



AND THE NEW...

**DEONTAY WILDER BRINGS THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP
BACK TO AMERICA WITH UNANIMOUS DECISION OVER
WBC CHAMPION BERMANE STIVERNE**

Catch The Replay On Monday, Jan. 19 At 10 p.m. ET/PT On SHOWTIME EXTREME; Also Available at SHOWTIME ON DEMAND® and SHOWTIME ANYTIME®

LAS VEGAS (Jan. 17, 2015) - And the new WBC Heavyweight World Champion...

America finally has its heavyweight world champion as Alabama's **Deontay Wilder** dethroned defending champion **Bermane Stiverne** via unanimous decision (118-109, 119-108, 120-107) Saturday on **SHOWTIME®** from the **MGM Grand Garden Arena** in Las Vegas.

Wilder (33-0, 32 KOs), who had never fought past the fourth round and had knocked out all 32 of his professional opponents, boxed brilliantly behind a stellar jab to become the first U.S.-born heavyweight champion in nearly a decade. The towering 6-foot-7 Tuscaloosa native capitalized on his reach advantage, jabbing consistently to set up a powerful straight right.

Fighting on Hall of Famer Muhammad Ali's 73rd birthday, Wilder became the first undefeated American heavyweight champion since Riddick Bowe in 1992 and the first American champion since Shannon Briggs won the crown in 2006.

"I'm just excited and happy to bring this belt back to America," Wilder said. "It's going to mean a lot. I think I answered a lot of questions tonight. We knew we could go 12 rounds. We knew we could take a punch. We knew we could do it."

Heading into the first heavyweight championship fight at MGM Grand since the infamous Mike Tyson-Evander Holyfield ear bite in 1997, there were questions from boxing insiders if Wilder, who had never been truly tested, could handle the power of a true heavyweight and last in the later rounds. But Wilder answered those questions with a disciplined game plan, landing more than double the total punches and throwing 420 jabs to Stiverne's 139.

"When I saw he could take a great punch we knew we were in for the long run. Twelve rounds is nothing. I want to bring excitement back to the heavyweight division. Whoever is ready, I'm ready."

Stiverne (24-2-1, 21 KOs) was able to stagger Wilder with a few shots, but he did not throw enough jabs or cut off the ring effectively. Wilder was allowed to circle the ring and pop his jab at will. Stiverne landed just 39 jabs compared to Wilder's 120.

"It wasn't my night," Stiverne said. "I felt 100 percent before the fight but once I got in the ring I couldn't cut the ring, I couldn't move my head like I usually do. What can I say? Congrats to him.

"I knew I was trying to throw combos of four or five punches and I could only throw two of them. I just felt like I was flat in the ring. What I know I could do I didn't do. I just have to go back and learn from my mistakes and find out what happened tonight."

WBC Super Bantamweight World Champion **Leo Santa Cruz** defended his crown for the fourth time with an eighth-round TKO of Jesus Ruiz and afterward called out fellow champions Abner Mares and Guillermo Rigondeaux in the co-feature of SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING.

The early rounds were close and competitive and Ruiz, a heavy underdog, seemed to be a tougher test than he looked on paper. But it was clear that Santa Cruz was landing the cleaner sharper punches. The former bantamweight world champion landed some meaningful shots and had Ruiz in trouble in the seventh and, for the first time, it appeared that he could finish Ruiz.

Santa Cruz (29-0-1, 17 KOs) came out blazing in the eighth, landed a big right cross to kick off the round and continued to tee-off on the challenger. In trouble against the ropes and not fighting back, referee Kenny Bayless jumped in and stopped the bout with Ruiz (32-6-5, 21 KOs) still on his feet at :29 of the eighth round. The champion landed 43 percent of his total punches and nearly 50 percent of his power punches, while landing an impressive 73 power shots to the body.

"Like I expected, it was a war," Santa Cruz said. "He came prepared. We hurt him and we didn't let the chance go away. We kept going after him and we stopped him. I hurt him with the right hand. I knew he was hurt so I went after him. I knew Kenny Bayless would stop it because he wasn't throwing punches.

"I want the best and I want to please the fans. I want (Abner) Mares, I want (Guillermo) Rigondeaux. Hopefully our next fight is against one of the best."

Ruiz, who only landed 22 percent of his total punches, disagreed with the stoppage.

"I want a rematch," Ruiz said. "I don't feel they should have stopped the fight, but I have to accept it. But I'm fine. Look at me - I'm not cut. He didn't even drop me."

In the opening bout of the SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING telecast, undefeated super lightweight **Amir Imam** floored **Fidel Maldonado Jr.** four times and scored a fifth-round TKO in a brawl that featured five total knockdowns.

Maldonado was the busier fighter, but Imam floored the Albuquerque resident for the fourth time in his career with a short right just a moment before the bell rang to end the second. Then, in an early candidate for Round of the Year that featured three knockdowns, Maldonado responded by knocking down Imam for the first time in his career 30 seconds into the third with a solid straight left. Imam bounced back and sent Maldonado to the canvas with a huge right with 20 seconds left in the third and then again with a straight right as part of a vicious attack with less than 10 seconds left in the round.

The action continued and Imam (16-0, 14 KOs) floored Maldonado for the fourth time in the fight with a short right followed by a left hook just seconds before the bell to close the fifth. Maldonado (19-3, 16 KOs) got up but was wobbling and referee Robert Byrd halted the contest at 2:59. Imam's power was the difference, landing 50 percent of his power shots.

"It was a tough knockdown, but champions get up and finish the fight hard and that's what I did," Imam said. "I just had to stay composed and do what I had to do. "I started timing him. When I hit him with that good shot he was out. I could see it. That was the rope-a-dope. I was swinging for the fences and that was it, baby.

"I'm ready for the title shot right now. I just want to fight for the title."

Four of the five knockdowns occurred with less than 30 seconds left in each round. After the fight, Maldonado admitted that he simply failed to protect himself when the rounds were winding down.

"I just got caught with a couple of punches," Maldonado said. "He kept his composure and he came out with the W. I just got caught. I got lazy in there and he capitalized. He was the better man tonight. I got kind of bored at the end of the rounds and I paid for it."

In the main event of SHOWTIME BOXING on SHO EXTREME, undefeated light heavyweight prospect **Vyacheslav Shabranskyy** (12-0, 10 KOs) kept his perfect record intact with a thoroughly convincing TKO victory of **Garrett Wilson** (13-9-1, 7 KOs).

Shabranskyy kept his distance and was very effective; landing 48 percent of his power shot and threw more than 60 punches in each round. The Ukrainian prospect scored a knockdown with a right in the closing seconds of the second and another with a clean right in the final 10 seconds of the eighth, sending Wilson face first to the canvas. Wilson beat the count but was saved by the bell as Shabranskyy unloaded more than a dozen consecutive punches.

The durable Wilson took a tremendous beating in the ninth and seemingly didn't land a punch, forcing referee Jay Nady to stop the bout after the ninth upon suggestion of the ringside physician.

In the opening bout of the SHO EXTREME telecast, heavyweight Eric Molina (23-2, 17 KOs) defeated Raphael Zumbano (32-9-1, 25 KOs) via eighth round TKO in a one-sided affair.

Molina, who landed 76 percent of his power shots and more than 50 percent of his total punches, was connecting at will when referee Russell Mora halted the contest at 1:28 of the eighth.

In a non-televised swing bout, **Cesar Quiñonez** (1-0, 1 KO), a Las Vegas native and the first fighter to go professional from Fernando Vargas' gym Feroz Fight Factory, made his professional debut and scored a knockout win over Chula Vista's **Joan Valenzuela** (1-2) in the second round at 2:13.

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"RETURN TO GLORY": STIVERNE VS. WILDER, a 12-round fight for Stiverne's WBC Heavyweight Championship took place Saturday, Jan. 17 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, and was co-promoted by **Don King Productions** and **Golden Boy Promotions** and sponsored by Corona and Mexico - Live It To Believe It!. In the 12-round co-feature, unbeaten WBC Super Bantamweight World Champion **Leo Santa Cruz** defended against **Jesus Ruiz** and undefeated **Amir Imam** faced **Fidel Maldonado Jr.** in a 10-round super lightweight bout for the WBC Continental Americas Super Lightweight Title. The event took place at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nev., and will aired live on **SHOWTIME** (10:00 p.m. ET/ 7:00 p.m. PT). The telecast was also available in Spanish via secondary audio programming (SAP). Preliminary bouts were televised live on **SHOWTIME EXTREME**® (8:00 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast).

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