

ShoBox TV report

By Jereme Warneck

Showtime ShoBox Recap June 27, 2009 Max Schmeling Halle-Berlin, Germany This match is being televised on tape delay as a form of infomercial. Arthur Abraham is being positioned to face Kelly Pavlik. Showtime decided to broadcast this match at the last minute to increase Abraham's exposure with the boxing audience in the United States and increase their chances of landing the Pavlik-Abraham match that seems destined to air on HBO. IBF Middleweight (160 pounds) 12-Round Championship Match: Arthur Abraham (29-0, 23 KO's, 159.5 pounds) (c) vs. Mahir Oral (25-1-2, 10 KO's, 158.75 pounds) Abraham won this title when it was vacant via knockout at 1:36 of round 5 over Kingley Ikeke on December 10, 2005 at Arena Leipzig in Leipzig, Germany. The title was previously held by Jermain Taylor who vacated it to rematch Bernard Hopkins. Abraham is making his tenth defense of this title. Abraham is best known for his 2 victories over Edison Miranda. The first was a 12-round unanimous decision victory on September 23, 2006 at Rittal Arena in Germany. The fight was a bloody and dirty brawl. In round 4, Miranda broke Abraham's jaw in 2 places. Abraham would be forced to box the rest of the match with his mouth open and spewing blood. However, this was not enough of an advantage for the notoriously dirty challenger. In round 5, Miranda was penalized for an intentional head butt. Miranda would go on to lose 4 more points throughout the match for repeated low blows. Even after giving up 5 points trying to illegally weaken Abraham, Miranda lost the majority of the rounds. In their second encounter, Abraham won via technical knockout at 1:13 of round 4 in a 166-pound catch-weight fight on June 21, 2008 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Florida. It was another dirty brawl. Unable to land punches to the head of Abraham, in round 2 Miranda landed a punch to Abraham's groin. The referee pretended the foul was an accident and allowed the fight to continue without a point deduction. Miranda would draw a warning a few minutes later for holding and hitting, but still no point deduction. Abraham answered Miranda's fouls with hard combinations that battered the Colombian. The native of Armenia would score 3 knockdowns in round 4 for the stoppage. Abraham's last match was a 12-round blowout unanimous decision victory over Lajuan Simon on March 14, 2009 at Ostseehalle in Germany. Abraham is The Ring magazine's number 1 contender at 160 pounds to their champion in the weight class, Pavlik. Oral began his pro boxing career at 19-years old with a 4-round unanimous decision victory over Gabor Balogh on March 4, 2000 in Torun, Poland. The challenger was moved very slowly after his pro debut. Oral would box the first 3.5 years of his career without facing an opponent that had more than 1 professional win on their record. Oral's opposition since then has been rather uneven. Oral has routinely faced opponents that have won 90% of their matches and almost as routinely faced opponents that have lost 90% of their matches. Oral won the newly created WBC Mediterranean 160-pound belt in his last match via technical knockout at 3:00 of round 7 over Alexander Sipos on November 18, 2008 at Kugelbake-Halle in Germany. The match was stopped when Sipos did not answer the bell to start round 8 due to an elbow injury. That belt is not on the line in this match. Oral is unranked by The Ring, and ranked by boxrec.com as the number 29 boxer in the world at 160 pounds. Both boxers are 29-years old. Oral has the height advantage standing 6' 1" tall, while Abraham stands 5' 9" tall. Abraham has the reach advantage with a 72" wingspan, compared to the 71.75" wingspan of Oral. Neither boxers' unofficial weight approaching match time is available. However, the IBF mandates boxers weigh-in within 10 pounds of the weight limit on the day of the match. That means both boxers should be relatively the same weight in the ring. Both boxers will employ the orthodox stance. The unified rules of boxing are in effect for this match. Two of the official judges keeping score of this match from ringside are from Italy and the other is from England. The referee is Earl Brown. Oral wins round 1, 10-9. Abraham is using a high guard similar to what Winky Wright uses, except Abraham is far more inactive than Wright. Wright uses a frequent and punishing jab to break down his opponents out of that defensive posture. That is designed to deliver lopsided decision victories. Abraham does very little punching out of his high guard stance, only throwing occasional combinations. However, the combinations Abraham throws are very hard and designed to deliver knockout victories. Oral dominates the lethargic Abraham to win round 2, 10-9. Abraham has done virtually nothing in the first 2 rounds. This is not helping build interest in a Pavlik-Abraham match. Oral easily wins round 3, 10-9, and leads on my scorecard after 3 rounds, 30-27. Both Nick Charles and Steve Farhood, who are calling this match for Showtime via satellite from New York, have Oral ahead after 3 rounds, 29-28. They both scored rounds 1 and 2 for Oral by the same score of 10-9 and round 3 for Abraham, 10-9, based on the champion landing a flurry at the bell in round 3. Oral is clearly ahead in the match after 3 rounds, but the challenger appears to beginning to tire. Oral's hands are dropping, which will allow Abraham to land his power punches. The German crowd is enthusiastically cheering a lot of the match, which seems generous. If this match were happening almost any other place in the world it would have been serenaded with a chorus of boos from about 1 minute into the match. Abraham has finally decided to punch in round 4. A combination capped by a right hand drops Oral to the canvas with 42 seconds to go in round 4. That is the third time Oral has been knocked down in his professional career. The challenger has never been knocked out, though. Oral successfully answers the referee's count, but is unlikely to make it out of the round if Abraham goes for the finish. Oral recovered well to make it out of round 4 without holding. The knockdown gives Abraham round 4 huge, 10-8. Charles and Farhood score round 4 the same. With 2:23 to go in round 5, Oral throws a wild lunging right hand. The punch completely missed Abraham and put Oral on the mat. Abraham motioned to the crowd in celebration anyway. The referee correctly ruled it a slip and the action is resumed with 2:15 to go in the round. Abraham solidly wins round 5, 10-9. The champion takes round 5 on both of the Showtime commentators' scorecard, 10-9. After round 5, a graphic aired plugging the Affliction pay-per-view. They have already shown a graphic for their July 11 boxing event. There has been no mention at this point of the Strikeforce show and it is 27 minutes into the show. A hard hand drops Oral with 1:04 to go in round 6. The challenger looks completely exhausted at this point. Abraham wins round 6 on everyone's scorecard, 10-8. After 6 rounds, Abraham leads on my scorecard, 57-55. Both Charles and Farhood have Abraham ahead after 6 rounds, 58-54. Oral wins round 7 easily, because Abraham

did nothing in the round, 10-9. Abraham appeared to take round 7 off, and Oral was still not able to land a meaningful punch in the round. Finally after round 7, there is a graphic for the Strikeforce show featuring Gina Carano vs. Cris Cyborg. Abraham decided to do a little punching and won round 8, 10-9. This match is terrible. Oral has no power and Abraham is treating him as the most dangerous power puncher in the world. Abraham out-classes Oral to win round 9, 10-9, and leads on my scorecard after 9 rounds, 86-83. Abraham appears to be boxing this match in his sleep. If he boxed this match using a modicum of effort it probably would have been over in round 2. Abraham appears to be working to match Anderson Silva for the champion in combat sports interested in doing the least in a match. After round 9, the referee warned Oral's corner he may stop this match from an accumulation of punches. With 2:40 to go in round 10, a left hook drops Oral to a knee. Oral is up at the count of 8, but looks beaten. The meager power Oral had at the beginning of the match disappeared several rounds ago and he has no energy left to continue. The referee is going to reluctantly allow Oral to continue with 2:24 to go in round 10. Abraham should finish the match in the next 24 seconds. A right to the body causes Oral to stagger back and take a knee with 2:16 to go in the round. The referee is going to apply a count, but there is no need. Oral has had enough. Surprisingly, Oral stood at 5. Oral's corner needs to throw in the towel. The challenger took the knee to tell his corner he wanted out of this match. They need to listen and throw in the towel. If the corner fails their charge here, the referee needs to stop the match. Oral has taken enough punishment tonight. The referee is going to let Oral continue. The 3 knockdown rule is not in effect. However, the referee told Oral that he will not let the boxer take much more damage. Showtime has removed the round clock at this point. A combination capped by a left hook to the body sends Oral to a knee for the third time in round 10. The referee is going to apply a count. This match has to be stopped. Oral's corner is being completely negligent at this point in not stopping the match. The referee is going to allow the match to continue with 1:42 to go in the round. The referee is telling Oral that the match will be stopped on the next knockdown. That would be the fourth knockdown of this round and sixth of the match. Finally, Oral's corner has come up on the apron to throw in the towel with 1:37 to go in the round. That is before any punches can be thrown following the third knockdown in round 10. As an act of mercy, Abraham indicated to the referee that Oral's corner had thrown in the towel. The final outcome courtesy of Michael Buffer is that at 1:23 of round 10 the referee has called a stop to the match making the winner by technical knockout, still undefeated and still the IBF Middleweight Champion of the World, "King" Arthur Abraham. The win moves Abraham to 30-0 with now 24 wins coming by way of knockout. Abraham said in his post match interview that none of the punches from Oral ever hurt him or were actually hard. The champion said his goal was to get big matches in the United States whether it was at 160 or 168 pounds. Al Bernstein then jokingly asked Abraham if anyone could hurt him. Abraham who had been conducting this interview through a translator in German replied to the question in English, "Yeah, my mother." Abraham must have a very scary mother. A match between her and Pavlik might be entertaining. Abraham was completely dominant in this match. The Showtime commentators described Abraham as an action boxer that they really wanted to see again. That was hyperbole. Abraham seemed to sleep walk through this match doing very little punching. Abraham's defense is great. His offense is overwhelming, when he chooses to punch. As a whole, Abraham seemed a good alternative to Ambien. Abraham seems very beatable. When he is passive opponents should be able to take advantage of him. It is unlikely this match will create a heavy demand for Abraham to face Pavlik. Abraham has a mandatory defense of his title against Giovanni Lorenzo scheduled for the fall. That should draw well in Germany and be thoroughly boring to an audience in the United States. Abraham is simply going to have to do a lot more to warrant big matches on this side of the Atlantic. Oral was not very good in this match. He has no punching power and not a lot of hand speed. Oral's defense is not particularly good either. Oral does have solid cardio, can take a good punch and showed good heart. However, the only reason he was competitive at any point in this match was because of what Abraham failed to do and not because of anything he did. This is a show to avoid. Abraham showed enough skills to prove he is a top boxer in the division. He then decided to frustratingly not use those skills. The result was a horribly boring match that will leave viewers exasperated, because it had the potential to be entertaining.

News and Notes: The delayed Floyd Mayweather, Jr.-Juan Manuel Marquez PPV has been rescheduled for September 19 still at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Nevada. Ticket sales had been poor for the originally scheduled July 18 date and are expected to be better for the new date. That is the weekend following Mexican Independence Day, and the event should be able to sell more tickets to the Mexican and Mexican-American tourists in Las Vegas that weekend. The details for the other big PPV this year are almost finalized. The Manny Pacquiao-Miguel Cotto match should be signed in the next few days. Pacquiao's trainer, Freddie Roach, has agreed for the match to take place at 145 pounds. That was the weight Cotto wanted and the major sticking point. It will happen November 14 on HBO PPV live from the MGM Grand. The Chad Dawson-Glen Johnson rematch is now set for November 7 on HBO. However, Gary Shaw who is promoting the event has not found a venue to run the event at yet. On June 24 the United States Senate approved a bill championed by Senator John McCain urging President Obama to give a posthumous pardon to Jack Johnson. Johnson, the first African-American heavyweight champion, was convicted of violating the Mann Act primarily for having the gall to be African-American and heavyweight champion of the world. The bill is now moving to the House of Representatives. Regretfully, the bill failed to pass the House or Senate under the last Congress. There is a new trend developing of professional athletes in other sports looking to get involved in boxing as managers. First Brandon Jacobs, the star running back for the NFL's New York Giants, is looking to become a manager through his connections with New Jersey based boxer Kendall Holt. Now Bobby Simmons, a forward for the NBA's New Jersey Nets, is starting to manage boxers in his native Chicago, Illinois. Simmons has already signed heavyweight Fres Oquendo. With Simmons in his corner, Oquendo defeated Mark Brown via technical knockout at 2:38 of round 3 on Friday in Chicago. Confident in continued success, Simmons is building a gym to house his stable of local boxers.

The next recap will be of the July 11 Showtime event featuring Vic Darchinyan moving up in weight to challenge for Joseph Agbeko's 118-pound title. Sincerely, Jereme Warneck number1contender.net Boxing and Video Game

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