

The Past Week in Action 28 February 2022

Highlights:

- Josh Taylor retains the IBF,WBAQ,WBC and WBO super lightweight titles with controversial split decision over Jack Catterall**
- Fernando Martinez ends the long reign of Jerwin Ancajas as he takes a unanimous decision to mlife Ancajas IBF super flyweight belt**
- Lawrence Okolie retains the WBO cruiserweight title with points win over Pole Michal Cieslak.**
- Filipino Vincent Astrolabio floors and outpoints Guillermo Rigondeaux.**
- Hector Garcia decisions WBA No 1 super featherweight Chris Colbert and Gary Antuanne Russell stops former WBC super lightweight title holder champion Viktor Postol**
- Jimmy Kelly scores upset win over unbeaten Kanat Islam**
- In Atomweight title fights Ayaka Miyao outpoints Eri Matsuda to win the vacant IBF Female title and Nanae Suzuki decisions champion Mika Iwakawa to collect the WBO title**

World Title/Major Shows

February 26

Glasgow, Scotland: Super Light: Josh Taylor (19-0) W PTS 12 Jack Catterall (26-1). Feather: Robeisy Ramirez (9-1) W TKO 3 Eric Donovan (14-2). Heavy: Nick Campbell (5-0) W TKO 7 Jay McFarlane (12-6). Cruiser: Scott Forrest (1-0) W TKO 2 Erik Nazaryan (28-26-4,2ND). Feather: Kurt Walker (1-0) W TKO 1 Jaroslav Hriadel (1-3). Welter: Paddy Donovan (8-0) W TKO 6

Miroslav Serban (13-9). Super Middle: John Docherty (11-1) W Jordan Grant (4-1).

Taylor vs. Catterall

Taylor retains the four sanctioning body belts with a very controversial split decisions that sees him on the floor for the first time as a pro.

Round 1

A very cautious round with both boxers probing but not many punches thrown. Catterall rocked Taylor back on his heels early and scored to the body a couple of times and with an occasional. Taylor was searching too long for an opening in a close round. Taylor was warned for punches to the back of the head and Catterall for holding.

Score: 10-9 Catterall

Round 2

Once again Catterall was throwing more punches with Taylor threatening but not committing. Catterall scored with some jabs and a hard left and although Taylor let his hands go late Catterall had pinched the round. Taylor was again warned for punches to the back of the head and Catterall twice for holding.

Score: 10-9 Catterall

Catterall 20-18

Round 3

A messy, untidy round with neither boxer doing much clean work. As both are southpaws by adopting a side-on approach and leaning forward Catterall was making it very hard for Taylor to land with his left and that was why some of Taylor's lefts were swinging around behind Catterall's head. Some quick jabs from Catterall were enough to swing the round d his way.

Score: 10-9 Catterall

Catterall 30-27

Round 4

Another round with very little clean action. Taylor was finally throwing a few more punches but Catterall scored with a nice combinations. Taylor pressed hard and just landed enough to have the edge but it was far from enthralling stuff.

Score: 10-9 Taylor

Catterall 39-37

Official Scores: Judge Ian John-Lewis 39-37 Taylor, Judge Victor Loughlin 38-38 TIED, Judge Howard Foster 38-38 TIED

Round 5

Catterall was being first to the punch and then leaping in and clinch to prevent any counters from Taylor. Catterall scored well with jabs and straight lefts. Taylor was cut under his right eye in a clash of heads and a swelling started by that eye. Catterall was doing the better work but also doing a lot of holding and tumbling in with shoulder charges.

Score: 10-9 Catterall Catterall 49-46

Round 6

Catterall was on the back foot snapping out jabs and firing the occasional on target lefts with Taylor just tracking him but not throwing any volume of punches. It was becoming a lunge then hold fight with no sustained action and too many clinches with Taylor "credited" with only throwing just seven punches in the round.

Score: 10-9 Catterall Catterall 59-55

Round 7

The round started with another clinch and a warning again to Catterall for holding but you have to wonder how many warnings are needed before a deduction? Taylor was just tracking Catterall again with Catterall jabbing well and landing straight lefts and then clinching again to smother Taylor inside with Taylor just not able to land cleanly. The referee warned Catterall about leading with his shoulder.

Score: 10-9 Catterall Catterall 69-64

Round 8

Finally a fight broke out in the eighth round as they stood and swapped punches and two chopping lefts to the head saw Taylor drop to one knee. It was his first time he had been knocked down as a pro but he was up quickly and did not seem badly shaken. He took the fight to Catterall and had some

success but Catterall scored with some useful punches before the bell.

Score: 10-8 Catterall

Catterall 79-72

Official Scores: Judge Ian John-Lewis 76-75 Catterall, Judge Victor Loughlin 77-74 Catterall, Judge Howard Foster 77-74 Catterall.

Round 9

Taylor finally awoke to the fact his title was in danger and threw more punches. He was making use of his right hooks and finding the target with his jab. Catterall was not as accurate or as quick with his own jab.

Score: 10-9 Taylor

Catterall 88-82

Round 10

Taylor continued to apply more pressure and was scoring with short hooks inside. Catterall finally pushed the referee too far and was deducted a point for holding Taylor's head down inside. Both landed some shots at the end of the round but Taylor had done enough to take the round and with the deduction it was a 10-8 round for Taylor.

Score: 10-8 Taylor

Catterall 96-92

Round 11

Taylor was chasing Catterall down in the round not letting Catterall tie him up too often and doing what clear scoring there was and it was his round. After the bell as they passed each other on the way to their corners Taylor slapped Catterall on the body as he passed him. It was not by any stretch a punch but the referee deducted a point for that so a 10-9 round for Taylor became a 9-9 round.

Score: Even 9-9

Catterall 105-101

Round 12

Taylor attacked with a sense of purpose that had been missing earlier in the fight and he was able to score with jabs and right hooks with Catterall just really looking to stay out of trouble presumably assuming he had a winning lead.

Score: 10-9 Taylor

Catterall 114-111

Official Scores: Judge Ian John-Lewis 114-111 Taylor, Judge Victor Loughlin 113-112 Taylor, Judge Howard Foster 113-112 Catterall

Taylor retains his four belts with a controversial decision. Catterall boxed cleverly with tactics designed to nullify Taylor's strengths and it almost worked. This was not by any means an entertaining fight with too much clinching in round after round but Taylor won't mind that as he retains his titles. He is talking about moving up to welterweight and if he does that will start a scramble at super lightweight and lead to some big fights at welterweight. Catterall looked unlucky. As this was a mandatory WBO defence there was no return bout clause as the other three sanctioning bodies would not have stood for their leading contenders being frozen in place until the return took place. The respective styles did not mix well and this was Taylor's least impressive fight since he moved into the top flight so he will have some work to do to find his top form again

Ramirez vs. Donovan

Perhaps his best performance to date as Cuban Ramirez outclasses Donovan. Southpaw Ramirez floored Donovan with a left in the first and kept up the pressure in the second opening a cut over Donovan's right eye with a left hook. Ramirez continued to drive home lefts in the third forcing Donovan to the ropes and after another left shook Donovan the referee stopped the fight. The 28-year-old Ramirez is a double Olympic gold medallist scoring wins over Michael Conlan, Tugstsogt Nyambayar, Shakur Stevenson and current IBF/WBA super bantamweight title holder Murodjon Akhmadaliev in Olympic action. Donovan had over 100 amateur fights and was five-time Irish champion but has left it too late to turn pro and has had to take hard fights in an attempt to move up quickly.

Campbell vs. McFarlane

Giant Campbell wins the vacant Scottish heavyweight title with seventh round victory over McFarlane. The 6'7" Campbell

looked very raw but McFarlane was carrying far too much weight and tired early. Campbell was scoring with ponderous rights but was also open to counters from McFarlane. By the sixth McFarlane was shipping some heavy rights and was on the floor in the seventh. He made it to his feet but with Campbell pounding him with punches the fight was stopped. Campbell becomes the first Scottish fighter to win the Scottish heavyweight title since George Stern beat Hugh McDonald in 1951. He is a former professional rugby player having played for a premier level team Glasgow Warriors. McFarlane weighed 200lbs when winning the Scottish Area cruiser title in 2018 but was 276lbs here.

Forrest vs. Nazaryan

Scottish hope Forrest started his pro career with a win when Belgian-based Georgian pulled out early in the second round due to an injury to his right arm. The 27-year-old South African-born Scot won a bronze medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games and scored a win over Joshua Buatsi when they were both starting out as amateurs. Nazaryan has weighed as little as 140lbs but was 207lbs for this fight.

Walker vs. Hriadel

Irish southpaw Walker, 26, arrives on the pro scene with a quick win. A left hook to the body sent Czech Hriadel down and the fight was over in two minutes. Walker has outstanding amateur credentials including gold medals at the European Games and the European Union Championships and silver medals at the Commonwealth Games and European Championships

Donovan vs. Serban

Southpaw Donovan was much too good for Czech Serban. Donovan's speed and accuracy found plenty of gaps in Serban's defence and he was cruising to victory in the sixth when the fight was stopped as a precaution due to Serban bleeding from his left ear. Donovan gets his sixth inside the distance victory. The Irish Traveller from Limerick is a former Irish Under-18

and Under-22 champion. Serban is 1-5 in his last 6 bouts but usually goes the distance.

Docherty vs. Grant

Docherty gets his second kayo victory in a week as he lands a crippling body shot that sends overmatched Grant down and out in the second. The 24-year-old southpaw is a former Commonwealth Youth gold medallist and won a bronze at the 2018 Commonwealth Games as well as scoring two victories over Tokyo silver medallist Ben Whittaker.

Las Vegas, NV, USA: Super Fly: Fernando Martinez (14-0) W PTS 12 Jerwin Ancajas (33-2-2). Super Feather: Hector Garcia (15-0,3ND) W PTS 12 Chris Colbert (16-1). Super Light: Gary Antuanne Russell (15-0) W TKO 10 Viktor Postol (31-4). Super Feather: Viktor Stavinskyi (13-0-1) W Claudio Marrero (25-5).

Martinez vs. Ancajas

Argentinian Martinez springs a major surprise as he takes wide unanimous decision over IBF champion Ancajas

Round 1

Good opening round for Martinez. He had no trouble getting past the jab of Ancajas and was ripping to the body with hooks and catching Ancajas with left hooks to the head. Ancajas could not get the range right and was under pressure the whole three minutes

Score: 10-9 Martinez

Round 2

A better round for Ancajas. He was connecting with solid hooks to the body and moving more making it difficult for Martinez to get inside and work. Martinez did put together a sharp combination but had lost some of his accuracy

Score: 10-9 Ancajas

TIED 19-19

Round 3

A great all-action round. Martinez was not using a jab at all but was bobbing under the jab of Ancajas getting inside firing

hooks from both hands. Ancajas was punching with him and landing hooks to the body and it was close but Martinez just had the edge.

Score: 10-9 Martinez

Martinez 29-28

Round 4

Ancajas change his tactics. He was standing off spearing Martinez with jabs and following with straight lefts. He was not looking to stand and trade and Martinez was finding it hard to get inside and often just eating jabs. He finished the round with a flurry of hooks but it was not enough.

Score: 10-9 Ancajas

TIED 38-38

Official Scores: Judge Max DeLuca 38-38 tied, Judge Davis Sutherland 38-38 Tied, Judge Steve Weisfeld 38-38 Tied

Round 5

Three minutes of war as again Ancajas used his right jab and right cross to score as Martinez tried to move inside. With no jab of his own Martinez was having to take some punishment to get inside, Again he ended the round strongly but the earlier work of Ancajas just gave him the edge in a very close round.

Score: 10-9 Ancajas

Ancajas 48-47

Round 6

A big round for Martinez. He was relentlessly marching forward throwing hooks and uppercuts. Ancajas was forced to stand and trade and was getting the worst of the exchanges. On a couple of times Ancajas backed out of the action after absorbing a series of hooks to the head.

Score: 10-9 Martinez

TIED 57-57

Round 7

A hectic round. Ancajas was using his jab/right cross tactics again and scoring well. Martinez was often put on the back foot but as the round progressed he was surging forward more and more and putting together short punches inside in five and six shot bursts.

Score: 10-9 Martinez

Martinez 67-66

Round 8

Martinez was getting on top. He was choosing his moment to dart inside fire a salvo of hooks and uppercuts and get out too quick for Ancajas to counter and then repeating to process. By the end of the round Ancajas looked to flagging from the pace of the fight.

Score: 10-9 Martinez

Martinez 77-75

Official Scores: Judge Max DeLuca 78-74 Martinez, Judge Davis Sutherland 78-74 Martinez, Judge Steve Weisfeld 78-74 Martinez

Round 9

Another round dominated by Martinez. He was snapping back Ancajas head with hooks and uppercuts and digging to the body with wicked shots. At times Ancajas fired back at other times he just soaked up the punishment as if not having the strength to match Martinez.

Score: 10-9 Martinez

Martinez 87-84

Round 10

Martinez rocked Ancajas with a right to the head at the start of the round and then they proceeded to try to knock lumps out of each other. Martinez was again firing clusters of punches with Ancajas standing and exchanging but Martinez was throwing more and landing more.

Score: 10-9 Martinez

Martinez 97-93

Round 11

This was now a survival of the fittest with both fighters just throwing hooks and uppercuts with no boxing skills on show. Ancajas was fighting hard to keep his title but he was weary and could not match the punch output of Martinez who was constantly surging forward with hooks and uppercuts and overwhelming the defence of Ancajas.

Score: 10-9 Martinez

Martinez 107-102

Round 12

For the final three minutes it was just a case of two magnificent dog-tired fighters head down and throwing as

many punches as they could. Again Martinez threw more and landed more with Ancajas fighting hard to the last bell to try and save his title.

Score: 10-9 Martinez **Martinez 117-111**
Official Scores: Judge Max DeLuca 117-111 Martinez,
Judge Davis Sutherland 118-110 Martinez, Judge Steve
Weisfeld 118-110 Martinez.

Great performance by Martinez as he showed extraordinary stamina to sustain the terrific pace of this fight. He brought the end to the five year rule by Ancajas as IBF champion. He had modest success as an amateur competing at the Olympic Games and World Championships as well as the WSB and AIBI pro competitions but needed to be parachuted into the IBF ratings as he had never previously fought anyone even close to being rated. He was given the chance and took it. As Martinez was only rated No 11 there will be pressure for him to face No 1 Jade Bornea who will be looking to even the score for the Philippines. Ancajas was making the tenth defence of the IBF title but he looked flat and never made use of longer reach but too often fought the fight Martinez wanted. He will be looking to rebound.

Garcia vs. Colbert

A win for Garcia was totally unexpected but Garcia not only derailed Colbert's plans for a title fight he outclassed Colbert and took a wide unanimous decision. From the start Garcia was piling forward pumping out punches and focusing on Colbert's body as he took the first round. Garcia continued to march forward in the second and third. Colbert scored with some heavy counters but again was outlanded and had to absorb some hefty body punches. The sheer volume of Garcia's punches was causing serious problems for Colbert who was only effective when he could stay off the ropes and find some punching room. Things went from bad to worse for Colbert in the seventh when a left put him flat on the canvas. He made it to his feet and survived to the bell. It was more pressure from

Garcia over the eighth and ninth as Colbert tried to stem the tide of punches coming his way but he was never able to stop Garcia rolling forward. Colbert needed a strong finish to have any chance but he was too often overwhelmed by the fire coming his way and Garcia was a clear winner. Scores 118-109 twice and 119-108. Dominican southpaw Garcia only took this fight at three weeks notice after WBA champion Roger Gutierrez had to pull out of his title defence against Colbert. Behind his 15 pro wins sits a time in the amateurs where Garcia had more than three hundred fights competing at the 2016 Olympics and winning a silver medal at the Pan American Games. As Colbert was No 1 with the WBA Garcia will be hoping that he now gets to face Gutierrez when the title holder recovers from the COVID-19 that forced him out of the fight with Colbert. This loss was obviously a big blow to Colbert who had scored wins over Jezzrel Corrales and Tugstsogt Nyambayar but at 25 time is on his side.

Russell vs. Postol

Russell leaves it late but stops former WBC title holder Postol with just 30 seconds left in the fight. Russell hustled and hustled in the first. Postol tried to use his longer reach and some smart footwork to stem Russell's attacks and was warned within the first minute of the fight for holding. Postol's jab was not strong enough to keep Russell out and Russell was able to get inside and work to Postol's body over the first two rounds. Postol did better over the third scoring well with right hand counters. Russell upped his pace in the fourth but Postol boxed smartly on the back foot and occasionally took the fight to Russell to probably steal the fifth and make the sixth close. From there the constant aggression from Russell put him in control. He was doing a better job of cutting off the ring and landing powerful lefts to the body. Postol was still slotting home some counter rights and there was a large bump under Russell's right eye but Postol could not keep Russell out. Russell was on target again and again with lefts to the body

and Postol's output dropped over the eighth and ninth. Russell hounded Postol in the tenth following him around the ring connecting with hooks from both hands. As they traded punches a left to the head sent Postol into retreat and Russell drove him along the ropes landing with head punches until with thirty seconds remaining in the fight the referee stopped the contest. Postol protested with some justification. He was going to lose anyway but despite being hurt he was on his feet and able to defend himself. Russell has won all of his fights by KO/TKO with former WBC title holder Postol a big step up from his previous opposition. Russell's only rating prior to this fight was No 36 with the WBC but this win should give him a substantial boost as in his last fight in August 2020 Postol only lost on a majority decision to Jose Ramirez in a challenge for the WBC title.

Marrero vs. Stavinskyi

Marrero wins this clash of southpaw using his superior experience to outscore Ukrainian Stavinskyi. Marrero paced the fight well. He made a fast start using his longer reach, clever movement and greater hand speed and switching his attacks from head to body. Stavinskyi eventually got into the fight over the middle rounds but left himself too much to do and Marrero staged a strong finish to take the majority decision. Scores 78-74 and 77-75 for Marrero and 76-76. Marrero, a former IBO and interim WBA title holder is rebuilding after consecutive losses to Kid Galahad and Xavier Martinez in 2020. Marrero was a big step up in quality of opposition for Stavinskyi and he can regroup.

February 27

London, England: Cruiser: Lawrence Okolie (18-0) W PTS 12 Michal Cieslak (21-2). Feather: Jordan Gill (27-1-1) W KO 9 Karim Guerfi (30-6,1ND). Middle: Anthony Fowler (16-2) W PTS 10 Lukasz Maciec (27-4-1). Heavy: Fabio

Wardley (13-0) W KO 2 Daniel Martz (20-10-1). Fly: Galal Yafai (1-0) W TKO 5 Carlos Bautista (10-5-1). Heavy: Demsey McKean 21-0) W PTS 8 Ariel Bracamonte (11-7). Light: Campbell Hatton (6-0) W TKO 6 Joe Ducker (9-9-2). Cruiser: Cheavon Clarke (1-0) W KO 2 Tony Visic (20-30-2).

Okolie vs. Cieslak

Okolie was looking to use his longer reach and shook Cieslak twice with rights in the first round but it developed into a scrappy, mauling affair. Okolie was quicker and always looked dangerous with his rights but Cieslak was tough and rough. A right to the head saw Cieslak drop to one knee in the fifth. He beat the count but was almost sent down again from another right. Okolie reach and better footwork gave him a big advantage but Cieslak proved a handful inside and rebounded to have some success in the middle rounds. Okolie continued to land heavy rights but Okolie absorbed them and kept taking the fight inside. Cieslak also tried switching guards but whatever tactics he used Okolie's longer reach and powerful rights gave him the edge and he was a clear if unimpressive winner. Scores 117-110, 116-110 and 115-112.

Second defence of the WBO title for Okolie. Cieslak had put in a good performance when losing on points against Ilunga Makabu for the vacant WBC title in January 2020 and had scored two creditable wins since then.

Gill vs. Guerfi

Gill wins the European title with dramatic kayo of champion Guerfi. Gill was in deep trouble at the end of the sixth and floored by a left hook in the seventh with the bell saving him. He chose to stand in a corner in the eighth which was strange tactics and saw him soak up a lot of punishment. The referee looked poised to step in a couple of times in the ninth as Gill again chose to stand in a corner and let Guerfi unload but with just seconds left a fierce right to the head saw Guerfi stumbled

back and then fly backwards to the canvas with the fight immediately being stopped as there was no way Guerfi was going to get up. With only three inside the distance wins to his name this was an unexpected finish but he is now the European champion.

Fowler vs. Maciec

Fowler gets back on track with a unanimous decision over useful Pole Maciec on scores of 99-93, 99-92 and 99-91. First fight for Fowler since his stoppage loss against Liam Smith in October. Maciec had won his last five bouts.

Wardley vs. Martz

Wardley floors Martz twice and kayos him in the second round. Martz actually had some success in the first knocking Wardley's mouthguard out late in the round. A frustrated Wardley came out swinging wildly in the second dropping Martz with a left and right to the head. Martz only just beat the count and was then floored by a left to the side of the head and went down. He was clutching his right ear as if the punch had damaged his ear but he was counted out. Twelfth win by KO/TKO for Wardley but Martz no test at all.

Yafai Bautista

Tokyo gold medallist Yafai has his first pro fight and gets in some rounds against Mexican Bautista. Yafai was much too quick for Bautista and handed out steady punishment. Bautista did not crumble and scored with some serious hooks when they traded punches. The fight became more and more one-sided and Bautista dropped to his knees under a series of punches. When he got up his corner waived the towel for the fight to be stopped. Yafai wins the vacant WBC International title in his first pro fight. First inside the distance loss for Bautista.

McKean vs. Bracamonte

Australian southpaw McKean has his first fight in Britain and gets a not too testing opponent. Argentinian Bracamonte was vastly overweight and slow and ponderous. McKean was able to circle Bracamonte and step in and scores when he chose with

very little coming back from Bracamonte. McKean showed nothing special but it is not easy to look good against a fighter such as Bracamonte. McKean won every round. Referee's score 80-72. Hopefully there will be stiffer tests than Bracamonte who at 6'3 1/2" weighed 293lbs.

Hatton vs. Ducker

Hatton gets a late stoppage win over Ducker. Hatton was sharper scoring with quick jabs and left hooks to the body but Ducker was willing and able to stand and trade with him. It was a very fast-paced fight with both showing signs of tiring in the sixth. Finally Hatton broke through with a series of head punches that sent Ducker reeling into the ropes and the referee stopped the fight. Only the second inside the distance win for 21-year-old Hatton who is still very raw.

Clarke vs. Visic

Impressive first showing by Tokyo Olympian Clarke. He showed a snappy jab, put his punches together well and drove Visic to the floor late in the opening round with a powerful right. He ended it with a booming right to the head in the second that sent Visic down heavily and he was counted out. Jamaican-born Clarke is one to watch.

February 24

Johannesburg, South Africa: Super Feather: Sibusiso Zingange (17-5-2,1ND) W PTS 12 Phila Mpontshane (15-3). Fly: Simangele Hadebe (11-3-2) W PTS 10 Halima Vunjabel (10-8-1).

Zingange vs. Mpontshane

With four successful defences of his South African title behind him Mpontshane needed to win this fifth defence to own the belt outright but Zingange ruined those hopes. The challenger was quicker with Mpontshane making a sluggish start and never recovering. Zingange scored a knockdown in the seventh and by the end Mpontshane's left eye was almost closed as

Zingange won on scores of 120-107,120-109 and 118-109. Former WBA and WBA Pan African champion Zingange gets his third win in a row. Mpontshane was having his first fight since September 2019.

Hadebe vs. Vunjabel

Hadebe wins the vacant ABU Female title with wide decision over Tanzanian Vunjabel. Hadebe was much too slick for the crude and limited Vunjabel. The Tanzanian walked onto too many punches and a swelling around her left eye from early in the fight hampered her vision. Hadebe looked close to ending early a couple of times but had to settle for a convincing points victory with the cards reading 98-92 twice and 100-90 for South African champion "Smash" Hadebe. Vunjabel has lost in challenges for the WBFederation and UBO belts.

Montreal, Canada: Super Light: Mazlum Akdeniz (16-0) W PTS Erick Encinia (15-6-1).

Akdeniz wins a split decision over Encinia. This was a close, hard-fought contest with southpaw Akdeniz not helping his case by losing a point for a butt early in the fight. His greater accuracy gave him the edge but he had to come through a rocky sixth to emerge the winner on scores of 96-93 and 95-94 with the third card reading 96-93 for Encinia. Canadian Akdeniz, 24, is of Kurdish antecedents. Encinia had registered a good win when he decisioned Pole Damian Wrzesinski (22-1-2) in May last year.

February 25

Plant City, FL, USA: Middle: Jimmy Kelly (26-2) W PTS 10 Kanat Islam (28-1). Welter: Peter Dobson (15-0) W PTS 10 Jose Borrego (19-4). Welter: Jonathan Eniz (28-17-1,1ND) W PTS 10 Mark Reyes Jr (14-2).

Kelly vs. Islam

None of the favourites won on this show and Kelly beating Islam was possible the biggest upset. Islam was having his first fight for a year and it showed as Kelly was quicker, more mobile and more accurate over the first two rounds with Islam looking slow and sluggish. Islam did better in the third but the rangy Kelly was outboxing him at distance and even getting the better of the exchanges inside. Islam kept marching forward and began to pick up a couple of rounds late in the fight but Kelly looked a much clearer winner than the scores suggest.. Scores 97-93 and 96-94 for Kelly and 95-95. Kelly collects the WBO Global belt with his biggest win so far. His losses have come against Liam Smith and Dennis Hogan. Kazakh Islam was unimpressive and the loss will have cost him is No 5 ranking with the WBO

Dobson vs. Borrego

Bronx boxer Dobson cruises to victory over a poor Borrego. Dobson outboxed Borrego over the first two rounds with Borrego scoring well to the body in the third. Dobson's clever boxing, strong jab and some good body punching saw him stay in control and his higher work rate had him pocketing the rounds. Borrego had a decent sixth round but never threatened Dobson's dominance and Dobson ran out a comfortable winner. Scores 100-90, 98-92 and 97-93. This is Dobson's first ten round fight and he is making steady if unspectacular progress. A very flat performance from Borrego who had won 5 of his last 6 fights.

Eniz vs. Reyes

Argentinian Eniz doubles his total of away wins as he floors and outpoints Reyes. Eniz came in to this one with just four days notice but made a good start edging the first round and then flooring Reyes with a left in the second. Reyes recovered and it developed into a close, hard fought battle but southpaw lefts from Eniz had Reyes bleeding from the nose and struggling with a swelling around his right eye. Despite that Reyes was very much into the fight until he was badly shaken by a right in

the ninth and that big round for Eniz made the difference. Scores 95-94 twice and 96-93 for Eniz. The Argentinian had lost a very close verdict to unbeaten Yauheni Dauhaliavets in Moscow on February 3 and that good performance from Eniz should have been a warning for Reyes. Eniz is now 2-5 on the road. Second consecutive defeat for Reyes but he had looked unlucky in losing a majority verdict against unbeaten Janelson Figueroa Bocachica in last year.

Pilar, Argentina: Light: Agustin Quintana (16-1-1) W KO 5 Reuquen Arce (14-6-2).

Quintana wins the vacant South American title with fifth round kayo of Arce. A slow opened round went to Arce but after that it was all Quintana. He landed constantly with his jabs and scored well with straight rights and uppercuts putting Arce on the back foot. In the fifth he drove Arce to the ropes and put him down with a left uppercut and Arce was counted out. Nine wins in a row for Quintana the Argentinian No 2. Second loss by KO/TKO for Arce

Vicenza, Italy: Super Bantam: Luca Rigoldi (26-2-2) W TKO 9 Hugo Legros (14-2-2). Middle: Carlo De Novellis (9-4-1) W PTS 10 Andrea Roncon (18-7-1).

Rigoldi vs. Legros

Rigoldi collects the vacant European Union belt with stoppage of Frenchman Legros. A mixed first round saw Rigoldi put Legros down with a left hook to the body. Legros beat the count and later in the round opened a cut on Rigoldi's left cheek. After that Rigoldi dominated the fight. He was too strong for Legros who although countering well lacked the power to threaten Rigoldi and was gradually worn down. In the ninth a body punch from Rigoldi had Legros dipping at the knees and trying to clinch but Rigoldi piled on the punches and with Legros reeling the fight was stopped. Former European champion Rigoldi lost his EBU title to Gamal Yafai in December

2020 but won the Italian title in October last year. Former French champion Legros had won his last five bouts.

De Novellis vs. Roncon

De Novellis proves age is just a number as he takes split verdict over Roncon in Roncon's home city. De Novellis knew he would have to make a fast start against the younger Roncon and being shorter with a lesser reach he had to take the fight to Roncon. He built a lead until a cut over his left eye in the fourth slowed him somewhat and allowed Roncon to apply some pressure to eat into De Novellis's early lead but De Novellis kept his nose in front with accurate counters and was a deserved winner. Scores 96-94 twice for De Novellis and 97-94 for Roncon. De Novellis, 41, had a spell of almost eight years out of the ring but now wins the national title at his second attempt. Roncon was also having a second shot at the title.

Tokyo, Japan: Atom: Ayaka Miyao (25-9-2). W PTS 10 Eri Matsuda (4-1-1). Atom: Nanae Suzuki (11-4-1) W PTS 10 Mika Iwakawa (10-6-1).

Miyao vs. Matsuda

Miyao wins the vacant IBF Female title with majority verdict over Matsuda. More experienced Miyao scored well against southpaw Matsuda in the opening rounds switching her attacks up and down and controlling the distance. Matsuda stepped up the pressure from the fifth with Miyao boxing on the back foot and countering with rights. Matsuda attacked strongly over the ninth and tenth but could not overcome Miyao's early lead. Scores 96-94 twice for Miyao and 95-95. Now 38 Miyao is a former WBA title holder who made six defences before losing the title and had been 0-2-1 in three subsequent title challenges. In her short experience Matsuda had already won the OPBF and Japanese titles and drawn in a previous shot at the IBF title.

Suzuki vs. Iwakawa

Suzuki gets a revenge victory over champion Iwakawa and collects the WBO Female title on a split decision. As with the IBF title fight this was a very close one. Suzuki had the better of the early rounds taking the initiative and landing strongly with hooks to the body. The second half of the fight featured too many clinches and although Iwakawa made it close Suzuki maintained her early edge to life the belt. Scores 96-94 twice for Suzuki and 96-94 for Iwakawa. Former Japanese champion Suzuki had lost a split decision against Iwakawa in a title challenge in September 2020. Iwakawa was making the second defence of the title.

Leeds, England: Light: Jimmy First (11-0) W Justin Newell (13-1).

First scores win with dramatic second round destruction of Newell. Newell was in control in the first round scoring well with jabs and hooks to the body. A strong jab caught First off balance and sent him stumbling but into the ropes which held him up and he was given a count. Newell was boxing confidently in the second when a huge right cross to the chin sent him crashing to the canvas on his back. He struggles trying to get up but when he managed to get to his feet he stumbled and almost went down again and the fight was stopped. First, 40 did not turn pro until he was 36 and picks up the vacant BBB of C Central Area belt his first title as a pro. Newell looked in command until the bomb exploded.

February 26

Dubai, UAE: Bantam: Vincent Astrolabio (17-3) W PTS 10 Guillermo Rigondeaux (20-3,1ND).

A huge upset sees Filipino Astrolabio floor and outpoint Rigondeaux. Astrolabio made a confident start taking the fight to Rigondeaux in the first throwing and connecting with plenty of right hands with Rigondeaux slotting home jabs. It was more

of the same in the second but with Rigondeaux proving a difficult target. He was landing counters but not throwing enough punches. Astrolabio maintained the pressure in the third and fourth being frustrated by the slippery Cuban and getting caught with crafty shots but throwing more and landing more. The pace dropped in the fifth with Rigondeaux again sliding punches through Astrolabio's guard. Astrolabio picked up the pace again in the sixth hounding Rigondeaux and he did a better job of cutting off the ring in the seventh although Rigondeaux kept finding gaps for his counters and sliding around Astrolabio's rushes. The eighth saw a critical moment in the fight. Two minutes into the round Astrolabio stepped in with a left followed by a straight right that sent Rigondeaux to the floor. He was up quickly but clearly shaken and Astrolabio drove forward landing more rights with Rigondeaux holding to make it to the bell. Great defensive work from Rigondeaux in the ninth with plenty of slick movement and sneaky counters but Astrolabio kept the pressure on over the last two rounds to take a very close decision on scores of 95-94 from all three judges with the 10-8 eighth round the difference. Filipino Astrolabio wins the vacant WBC International title. This was major surprise as Astrolabio had never fought anyone remotely near the world ratings and his No 7 rating by the WBO came as a result of his winning their Oriental title with a win over fighter rated No 207 by Box Rec. Managed by Manny Pacquiao he must be hoping for a shot at fellow-Filipino John Riel Casimero who holds the WBO belt. At 41 time is catching up on Rigondeaux. He still has exquisite boxing skills but is slowing making him more vulnerable and he won't find it easy to get back into title contention.

Brampton. Canada: Middle: Sukhdeep Singh Bhatti (10-0) W TKO 3 Jordan Balmir (11-2).

"Chakria" Bhatti wins the vacant Canadian national title with third round stoppage of Balmir. The 29-year-old locally-based

Indian-born Bhatti learned his boxing in the Indian Boxing League back in the Punjab and represented India in the Asian Championships. Balmir, who was stopped in three rounds by Steven Butler, was having his first fight for 14 months.

General Santos City, Philippines: Fly: Esneth Domingo (16-1) W PTS 10 Jesse Espinas (20-5). Minimum: Melvin Jerusalem (18-2) W PTS 8 Ramel Antaran (4-16-2).

Domingo vs. Espinas

This should have been a routine win for Domingo but he injured his right hand and had to fight hard to get the decision over experienced Espinas on scores of 96-94 on the three cards. Fifth victory in succession for Domingo. Southpaw Espinas was returning to action for the first time since beating WBC minimumweight title challenger Denver Cuello in October 2019.

Jerusalem vs. Antaran

OPBF champion Jerusalem makes it seven wins in a row as he takes the unanimous verdict over Antaran on scores of 79-73 twice and 77-75. He is No 2 with the WBC so will be looking for a title shot soon. Antaran has won only one of his last twelve bouts.

Atlanta, GA, USA: Super Middle: Money Powell IV (13-1) W KO 2 Fidel Monterrosa (39-28-1,1ND). Super Feather: Albert Bell (20-0,1ND) W KO 1 Daulis Prescott (32-15,3ND).

Powell vs. Monterrosa

Powell gets his eighth win by KO/TKO with second round knockout of Monterrosa. Powell put Monterrosa down three times in the opening round and when he floored Monterrosa again in the second Monterrosa was counted out. Third victory for German-born Powell after losing a majority verdict to Vaughan Alexander in 2019. Colombian Monterrosa certainly

saw a turn in his career as one time he was 19-0 and is currently 1-15.

Bell vs. Prescott

Not a big puncher Bell gets this over with one punch kayo of a very faded Prescott. Only the sixth inside the distance win for Bell but twelfth loss that was for Colombian Prescott.

Philadelphia, PS, USA: Super Welter: Ray Robinson (25-3-2) W RTD 3 Silverio Ortiz (37-29).

Robinson gets an easy win as he returns to action for the first time since a draw with Josh Kelly in June 2019. Despite his lay-off the 5'10" Robinson was too big and too sharp for 5'6" oldie Ortiz. Robinson was getting through with hard punches over the first two rounds with Ortiz having some limited success with counters. It was all Robinson in the third as he bounced punches of Ortiz's head and the Mexican's corner retired their man at the end of the round. The COVID break came at a bad time for 36-year-old Robinson as he had rebounded from a loss to Yordenis Ugas with very creditable draws against Egidijus Kavaliauskas and Kelly. Now 39 Ortiz started his career as a featherweight and has now been beaten in his last eight fights.

Lusaka, Zambia: Super Bantam: Kudakwashe Chiwandire (5-2-1) W PTS 10 Catherine Phiri (16-5).

Inexperienced Zimbabwean Chiwandire, 26, wins the vacant interim WBC Female title with split decision over home city fighter Phiri. Despite the difference in experience Chiwandire showed no respect to former WBC bantamweight champion Phiri and attacked hard from the start. Phiri just could not handle Chiwandire's aggression and never really established a toe-hold in the fight finishing a clear loser and showing the signs of battle in the shape of a bad swelling around her left eye. Two judges gave it the Chiwandire 98-92 but the third somehow saw Phiri the winner 96-94. There was nothing in Chiwandire's record to say she would be a threat to Phiri but

she delivered on the night. Phiri was having her first fight in three years.

Fight of the week (Significance): Josh Taylor struggling to hold on to his four titles could see him move up to welterweight where some big fights await him.

Fight of the week (Entertainment): Fernando Martinez vs. Jerwin Ancajas was a war in every round.

Fighter of the week: An unheralded Martinez for beating Ancajas who was making the tenth defence of his IBF title and was the longest reigning of the current title holders.

Punch of the week: The right counter from an under fire "non-puncher" Jordan Gill that flattened European champion Karim Guerfi.

Upset of the week: Martinez beating long reigning champion Ancajas

Prospect watch: Irish featherweight Kurt Walker looked sharp in his first fight in the professional ranks.

Observations

Rosette: Martinez and Ancajas for their stirring scrap

Red Card: The scoring in Josh Taylor vs. Jack Catterall which drew a whole raft of criticism and is being reviewed by the BBB of C

Quite a week for upsets. I chose Martinez vs. Ancajas but could just as easily picked Hector Garcia beating Chris Colbert, Jack Kelly beating Kanat Islam or Vincent Astrolabio winning over Guillermo Rigondeaux.

-The phrase fit to fight covers a very wide area-literally. You have Scottish heavyweight Jay McFarlane who at one point in his career weighed 200lbs for a fight but was 76lbs heavier for his fight against Nick Campbell on Saturday in Glasgow and on the same show Erik Nazaryan who weighed a low 140lbs in his career and was 67lbs heavier when fighting Scott Forrest and

on Sunday Argentinian Ariel Bracamonte managed to pack 293lbs into his 6'3 1/2" frame.

-French prospect Milan Prat was to have fought Ukrainian Bohdan Shtonda on Saturday but that was cancelled as Shtonda could not travel. I wonder how much more of impact we will see from the conflict in Ukraine.