

The Past Week in Action 31 January 2022

Highlights:

- Ilunga Makabu retains the WBC cruiser title with split decision over Thabiso Mchunu
- Trevor Bryan scores split decision over Jonathan Guidry in defence of WBA secondary heavyweight title.
- Robinson Conceicao gets unanimous decision over Xavier Martinez
- Sergio Martinez continues his campaign for a title shot with points win over Macaulay McGowan.
- Thomas Faure wins the vacant European Union light-heavyweight title with decision over Kevin Cojean.
- Francisco Fonesca and Cristofer Rosales register wins in Managua.

World Title/Major Shows

January 29

Warren, OH, USA: Cruiser: Ilunga Makabu (29-2) W PTS 12 Thabiso Mchunu (23-6). Heavy: Trevor Bryan (22-0) W PTS 12 Jonathan Guidry (17-1-2). Cruiser: Johnnie Langston (10-2,1ND) W TKO 5 Nick Kisner (22-6-1,1ND). Heavy: Dacarree Scott (7-0) W PTS 10 Ahmed Hefny (13-2). Middle Moore (19-3) W PTS 10 Anthony Lenk (17-8-0). Welter: Tre'Sean Wiggins (13-5-3) W TKO 3 y Wilson (10-3).

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Makabu vs. Mchunu

Makabu retains the WBC title with a controversial split verdict over Mchunu in a clash of southpaws.

Round 1

Mchunu had quicker hands and was more mobile than Makabu. He was snapping fast jabs from a low guard and then shifting

before the slower Makabu could counter. Makabu landed a good left to the body but Mchunu did most of the scoring.

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Round 2

A good round for Makabu. He upped his place trapping Mchunu against the ropes and scoring with thumping shots to head and body. Mchunu was standing static in front of Makabu and paid for that as Makabu continue to score with body punches.

Score: 10-9 Makabu

TIED 19-19

Round 3

Another strong round for Makabu. He was bludgeoning Mchunu with body punches and landing heavily to the head. Too often Mchunu was standing trading punches instead of using his speed to box.

Score: 10-9 Makabu

Makabu 29-28

Round 4

This was a close round. Mchunu started out using his quicker hands to spear Makabu with jabs and scoring with uppercuts. Makabu was missing with lots of shots but also landing some heavy hits. Mchunu was slotting home jabs and moving and although Makabu finished strongly it was Mchunu's round

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Tied 38-38

Official Scores Judge Steve Weisfeld 40-36 Makabu, Judge Nathan Palmer 39-37 Makabu, Judge Jamie Garayua 40-36 Makabu

Round 5

Mchunu's hand speed made the difference here. He was getting his punches off first and Makabu was off target with his counter. A left hook from Mchunu sent sweat flying off Makabu's head and he blocked or dodged the big stuff from Makabu.

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Mchunu 48-47

Round 6

Again Mchunu was scoring with quick hooks and uppercuts inside. He did not have the power of Makabu but he was on

target whilst Makabu was missing with big lefts. Makabu rocked Mchunu with a left late in the round but Mchunu had the edge.

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Mchunu 58-56

Round 7

This round went to Makabu. He was taking that extra step forward behind his jab and banging home some hurtful body punches. Mchunu's output was low and he found himself pinned to the ropes on occasion which allowed Makabu to score with more body punches.

Score: 10-9 Makabu

Mchunu 67-66

Round 8

Makabu also took this one. His powerful jabbing had Mchunu constantly on the back foot. He was tracking Mchunu around the ring and scoring with body punches and rights to the head. Mchunu scored with a powerful left hook but did little else.

Score: 10-9 Makabu

Tied 76-76

Official Scores: Steve Weisfeld 77-75 Makabu, Nathan Palmer 77-75 Makabu, Jamie Garayua 79-73 Makabu

Round 9

Good boxing from Mchunu as he moved inside to cancel out Makabu's jab and out worked him in close. He got through with a couple of sharp right hooks and although Makabu came on late in the round it was not enough to swing it his way.

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Mchunu 86-85

Round 10

A close round with neither fighter having a great deal of success. Makabu landed the heavier punches but Mchunu was sharper drawing Makabu's jab then darting inside to score with hard right uppercuts and just had the edge.

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Mchunu 96-94

Round 11

Mchunu took this one. He was again drawing Makabu's jab and then stepping smartly inside and connecting with hooks and uppercuts. Makabu was ponderous with his punches and Mchunu was able to score with a series of right hooks.

Although Makabu again had some success late it was Mchunu's round.

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Mchunu 106-103

Round 12

Mchunu started the round firing right hooks and straight left as he moved around Makabu then the pace dropped as neither fighter did much until a little flash in the form of a couple of hooks from Mchunu which gave him the round.

Score: 10-9 Mchunu

Mchunu 116-112

Official Scores: Steve Weisfeld 115-113 Makabu, Nathan Palmer 115-113 Mchunu, Judge Jamie Garayua 116-112 Makabu.

Second successful defence for DRC's Makabu which may now lead to a big money fight with Saul Alvarez. Makabu had knocked out Mchunu in eleven rounds in 2015 but for me Mchunu just won this one. Makabu is not overly tall at 6''' but if the Alvarez fight does come off then as the bigger man, a natural 200lbs fighter with 25 wins by KO/TKO, Makabu might pose problems for Alvarez but he is not quick so that might be a leveller. South African Mchunu deserves a return but won't get one anytime soon and this was not a great fight so there might not be much incentive for a return

Bryan vs. Guidry

Bryan holds on to the secondary WBA belt with a split decision over Guidry with one judge seeing a different fight to most people. Bryan made full use of his longer reach and his 5'' height advantage to take the first round with some solid jabbing. He also took the lead in the second but Guidry showed some fire and scored with a couple of left hooks. Bryan again used his physical edges to take the fourth but Guidry came alive in the fifth and Bryan was forced to stand and trade punches which was a good round for Guidry. Bryan used his skills more over the sixth and seventh and with Bryan also having a 28lbs pull in weight and Guidry looked to be tiring in the eighth and there was a growing swelling under his right eye. Guidry showed he

was still there by rocking Bryan with a right in the ninth. Neither fighter had much left over the closing round but Bryan nearly ended just before the last bell flooring Guidry with a series of punches but Guidry made it to his feet. Scores 118-109 and 116-111 for Bryan and a totally strange 115-112 for Guidry from highly experienced judge Steve Weisfeld. Bryan made this a much harder fight than it should have been and his performance makes any thought of a fight against Tyson Fury, Oleksandr Usyk or Anthony Joshua laughable. Instead he will now have to defend his WBA belt against Daniel Dubois and he will start a rank outsider in that fight. Guidry did better than expected but then expectations were very low. He will probably get a few more fights on the back of going the distance in this one.

Langston vs. Kisner

Langston just too quick for a faded Kisner. Langston mixed his punches well scoring with good shots to head and body and outscored Kisner over rounds one and two without really dominating. Kisner got into the fight more in the third but it was all over in the fourth. Langston put Kisner down twice with right hooks to the body and for the third time with a series of head punches and the fight was stopped. Langston, who was stopped in three rounds by Jared Anderson in June 2020, wins the vacant NABA title. Kisner suffers his third defeat by KO/TKO and was having his first fight for almost two years.

Scott vs. Hefny

Scott has a run of five first round wins in a row broken as he has to go the full ten rounds to outpoint Hefny. Although four inches shorter than the 6'2" Hefny at 5'10" Scott was 60lbs heavier and used that extra weight to force Hefny onto the back foot over the first two rounds. Hefny found the distance with his jab in the third and looked to have taken that round. A clash of heads in the fourth saw Hefny cut over his left eye and Scott took that round and the fifth as Hefny seemed affected by the cut. Hefny steadied himself in the sixth and they then

fought on even terms over the last four rounds making it close. Scores 97-93 and 96-94 for Scott and 96-94 for Hefny. Scott, 23, had never gone past the second round before but had only fought very poor opposition and is going to need to shed some weight if he wants to be taken seriously. Egyptian Hefny has also been matched with only third rate foes.

Moore vs. Lenk

Moore takes unanimous decision over Lenk. Scores 99-91 on the three cards for Moore. He came in over the weight for the fight for the vacant NABA title so could not claim the belt. First fight for 27 months for Moore. Southpaw Lenk's only fight in the last two years was a win over a guy with a 0-5 record.

Wiggins vs. Wilson

Wiggins scores three knockdowns and halts Wilson in three rounds. Wilson did enough to make the opening round close but as he tried to put the 5' 11" Wiggins under pressure in the second he walked on to a counter and was dropped. He was on the floor again in the third from two lefts and although he beat the count as Wiggins landed another left the referee stopped the fight. Wilson protested and it did look a very questionable stoppage. Southpaw Wiggins collects the vacant NABA title with his seventh inside the distance. Second defeat by KO/TKO in his last three fights for Wilson.

Tulsa, OK, USA: Super Feather: Robson Conceicao (17-1) W PTS 10 Xavier Martinez (17-1). Light: Giovanni Cabrera (19-0) W PTS 8 Juan Tellez (16-2). Heavy: Stephen Shaw (16-0,1ND) W TKO 8 Joey Dawejko (21-10-4). Middle: Nico Ali Walsh (4-0) W KO 2 Jeremiah Yeager ((1-2-1). Super Feather: Carla Torres (7-6) W PTS 8 Kalliopi Kourouni (11-3).

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Conceicao vs. Martinez

Conceicao outpoints previously unbeaten Martinez with all three cards showing him a clear winner. Conceicao has built on

the improvement he showed when giving Oscar Valdez such a tough time in the WBC title fight in September. He had in the past looked to be going for quantity and not worrying too much about accuracy or defence. Against Martinez he was still a busy fighter throwing plenty of combinations but working more with his jab and showing a much improved defence. Martinez was coming forward but Conceicao was feeding him plenty of jabs and then firing rapid combinations and Martinez was having trouble finding his range. Conceicao stayed in the pocket too long in the third and was stunned by a left hook to the temple but he paid Martinez back with a long looping right uppercut in the fourth which shook Martinez. Conceicao was just too quick for the plodding Martinez and dominated round after round for a comfortable victory in what looked a real test before the first bell. Scores 100-90, 99-91 and 98-92 for Conceicao. The only rating Conceicao held before this fight was No 4 with the WBC. Martinez was No 4 with the WBA and 14 and 15 respectively with the WBC and WBO so at least Conceicao should get promotion

Cabrera vs. Tellez

Cabrera overcomes a feisty Tellez to take the points. Southpaw Cabrera boxed cleverly from the start making good use of his 5" height advantage and his longer and reach as Tellez always dangerous was looking to come forward. Tellez pressed hard in the second getting through with some good body punches but Cabrera countered his rushes well in the third. Tellez almost fell out of the ring after missing with a wild punch in the fourth but recovered and ended the round strongly. Cabrera outscored Tellez over the fifth and sixth and they both landed some good punches in a close seventh with Cabrera rocking Tellez in the last to wrap up the decision. Scores 78-74 twice and 77-75 for Cabrera. Good win for the 19-year-old prospect that had not fought for 27 months. Tellez only previous loss was against unbeaten Michel Rivera and a sixth round kayo of then unbeaten Carlos Balderas showed his danger. These two were

supposed to fight other opponents on the card but Tellez came in 5lbs over weight for his fight so was shifted to face Cabrera.

Shaw vs. Dawejko

After a studied start Shaw was in total control of this one. He was bigger, quicker and the harder paunches and landed heavy shots over the early rounds. Dawejko rumbled forward but rarely troubled Shaw. In the sixth he twice rocked Dawejko with powerful rights and he built on that in the seventh. It could have been stopped then but Dawejko pleaded to be allowed to come out for the last round and a series of punches saw the referee stop the fight to save Dawejko early in the eighth. The 29-year-old 6'4" gets his twelfth inside the distance victory. A former National Golden Gloves bronze medallist he looks a new threat in any already crowded division. Dawejko is a fight anyone anywhere type but is 2-6 in his lost eight fights and this is his third loss by KO/TKO.

Walsh vs. Yeager

Walsh scores spectacular stoppage of Yeager. No way this was going tom last as they both unloaded heavily in the first. In the second Walsh connected with an overhand right and then nailed Yeager with a perfect left hook that sent Yeager flying into the ropes and down on his back. Yeager did well to get up and defied Walsh's attempts to put him away until Walsh pinned him against the ropes late in the round. Walsh wound up his punches, fitted in an "Ali shuffle", then landed a left hook that had Yeager slumping in the ropes and the fight was stopped. Second inside the distance win for the Grandson of the late Muhammad Ali and a great improvement over his majority win over Reyes Sanchez in his last fight.

Torres vs. Kourouni

Puerto Rican Torres took a majority decision over Greek southpaw Kourouni on scores of 80-72 and 77-75 for Torres and 76-76. These two clashed at the weigh-in but stuck to the rules in the fight. Both are former Female title holders Torres with the IBA title holder and British-based Kourouni

January 27

Madrid, Spain: Middle: Sergio Martinez (55-3-2) W PTS 10 Macaulay McGowan (14-3-1). Feather: Bernard Torres (16-0) W PTS 10 Mauro Perouene (13-5-1).

Martinez vs. McGowan

Martinez scores two knockdowns on the way to a unanimous decision over McGowan. Martinez was on the canvas in the first but he overbalanced when missing with a punch and it was rightly ruled a slip. Martinez was holding his hands down and piercing McGowan's defence with right jabs. Martinez outscored McGowan over the second and third but McGowan applied plenty of pressure and looked to have edged the fourth and made the fifth close. Martinez dominated the sixth and put McGowan down in the seventh with a left to the body that saw McGowan take a count on one knee. Martinez rocked McGowan a couple of times in the eighth and ninth and then floored McGowan for a second time with a left to the head in the tenth but McGowan beat the count and lasted out the remaining few seconds. Scores 99-89 twice and 98-90 for Martinez. Even at 46 Martinez is hoping for another title shot with WBA title holder Ryota Murata as his target. McGowan had lost his previous two fights in tough pairings against Tursynbay Kulakhmet and Kieran Conway but gave Martinez ten useful rounds of work. McGowan was ranked No 342 by Box Rec so winning this fight hardly represents an achievement for Martinez.

Torres vs. Perouene

In a clash of southpaws Philippines-born Norwegian Torres was given a harder than expected night by Argentinian Perouene. Torres took the lead early but Perouene came into it over the middle rounds. With both fighters cut Torres staged the stronger finish and took the split decision on scores of 96-94 and 96-95 and 96-94 for Perouene. Torres wins the vacant IBO IberoAmerican belt (yes another new title). He was expected to

do better than this but Perouene had lost only two of his last 15 fights.

Johannesburg, South Africa: Super Bantam: Steven Bagwasi (7-1) W PTS 10 Koos Sibiyi (23-17-5). Super Bantam: Ellen Simwaka (9-5-2) W TKO 4 Gabisile Tshabalala (10-6-1).

Bagwasi vs. Sibiyi

Botswanan Bagwasi takes a split decision over more experienced Sibiyi. In a closely contested bout the youth and speed of Bagwasi saw him outbox Sibiyi early. Sibiyi looked to be pacing the fight better as he pulled ahead over the middle rounds but age caught up with him and Bagwasi was able to edge in front before the final bell and win on scores of 96-94 and 96-95 with the third judge seeing Sibiyi the winner 96-94. Third win in a row for 27-year-old Bagwasi, Sibiyi, 40, a pro for almost 22 years, has had four unsuccessful shots at winning a South African title.

Simwaka vs. Tshabalala

Malawian Simwaka made it a bad night for the home fighters as she stopped Tshabalala in four rounds. This looked a competitive match on paper but Simwaka was the harder puncher and she hunted down Tshabalala scoring repeatedly with hard rights until the referee stopped the fight in the fourth round. Simwaka lost to Kristen Fraser for the Commonwealth title in 2018 and this victory is her seventh by KO/TKO. Fifth loss in her last six fights for Tshabalala.

January 28

Tijuana, Mexico: Fly: Adrian Curiel (19-4) W PTS 10 Hugo Hernandez (18-6-1). Super Welter: Alexis Salazar (24-4) W PTS 8 Valentin Martinez (10-3-1). Light: Francisco Lopez (14-0-1,1ND) W TKO 4 Guillermo Garcia 9-11-1

Curiel vs. Hernandez

Curiel takes split verdict over Hernandez in an exciting, brutal slugfest. The first two rounds went to Hernandez. Curiel was taking the fight to Hernandez coming forward throwing punches but southpaw Hernandez was more accurate. Curiel kept marching forward but now had his jab on target and was connecting with hard left hooks to the body. With both throwing so much leather the rounds were close but Curiel, occasionally switching to southpaw, was outlanding Hernandez over the middle rounds. Hernandez banged back with a good eighth round but Curiel was bossing the action over the ninth and tenth and looked a clear winner. Scores 97-93 and 96-94 for Curiel and 96-94 for Hernandez. Curiel, 23, gets his third victory in a row. Hernandez drops to 3-3-1 in his last seven fights.

Salazar vs. Martinez

Salazar boxes his way to a unanimous verdict over late choice Martinez. The tall Salazar has a big edge in skill but Martinez is a tough attacking fighter. Salazar basically stuck with the strong jab and right cross approach. He outscored Martinez over the first three rounds but swarming attacks saw Martinez do enough to take the fourth. Although forced to fight inside more than he liked Salazar swept the next three rounds with Martinez putting in a big effort in the last. Scores 78-74 twice and 79-73 all for Salazar. He had put together a thirteen-bout winning streak before being stopped in three rounds by Carlos Adames in June last year and this is his first fight since then. Martinez was having his first fight since March 2018 and the rust and experiencing his first eight round fight played against him.

Lopez vs. Garcia

Lopez stops Garcia in four rounds. Bigger and stronger Lopez dominated the action punishing substitute Garcia over the first two rounds. Garcia just kept rolling forward throwing punches

but in the last ten seconds of the third he was stopped in his tracks by a counter right in the third. His legs turned to rubber and flopped about until he staggered back across the ring to the ropes virtually out on his feet. He should not have been allowed to come out for the fourth. Lopez hurt Garcia with a left hook to the body and then poured on the punches until Garcia dropped to the canvas with the towel being thrown in by Garcia's corner. Ninth win by KO/TKO for the 5'11" Lopez. Garcia too game for his own good has lost his last five fights

Hialeah, FL, USA: Bantam: Michell Banquez (20-1) W RTD 6 Joahnys Argilagos (8-1). Super Bantam: Jorge de Jesus Romero (22-0-1) W RTD 5 Lucas Baez (37-21-5). Heavy: Ricardo Aguero (1-0) W TKO 2 Brandon Grundy (0-2).

Banquez vs. Argilagos

Cuban prospect Argilagos suffers his first defeat as he retires after six rounds against Venezuelan Banquez. From the start Banquez was taking the fight to Argilagos. The Cuban was moving well and countering but was being forced on to the back foot and too often fighting with his back to the ropes. Banquez began to dominate the action with Argilagos fading but the ending was a surprise. Banquez landed a good right late in the sixth but Argilagos did not look shaken. In the interval there seemed to be an argument between Argilagos and his team with his chief second walking out of the ring and indicating Argilagos had decided to quit. Banquez had been out of the ring since July 2019 but the danger signs were there as in that July fight he outclassed unbeaten Prince Patel. There have been questions over Argilagos stamina but his management claimed he had suffered stomach pains from the start of the fight. Argilagos is just 25 and won gold at the World Championships in 2015 and 2017 and a silver at the 2016 Olympics but those medals were at light flyweight so he is having difficulty adjusting but is 25 so has time on his side.

Romero vs. Baez

Romero continues unbeaten as he uses his trade mark body punching to wear down Argentinian Baez. Left hooks to the body floored Baez three times and he retired at the end of the fifth round. Despite his impressive statistics this is the first time Romero has been in a fight scheduled for ten rounds so its time he took a risk. Eleventh inside the distance defeat for Baez.

Aguero vs. Grundy

Yet another giant heavyweight enters the pro ranks as 6-8" Cuban Ricardo Aguero stops Brandon Grundy in two rounds. Aguero had six inches in height and lots of weight over total novice Grundy. Aguero drove Grundy to the canvas twice in the second round and the fight was waived off. Aguero has extensive amateur experience without ever winning a Cuban title but when Ernesto Savon, Lenier Pero and Jose Larduet to face that is not surprising.

January 29

Light Heavy: Franco Acosta (10-0) W PTS 10 Walter Sequeira (24-9-1). Super Fly: Kevin Munoz (13-1,1ND) W PTS 10 W Abel Silva (7-8-3).

Acosta vs. Sequeira

Acosta wins the vacant national title with a unanimous decision over experienced Sequeira. The 6' 3 1/2" tall Acosta had lots of height and reach over the 5'8" Sequeira and was able to score from distance but Sequeira was more than willing to walk through the punches to get in close. Acosta looked good when he boxed patiently and put his punches together but his jab lacked power. He was shaken badly in the third and suffered a cut over his left eyebrow in a clash of heads but his better skills saw him win most of the rounds. Scores 100-90 1/2 99-91 and 98 1/2 -94. Acosta, 25, had scored seven wins by KO/TKO and never had to go past six rounds for victory. Sequeira was a

much tougher test than the mediocre guys Acosta had beaten in the past having been in with Avni Yildirim, Anthony Yarde and Kevin Lele Sadjo.

Munoz vs. Silva

Munoz makes a third successful defence of the South American title with a unanimous points win over Silva but it was close as Silva took the fight to Munoz in every round. Both had periods of domination in a fierce scrap but Munoz was busier and more accurate. He was given a standing count in the seventh when he almost dropped to his knees under a strong attack from Silva but recovered well. Scores 95-94 twice and 98-92 for Munoz. Both fighters were coming off a loss with Munoz being stopped in five rounds by Angel Aquino for the IBF Latino bantam belt and Silva outpointed by Pablo Gomez in a shot at the vacant South American bantamweight title.

Villa Carlos Paz, Argentina: Super Bantam: Marianela Ramirez (8-7-2) W TKO 1 Natalia Alderete (4-7).

Ramirez wins the vacant South American Female title with first round stoppage of Alderete. Ramirez dropped Alderete twice and the fight was stopped with less than 90 seconds gone in the round. Ramirez, 37, is 4-1-2 in her last 7 fights which includes a previous draw for this title and a points defeat against Daniela Bermudez for the WBO Female bantam title. Alderete was having her second shot at a South American title.

Chateauroux, France: Light Heavy: Thomas Faure (21-4-1) W PTS 12 Kevin Cojean (27-11-2).

Local boxer Faure wins the vacant European Union title as he scores a points victory over tough and experienced Cojean in an all-French contest. Faure said he had been working hard on his jab and his fitness and both of these proved vital factors. These two had fought a draw for the French title in January last year but this time Faure had taken the lessons on board from that fight and was a clear winner. Scores 116-112 twice and

117-111. Faure is 12-1-1 in his last 14 fights and the plan is to defend the EU title and then challenge for the EBU title. Cojean had won the vacant French title in November with a stoppage of Hugo Kasperski.

**Managua, Nicaragua: Super Feather:
Francisco Fonseca (29-3-2) W KO 2 Franco Gutierrez
(11-7-2). Fly: Cristofer Rosales (32-5) W DISQ 5 Jerson
Ortiz (17-5,1ND).**

Fonseca vs. Gutierrez

Former IBF title challenger Fonseca hits too hard for Gutierrez. Fonseca dished out some punishment in the first and then put Gutierrez down three times in the second to end the fight. Fourth consecutive inside the distance victory for Fonseca after his first round stoppage loss against Ryan Garcia in February 2020. He lifts the WBA Fedelatin belt. Only one win in his last seven fights for Gutierrez.

Rosales vs. Ortiz

This was never going to be much of a test for Rosales but the win comes with some controversy. Bigger, quicker and the harder puncher Rosales scored well in the first but Ortiz rebounded to win the second with some crisp body punches. Rosales had Ortiz down in the third but Ortiz got up and then landed some punches to the back of the head without being warned. The fourth turned nasty as Rosales landed a punch to the back of Ortiz's head and Ortiz responded with an elbow smash. It all boiled over in the last seconds of the fifth. Once again Ortiz struck with his elbow and Rosales delivered a punch to the back of Ortiz's head. The Referee deducted a point from Rosales for the punch to the back of the head and disqualified Ortiz for the elbow offence. Former WBC fly champion Rosales was having his fight in fourteen months. Third loss in his last four bouts for Ortiz

**Ekaterinburg, Russia: Super Light: Fedor Papazov (24-4)
W PTS 10 Akzhol Sulaimanbek (16-2)**

Papazov gets the win as he stages a strong finish to take the split decision. After studying each other in the first round hostilities broke out in the second and the battle was fierce from there. Sulaimanbek had built a lead until a huge ugly swelling on his forehead above his right had him fighting more defensively over the ninth and tenth which allowed Papazov to just edge in front. Scores 97-93 and 95-94 for Papazov and 95-95. Papazov wins the vacant WBC Asian Boxing Council title and is now a modest 3-2 in his last 5 outings. Kyrgyzstan-born southpaw Sulaimanbek won his first 15 fights before being knocked in seven rounds by Mark Urvanov in 2020 for the WBO Gold belt.

**Vitoria, Spain: Bantam: Fran Mendoza (13-0) W PTS 8
Anuar Salas (21-13-1).**

Mendoza gets the unanimous decision in a clash of two Colombian's. A great start for Mendoza as he had Salas down in the first. Salas survived and fought back hard turning this into an entertaining scrap. Mendoza's better skills saw him through but Salas was competitive to the last. The 24-year-old locally-based Mendoza has had all of his fights in Spain. Salas was 20-3 at one time but drops to 1-10-1 in his last dozen fights.

**Merida, Mexico: Super Light: Omar Aguilar (23-0) W KO
2 Ricardo Banuelos (17-7-1).**

After an even first round Aguilar exploded in the second sending Banuelos down twice with left hooks. Aguilar sent Banuelos flying to the ropes and onto the canvas for the first knockdown. Banuelos only just made it to his feet and another left hook put him down heavily and the count was waived with Banuelos need some medical attention before getting up. Twelfth consecutive inside the distance win for Aguilar and his

twenty-second in total. The 22-year-old from Ensenada is ready for stiffer tests. Five losses by KO/TKO for Banuelos.

Fight of the week (Significance): Ilunga Makabu's win over Thabiso keeps alive Makabu's hope of a fight with Saul Alvarez.

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Adrian Curiel vs. Hugo Hernandez was war from bell to bell

Fighter of the week: Ilunga Makabu remains WBC champion

Punch of the week: The left hook from Nico Ali Walsh that put Jeremiah Yeager down was a beauty

Upset of the week: No biggies

Prospect watch: Mexican super lightweight Omar Aguilar 23-0 22 wins by KO/TKO could be worth following.

Observations:

Rosette: A real bit of good news for boxing-Don King is said to have retired but at least he went out with an undercard in Warren that reminds me why I won't miss him

Red Card: Don King goodbye-I hope.

-Not sure about Sergio Martinez looking for another title shot. He is 46 now but will be 47 next month. He has mentioned Ryota Murata as a target. After six years out of the ring wins over Jose Fandino rated by Box Rec No 256, Jussi Koivula inactive for 18 months after being stopped by Conor Benn, Brian Rose plenty of experience but rated No 100 and Macaulay McGowan rated No 341 hardly seem the sort of fights to prepare for a world title shot but that hasn't stopped the Worst Boxing Association from ranking him No 4!.

-Tanzanian Said Mbwela has certainly touched base with a number of weight divisions. He weighed 142 lbs in his first fight in 2007 and was 167lbs in his most recent fight. Not too outside the realms of possibility but at one time was 191 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. I wonder which leg he cut off to get down to 167.

- I guess any fighter has a right to boast about being a boxer as it takes guts to climb through the ropes whether you win or lose. Unless he decides to fight again South African

middleweight Khodani Nephalane might hesitate to tell his kids about his career. He was knocked out in 17 seconds in his only fight so far. How long was your boxing career dad?

"Seventeen". "Um.. seventeen years, months, weeks, days? No seconds"