having Charlo the winner by six points.

Both fighters are interested in a return and hopefully it will happen. I have been underestimating Castano since he first turned pro just seeing him as a wild slugger but he showed great heart, a tremendous work rate and clever use of a cross-arm defence. Charlo was disappointing never showing any real form or sustained aggression until the last three rounds. It will be interesting to see if Charlo has a better plan next time. Castano was unlucky here. He should have got the decision.

Romero vs. Yigit

Romero halts Yigit in seven rounds in defence of his WBA interim belt. Yigit was a short notice substitute and came in 5 ½ lbs over the limit so could not win the title. Yigit started well swopping punches with Romero. He suffered a gash on his left cheek from a Romero elbow in the third and by the fourth Romero was staring to land some heavy shots and was in control. In the fifth Romero used a wrestling hold to throw Yigit to the canvas and was then deducted a point for hitting Yigit

after the break call. He then landed a series of punches that sent Yigit to the canvas. Yigit struggled to beat the count and he was saved by the bell. An exhausted Yigit soaked up punishment in the sixth and a left and right floored him in the seventh. When the action resumed Romero bundled Yigit to the floor but it was from a push so no count. Yigit was finished. He tried to walk through Romero's punches but as he stumbled forward a left hook sent him down heavily and the fight was stopped. Romero, 25, was making the first defence of the interim belt. Yigit was obviously not in condition and was too brave for his own good. He hasn't looked the same fighter since the savage beating he took in losing to Ivan Baranchyk for the vacant IBF super light title in 2018.

Vidal vs. Aleem

Vidal gets a majority decision over Aleem. There was a nice mix of styles here with the bigger stronger Vidal walking down the clever, quick-handed but light-punching Aleem. Vidal kept up the pressure and rocked Aleem with a right to the head in the second. Aleem was spearing Vidal with punches as the Uruguayan came forward and firing rapid combinations inside but not having the power to dissuade Vidal. There were plenty of exchanges in what was warming into an entertain match as they traded punches inside at the end of the fourth. Since he could not keep the power punching Vidal out Aleem stood and scrapped with Vidal. A series of crunching left hooks to the body had Aleem hurt in the sixth but he bounced back to outscore Vidal in the seventh and rocked him in the eighth with a left hook. It was toe-to-toe through the ninth and tenth with the result seemingly in the balance but the judges came down on the side of Vidal with two judges seeing it 97-93 for Vidal and the third turning in a 95-95 card which looked the better measure of the fight. Vidal, 25, shows promise. He is lucky to be boxing as he was struck by a lorry when doing road work in 2015 and suffered a broken pelvis and needed surgery to an injured arm. Aleem has no luck in close fights as in his last

three contests he has drawn with Matt Korobov and lost to Ronald Ellis and Vidal with all three results being majority decisions.

Murtazaliev vs. Gray

Murtazaliev was looking to showcase his power and move a step closer to a fight with Charlo for the IBF title. He succeeded in the power aim as he rocked Gray on various occasions but could never totally subdue Gray who took the licks and fought back enough to garner some respect from Murtazaliev even though losing clearly. Scores 79-73 twice and 78-74 for Russian Murtazaliev. He is No 1 with the IBF but after the draw between Charlo and Castano and the possibility of a return it seems he is further away and not closer to a title fight. This is the first fight for Gray since being stopped in six rounds by Gary O'Sullivan in March 2019.

**Brussels, Belgium: Cruiser: Ryad Merhy (30-1) W TKO 9
Zhaoxin Zhang (10-2-1). Super Light: Hovhannes Martirosyan (12-0) W RTD 8 Renald Garrido (25-29-3). Super Light: Antoine Vanackere (17-1) W PTS 10 Nazri Rahimov (9-3). Cruiser: Steve Eloundou Ntere (5-0) W PTS 10 Zura Mekereshvili (16-30-1). Super Light: Mohamed El Marcouchi (28-2) W PTS 6 Gary Abajyan (26-42-1). Super Feather: Miko Khatchatryan (13-0) W KO 3 Michael Pappoe (26-8). Super Middle: Kevin Lele Sadjo (16-0) W PTS 8 Javier Maciel (33-13). Cruiser: Samuel Kadje (16-1) W KO 3 Vukasin Obradovic (6-18-1). Cruiser: Youri Kayembre Kalenga (27-6) W KO 1 Mikheil Khutsishvili (31-44-6).**

Merhy vs. Zhang

Merhy makes a first defence of the secondary WBA title with stoppage of inexperienced Zhang. In the first Zhang made an assured start using his longer reach firing jabs and trying right hands. He was flat-footed and showed no upper body movement and Merhy was able to score with jabs of his own.

In the second a jab from Merhy sent Zhang down . He was up quickly indicating it was a slip. He was not too shaken but Merhy dominated the round as he threaded jabs though Zhang's guard. A big left hook from Merhy floored Zhang in the third. The challenger made it his feet and despite a couple of heavy rights from Merhy survived to the bell. Merhy was landing strongly again in the fourth and fifth but Zhang showed a good chin. The pace dropped in the sixth allowing Zhang to work his jab and he even had Merhy trapped against the ropes and under fire for a spell. Merhy picked up the pace again in the seventh scoring with his jabs and long rights on a visibly tiring Zhang. Merhy was following Zhang around the ring in the eighth loading up on his punches and when Zhang prodded out a tame right Merhy came over the top with a solid left hook that dumped Zhang on the canvas on his side. Zhang got up but after the eight count the referee made a good decision to stop the fight. Ivory Coast-born Belgian Merhy makes it 25 inside the distance finishes. He was to have defended against Kevin Lerena but COVID restrictions meant Lerena could not get to Belgium. Hopefully that fight can be made as it is a hard one to call and it would be a treat for the fans. Zhang was called in at just five weeks notice with the task of getting a visa giving him little time to prepare for the fight. He had plenty of flaws but as he had no amateur background it was understandable and he was not disgraced.

Martirosyan vs. Garrido

A rarity here as for the first time in 57 fights Garrido fails to go the distance. Belgian champion Martirosyan used better skills to outbox the ever aggressive Frenchman. It looked as though Garrido was on his way to another points defeat but an injury to his jaw was too serious for him to continue. Martirosyan wins the vacant BeNeLux title for fighters from Belgium Netherlands (Holland) and Luxemburg. Garrido will be back in action as soon as his jaw heals.

Vanackere vs. Rahimov

Southpaw Vanackere wins the vacant IBO Continental title. This was a close one with Rahimov spoiling his own chances by some infractions that cost him a point deduction in the second and tenth rounds. Scores 95-93 twice and 95-94 for Vanackere. Now nine consecutive wins for the Belgian champion. Ukrainian Rahimov, 20, was 6-1 going into this one.

Ntere vs. Mekereshvili

Cameroon-born Ntere collects the vacant Belgian title as he outclasses Georgian Mekereshvili. Ntere made good use of his edges in height and reach to control the fight with Mekereshvili never really a threat. Scores 99-91 twice and 100-90 for Ntere who was in his first ten round fight. Mekereshvili extends his current losing streak to seven.

El Marcouchi vs. Abajyan

(Marco) El Marcouchi has one of the best records of active Belgian boxers but needs to start moving up as at 33 his youth is behind him. The Miami-based fighter easily handled late substitute Abajyan and eased to a points victory. His only loss in his last 23 contests was a disqualification. Georgian Abajyan, 47, slides a little further down the slope with his thirteenth loss in a row.

Khatchatryan vs. Pappoe

Belgian prospect Khatchatryan gets another win under his belt with stoppage Ghanaian Pappoe. Khatchatryan sent Pappoe to the boards in the second and then finished him in the third with a body punch. Although he is the Belgian lightweight champion this win gave him the IBO International super featherweight belt. Pappoe went twelve rounds with Isaac Dogboe back in 2016.

Sadjo vs. Maciel

“KLS” Sadjo may be a little old at 31 to be deemed a prospect but he is a former undefeated French champion and experienced Argentinian Maciel is only the second fighter to take him the distance. Sadjo floored Maciel in the first but Maciel did not buckle and made Sadjo work hard over the

remaining seven rounds. Scores 79-72, 79-73 and 78-72 for Sadjo. After 14 consecutive inside the distance wins that's now two points wins in a row. At one time Maciel was 27-2 but now he is just in it for the money he can get as a travelling trial horse and this is his seventh loss in six different countries with six of his opponents being unbeaten.

Kadje vs. Obradovic

Former Belgian cruiserweight champion Kadje punches too hard for Obradovic. After handing out punishment for two rounds Kadje landed a vicious right uppercut that dropped the Serbian to his knees and he sat out the ten count. Frenchman Kadje has 13 inside the distance finishes. Obradovic no real test.

Kalenga vs. Khutsishvili

Farcically easy for Kalenga. The fight had only just started when Khutsishvili flopped to the floor from a phantom punch and was counted out. The 33-year-old former interim WBA title holder Kalenga had lost big fights to Yuniel Dorticos, Kevin Lerena, Mateusz Masternak and Michal Cieslak so has work to do to get another title chance. A very predictable result as Khutsishvili has now lost by KO/TKO twenty-four times.

13 July

Fontenay-sous-Bois, France: Welter: Mehdi Mouhib (19-2) W TKO 4 Yahya Tlaouziti (18-5-3). Super Light: Massi Tachour (16-4,1ND) W RTD 4 Luciano Randazzo (15-4-4).

Mouhib vs. Tlaouziti

Mouhib blows away Tlaouziti to win the vacant European Union title. Mouhib sent Tlaouziti down in each of the first two rounds. Tlaouziti banged back to take the third but a left to the head put him down again in the fourth and the fight was stopped. Twelfth win by KO/TKO for Mouhib. First inside the distance loss for former French champion Tlaouziti

Tachour vs. Randazzo

Home town fighter Tachour retains the European Union title with victory over Italian Randazzo, The challenger started aggressively but powerful hooks and uppercuts from Tachour soon had Randazzo going backwards. Tachour scored heavily in the fourth and Randazzo retired at the end of the round citing an injury to his left shoulder which had affected his performance in the fourth. Algerian-born Tachour was making the first defence of the EU title and has won his last thirteen fights. Former Italian champion Randazzo was 5-0-1 going into this fight.

14 July

Tokyo, Japan: Minimumweight: Ginjiro Shigeoka (6-0) W TKO 2 Toshiki Kawamitsu (6-1).

The latest Japanese prodigy Shigeoka stops Kawamitsu in two rounds in a WBO Asia Pacific title defence. The 5'0" tall Shigeoka was giving away 4" in height and immediately took the fight to Kawamitsu who was forced to stand and trade punches in an exciting first round. It was all over in the second as Shigeoka floored Kawamitsu with a right hook. Kawamitsu beat the count but was stunned by another right hook and a straight left and the referee stopped the fight. The 21-year-old Shigeoka was 56-1 as an amateur and is being tipped as a future star in Japan. (The loss came when he was to have fought his brother in a tournament final and although he entered the ring when the gong went his corner threw in the towel so Shigeoka "lost" the fight). Kawamitsu never in with a chance.

16 July

Shawinigan, Canada: Super Light: Yves Ulysse Jr (20-2) W TKO 5 David Theroux (16-5).

Ulysse crushes Theroux in five rounds. Ulysse took control in the first and then put Theroux down heavily with a short right hook in the second. He continued to punish Theroux in the third and fourth. In the fifth a right which landed high on the side of Theroux's head sent him down on his hands and knees. He spun around and eventually made it to his feet but was walking towards his corner as the referee stopped the fight. Ulysse wins the vacant NABA title. He lost a razor-thin decision against Ismael Barroso for the WBA Gold title in December 2019 but had come back well with a stoppage of fellow Canadian Mathieu Germain in November. Second consecutive inside the distance loss for Theroux who retired after six rounds against Steve Claggett in November.

**Ladispoli, Italy: Cruiser: Mattia Faraoni (7-1-1) W RTD 5
Francesco Versaci (21-4-1).**

In a return match Faraoni wins the Italian title with injury victory over champion Versaci. The challenger looked to have built a lead over the first four rounds. Versaci gave it a big try in the fifth but then retired due an injury to his right shoulder. These two had met in March with the fight ending after just one round when Versaci was unable to continue due a punch to the back of the head. It was a winning double for Faraoni. He did go down once but it was after the fight when he proposed marriage to his girl friend and she accepted. Versaci was making the second defence of the title.

Grosseto, Italy: Light: Vairo Lenti (9-4-1) W PTS 10 Luca Maccaroni (16-7-4).

Lenti outboxes perennial challenger Maccaroni. Lenti constantly found opening for his jab and used some slick footwork and accurate counters to pile up the points. Maccaroni had a good fifth but other than that despite Maccaroni's constant pressure Lenti never lost control of the fight. Scores 99-91, 98-92 and 97-93 for Lenti in his first defence of the national title. His lack

of power will be Lenti's biggest problem against better quality opponents. Maccaroni was trying to win a national title for the fourth time having lost twice at super lightweight and now twice at lightweight.

Talisay City, Philippines: Minimum: Melvin Jerusalem (17-2) W PTS 12 Tito Landero (11-6-2). Fly: Dave Apolinario (15-0) W TKO 4 Charlie Malupangue (9-5-3). Light Fly: Christian Araneta (20-2) W TKO 1 Richard Claveras (19-7-2). Super Fly: KJ Cataraja (13-0) W TKO 7 Cris Alfante (17-9-1). Feather: Jeo Santisima (21-3) W TKO 1 Alan Alberca (11-5).

Jerusalem vs. Landero

Former WBC title challenger Jerusalem outpoints former WBA and IBO title challenger Landero. Jerusalem boxed for most of the fight on the back foot scoring well with his jab at distance and countering the advancing Landero who never stopped walking forward. His pressure gave Landero a couple of rounds but he was outboxed and outscored by Jerusalem. Scores 118-110 twice and 116-112 for Jerusalem who snaps up the vacant OPBF belt with his sixth win in a row. He had scored a wide unanimous decision over Landero in 2018. He looked unlucky to lose to Wanheng in Thailand for the WBC title in 2017 with two judges giving Wanheng the win by 114-113 and the other by 115-113. Landero, who lost to Knockout CP Freshmart for the WBA minimum title 2018, is on the slide having now lost 5 of his last 6 fights.

Apolinario vs. Malupangue

In a clash of southpaw's Apolinario gets his tenth inside the distance victory as he stops Malupangue in the fourth. Apolinario was landing heavily from the start. He rocked Malupangue in the third and in the fourth after a punch sent Malupangue's mouthguard flying Malupangue indicated he was finished and the fight was stopped. Apolinario wins the WBA Asian title. Malupangue had won 4 of his last 5 fights.

Araneta vs. Claveras

Araneta wipes out Claveras in 91 seconds. With Claveras against the ropes Araneta landed a series of bombs that sent Claveras down heavily and the referee immediately stopped the fight after just 91 seconds. Sixteenth inside the distance win for the Cebu City southpaw.

Cataraja vs. Alfante

Cataraja moves to thirteen wins as he stops a too brave Alfante in the seventh. Southpaw Alfante just kept rolling forward and landed enough to keep Cataraja busy. Too often Alfante was walking onto left hooks to the body and straight rights but he persisted in trying to trade punches. He was shaken in the sixth and walked onto a right in the seventh which sent him stumbling to the ropes and down. He was up early but when the referee reached eight Alfante just shook his head and the referee waived the fight over. Only two opponents have managed to last the distance against Cataraja. Alfante was a useful 6-2 going in.

Santisima vs. Alberca

Santisima punches too hard for Alberca. He floored Alberca with a left hook to the body and then put him down and out with a left hook to the head. All over in 101 seconds.

Santisima's only loss in his last 20 fights is an eleventh round stoppage by Emanuel Navarrete for the WBO super bantam title in February last year. Four quick defeats for Alberca

17 July

Magdeburg, Germany: Light Heavy: Michael Eifert (8-1) W PTS 10 Tom Dzemski (17-1). Cruiser: Juergen Uldedaj (14-0) W TKO 7 Dmytro Serguta (7-2). Heavy: Peter Kadiru (11-0) W TKO 2 Adnan Redzovic (21-6). Cruiser: Adam Deines (20-2-1) W RTD 4 Bernard Donfack (23-27-4).

Eifert vs. Dzemski

Eifert gets revenge as he takes majority verdict over Dzemski. It was Dzemski who made the more confident start but he was staggered by a left from Eifert in the third. Eifert built on that success to take the fourth but Dzemski settled again to edge the fifth. Eifert's harder punching saw him take the sixth and he looked to have taken the close seventh and eighth and landed heavily in the ninth. Dzemski threw everything into the tenth but it was not enough. Scores 97-93 twice for Eifert and 95-95. Eifert wins the WBC, IBF and WBO Youth titles and reverses his majority decision loss against Dzemski in August last year. Dzemski will be rebuilt.

Uldedaj vs. Serguta

Albanian Uldedaj lifts the vacant WBC Youth title, He put Ukrainian Serguta on the floor in the second round but Serguta recovered to fight back hard until a left hook sent him tumbling to the canvas in the seventh and the fight was stopped.

Uldedaj gets his fifth win by KO/TKO. Serguta had lost to Leon Harth on points in April.

Kadiru vs. Redzovic

Kadiru gets his sixth victory by the short route. He dropped Bosnian Redzovic late in the first and when he staggered Redzovic in the second the referee halted the action. The German champion is going to be working as a sparring partner with Anthony Joshua. Third loss in a row for Redzovic against tough opposition.

Deines vs. Donfack

Deines returns with a win as he floors Donfack in the first and fourth rounds and Donfack does not come out for the fifth. First fight for southpaw Deines since losing on a tenth round stoppage against Artur Beterbiev for the IBF and WBC light heavyweight title in March. Just one win in his last thirteen fights for Donfack.

Suwalki, Poland: Cruiser: Krzys Wlodarczyk (59-4-1) W PTS 8 Vadym Novopashyn (6-3). Middle: Fiodor

Czerkaszyn (18-0) W TKO 1 Damian Bonelli (24-8). Light Heavy: Marek Matyja (20-2-2) W TKO 2 Maksym Miszczenko (7-2).

Wlodarczyk vs. Novopashyn

In his first fight for 20 months Wlodarczyk took a couple of rounds to find his range. The pace was slow with Wlodarczyk not throwing many punches but he was accurate. Novopashyn found gaps when Wlodarczyk was careless with his guard but he tired and faded out of the fight. Wlodarczyk scored heavily over the late rounds staggering Novopashyn with a left in the fifth but other than that he never really had Novopashyn in any trouble. Scores 79-73 twice and 80-72 for Wlodarczyk. Not an impressive showing from former IBF and WBC title holder Wlodarczyk who is aiming to be busier and fight his way to another title shot but at 39 he needs to hurry. Novopashyn gave Wlodarczyk some useful rounds of work.

Czerkaszyn vs. Bonelli

Czerkaszyn wipes out Bonelli inside a round. A huge left hook flattened Bonelli. He made it to his feet but Czerkaszyn had him pinned to the ropes and was bombarding him with punches bringing the referee in to stop the massacre. The 25-year-old Ukrainian-born Pole makes it twelve inside the distance wins. Argentinian Bonelli is 0-3 in fights in Poland.

Matyja vs. Miszczenko

Matyja produces a one-punch finish to stop Ukrainian Miszczenko. The first round was even with Miszczenko taking the fight to the local fighter. In the second Miszczenko went down from a low punch and was given a chance to recover. Later in the round he threw a lazy jab and Matyja came over the top with a right that sent Miszczenko down heavily. Miszczenko struggled to his feet but did not respond to the referees instructions and the fight was over. Ninth win by KO/TKO for Matyja.

Lesniki, Ukraine: Super Welter: Dymtro Mytrofanov (11-0-1) W PTS 10 Rilliwan Babatunde (13-1). Middle: Khasan Baysangurov (21-1) W RTD 1 Berikbay Nurymbetov (7-4-1). Welter: Khuseyn Baysangurov (19-1) W TKO 3 Nika Gvajava (12-22-3).

Mytrofanov vs. Babatunde

Oxnard-based Ukrainian Mytrofanov retains the WBO Oriental title with unanimous decision over Babatunde. Mytrofanov was conceding height and reach to the Nigerian but rumbled forward throughout the fight. Babatunde showed some useful skills and counterpunched well causing Mytrofanov some problems. He just did not have the power to keep Mytrofanov out and was under heavy pressure in every round. Scores 99-90, 99-91 and 98-92. Mytrofanov was defending the title he won by decisioning Asinia Byfield in December. First fight outside of Nigeria for Babatunde and at 25 he will only get better.

Baysangurov vs. Nurymbetov

Early finish for Baysangurov as Kazak Nurymbetov retires at the end of the first round with a hand injury. Baysangurov lost on an eleventh round stoppage against Rob Brant for the secondary WBA middleweight title in February 2019 and this is the fourth win for him as he rebuilds. Nurymbetov is 2-4-1 in his most recent contests.

Baysangurov vs. Gvajava

Elder brother Khusein bounced Gvajava off the floor six times before their fight was stopped in the third round. Five inside the distance wins in a row for Baysangurov who rarely needs the full distance to win as he has beaten 17 of his opponents by KO/TKO. Georgian Gvajava falls to 1-10-1 a bad dozen.

Rock Rapids, FL, USA: Middle: Serhii Bohachuk (19-1) W KO 1 Brandon Baue (16-24)). Welter: Ronald Cruz (18-1) W PTS 8 Chris Gray (13-23-1).

Bohachuk vs. Baue

Lanky Bohachuk ended this one early. After hurting Baue with a uppercut Bohachuk landed a left hook to the body dropping Baue to one knee and he was counted out. First fight for Bohachuk since being stopped by Brandon Adams in March. All 19 of Bohachuck's wins have come by KO/TKO. Baue was a substitute and suffers his sixteenth loss by KO.TKO.

Cruz vs. Gray

Cruz gets unanimous verdict over a very rusty Gray on scores of 78-74 twice and 79-73. The 29-year-old Californian extends his winning run to 16 fights. Gray, 45, was having his first fight since December 2015.

Villa Carlos Paz, Argentina: Middle: Juan Taborda (16-0) W PTS 10 Abraham Buonarrigo (9-2).

Taborda wins the vacant WBO Latino title as he outpointed Buonarrigo. After two fairly even rounds Taborda's power put him in command. He had Buonarrigo in trouble in the fourth and seventh round. Taborda coasted through the eighth and swept the last two rounds to cement his victory. Scores 97-93 twice and 98-92 for Taborda who was having his first fight since December 2019.

Berlin, Germany: Super Bantam: Michael Kannier (12-3-1) W PTS 12 Jozsef Ajtai (22-18). Super Light: Zapir Rasulov (36-1) W PTS 8 Nestor Faccio (18-13-2,1ND).

Kannier vs. Ajtai

German Kannier wins the vacant Global Boxing Council belt with points victory against little Hungarian Ajtal. Kannier was just too big for the 5'2 1/2" Ajtal. Scores 118-110 twice and 120-108 for Kannier who has won 9 of his last 10 fights with the loss coming against Zapir Rasulov. Ajtal, a former Hungarian light flyweight title holder is 1-9 in his last ten outings.

Rasulov vs. Faccio

Rasulov seems to be taking a long time to get nowhere. He outpointed Uruguayan Faccio but despite the scores made heavy work of winning. Faccio was competitive all the way but the judges saw Rasulov the winner on scores of 79-74, 78-74 and a more realistic 77-75. Russian Rasulov, 34, celebrated 17 years as a pro this month but is still fighting six and eight round contests. Faccio had lost his last three fights which is typical of the level of risk Rasulov is willing to take.

Fight of the week (Significance): Jermell Charlo vs. Brian Castano. Must lead to a return to get those four titles unified.

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Amilcar Vidal vs. Immanuwel Aleem an inspired bit of matching which produced a great scrap.

Fighter of the week: He may not have won but for me Brian Castano should have now been holding the four belts.

Punch of the week: Some beauties. The left hook from Ryad Merhy in the eighth round was a classic and Yves Ulysse produced a great right to stop Theroux but I will go for the perfectly timed left hook from Pole Fiodor Cerkaszyn that put Damian Bonelli down.

Upset of the week: No shockers

Prospect watch: Japanese minimumweight Ginjiro Shigeoka 6-0 and 56-1 as a amateur looks a cert with only his 5'0" height limiting the divisions he could span

Observations

The Juarez family has produced two outstanding talents in female boxing. Mariana "Barbie"-real name Maria Anastasia Trejo, now 41, is a former WBC flyweight and bantamweight title holder and is 17-2 in title fights with an overall record of 55-10-4. Despite the scarcity of female boxers younger sister Lourdes had 33 fights over seven years as a pro before getting

a title shot last December when she won the WBC female super flyweight title. Some family.

There are many areas of the world where being around 5'0" tall and weighting around 103lbs does not hamper you in finding fights. That's not the case in Europe. Take Hungarian Jozsef Ajtai. He is 5'2 1/2" and weighed as low as 101lbs in a fight at the start of his career. Gradually he was taking on opponents such as Andrew Selby, Shiming Zou, Khalid Yafai, Artem Dalakian and 5'9 1/2" Gavin McDonnell and is tackling super bantamweights and even super featherweights to get fights. There's vertically challenged and just too small.

Belgian fans certainly got their money's worth in Brussels as the Merhy vs. Zhang card had sixteen fights scheduled ranging from twelve rounds to four rounds and not one Belgian loser on the night.