

UNDEFEATED FEATHERWEIGHT PROSPECT RUBEN VILLA OUTPOINTS LUIS ALBERTO LOPEZ IN MAIN EVENT OF SHOBX: THE NEW GENERATION FRIDAY ON SHOWTIME®

CORONA, Calif. – May 10, 2019 – Undefeated prospect Ruben Villa stayed true to his calm and consistent style, recording a unanimous decision over Luis Alberto Lopez in his first main-event appearance on ShoBox: The New Generation Friday from Omega Products Events Center in Corona, Calif.

The judges' scorecards read 98-92, 97-93 and 96-94 in the featherweight bout, although all three ShoBox commentators had Villa winning each round except the 10th round, giving the final round to Lopez (17-2, 8 KOs) in a fight that saw nearly 1,400 punches thrown.

"I give myself a 'C' grade," said Villa, making his second consecutive ShoBox appearance. "He was a tough opponent and had a real awkward style and wasn't really a boxer. It took me awhile to adjust to him and it was hard not to get frustrated."

Taken the 10-round distance for the first time in his career, the 22-year-old Villa (16-0, 5 KOs) of Salinas, Calif., took the first two rounds to get used to the top-15 ranked contender Lopez's awkward style before he began landing heavy body shots to dominate the third round.

In the seventh round, Villa out-jabbed Lopez and continued the onslaught of body punches in the ninth round, but was not able

to get the knockout against the game Lopez.

"I agreed with the judges' scorecards," the two-time National Golden Gloves Amateur Champion Villa said. "I still got the unanimous decision win so I have no problem with that. I can take a whole lot from this fight tonight."

Lopez was coming off an upset victory over Ray Ximenez in his U.S. debut in February but could not repeat the feat against the highly regarded Villa.

"I hit him with the better shots," Lopez said. "I was consistently throwing and landing the power shots while he was just jabbing. I felt good. It's a complicated to fight a lefty, but I thought I landed the punches that scored."

In the co-feature, undefeated 21-year-old rising prospect Michael Dutchover (13-0, 10 KOs) made quick work of late replacement Rosekie Cristobal (15-4, 11 KOs) of the Philippines, connecting on a right-left combination to Cristobal's liver that sent him to both knees before being counted out by referee Zachary Young at 1:46 of the first round of a scheduled eight-round super lightweight contest.

In his ShoBox debut, Dutchover of Santa Fe Springs, Calif., by way of Midland, Texas, recorded six body connects among his 11 landed power punches in the fight that lasted just 109 seconds.

"I have to be able to adjust," said Dutchover, a runner-up at the 2016 National Golden Gloves and a bronze medalist in the 2016 Olympic qualifiers. "I was given a tall lefty on short notice due to the original opponent dropping out. Part of being a professional is being able to adapt. It's nothing I haven't seen before. I've seen pretty much every style through the amateurs and now during sparring sessions as a pro."

Dutchover added: "I was patient and waited for the open shots. He wasn't covering up the body so that was my target. The plan

from the beginning was to break him down. I'm just happy I was able to end it early and give the fans something to talk about."

In the opening bout of the tripleheader, undefeated bantamweight prospect Saul Sanchez (12-0, 7 KOs) recorded an eighth-round knockout against Brandon Benitez (14-2, 6 KOs) in an entertaining and all-action fight.

After an even first round, Sanchez and Benitez continued to trade shots over the first three rounds before Benitez's legs began to betray him and he tired midway through the fourth, slowing the pace of the fight considerably. Sanchez, of North Hollywood, Calif., landed three huge punches that staggered Benitez as the fourth round came to a close, stoking the undefeated prospect with confidence as the fight reached progressed to the later rounds.

In the seventh round, Mexico's Benitez suffered an injury over his right eye from a Sanchez punch, and referee Raul Caiz Jr. warned Benitez prior to the eight round to protect himself. At the start of the eighth round, a flush right hand by the 21-year-old Sanchez connected cleanly and Caiz Jr. stepped in and stopped the fight after just 18 seconds.

"I felt strong throughout the fight," Sanchez said. "Benitez was tough so I had to be careful and aggressive at the same time. I know I hurt him a handful of times, but I know I can do better. My conditioning was great. I was ready to go the distance."

Sanchez out-landed the 21-year-old Benitez 145-94 overall and 123-78 in power connects while landing 42 percent of his power shots to Benitez's 29 percent.

"I was responding well in every round," said Benitez from Queretaro, Mexico. "I don't know why the referee stopped it. I had a lot more left. I'm just disappointed I wasn't allowed to finish the fight."

In Non-Televised Action

Former world title contender Petr Petrov (40-6-2, 20 KOs), who at 36 still campaigns as a lightweight, made easy work of former interim world title-challenger Ruben Tamayo (27-13-4, 18 KOs) by dropping him three times in the second round to win via knockout at the 2:59 mark.

Petrov, stalked Tamayo from the opening bell and split his guard numerous times with a stiff right. Tamayo looked overwhelmed from the start and was fortunate to exit the fight when he did.

Middleweight contender and 2018 champion of The Contender champion Brandon Adams was interviewed during Friday's telecast to discuss his June 29 SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING® showdown with undefeated Jermall Charlo, which was announced earlier on Friday.

"I'm a new face," Adams told Hall of Famer Steve Farhood. "I'm in the top 10. I'm in the discussion and I think that's enough to shake everything up. The guy that comes out to nowhere is a great story for boxing.

"I hope I get the best Charlo because I'm bringing the best 'Cannon.' I'm very fan friendly and I definitely go for the kill. When I get in the ring I like to entertain myself. I'm very much looking forward to fighting Charlo. It's going to be exciting."

Friday's fights were promoted by Banner Promotions and Thompson Boxing. The full telecast will replay on Monday, May 12 at 10 p.m. ET/PT on SHOWTIME EXTREME and will be available on SHOWTIME ANYTIME® and SHOWTIME on DEMAND®.

Barry Tompkins called the action from ringside with boxing historian Steve Farhood and former world champion Raul Marquez serving as expert analysts. The executive producer was Gordon Hall with Richard Gaughan producing and Chuck McKean

directing.

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About ShoBox: The New Generation

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**RUBEN VILLA vs. LUIS ALBERTO
RUIZ FINAL WEIGHTS, QUOTES &
PHOTOS FOR SHOBX: THE NEW
GENERATION TRIPLEHEADER**

TOMORROW LIVE ON SHOWTIME®

ONTARIO, Calif. – May 9, 2019 – Undefeated featherweight prospect Ruben Villa and once-beaten and top-15 ranked contender Luis Alberto Lopez both made weight a day before their main event showdown on ShoBox: The New Generation Friday, May 10 live on SHOWTIME (10:30 p.m. ET/PT) from Omega Products Events Center in Corona, Calif.

The 22-year-old Villa (15-0, 5 KOs) returns in a 10-round bout for his second consecutive test on the prospect developmental series after dispatching then-unbeaten Ruben Cervera in the first ShoBox telecast of 2019. The two-time National Golden Gloves Amateur Champion and highly touted prospect will take on the Mexican Lopez (17-1, 8 KOs), who is coming off an upset victory over Ray Ximenez in his U.S. debut in February.

In the co-feature, fast-rising 21-year-old Texan Michael Dutchover (12-0, 9 KOs) will take on late replacement Rosekie Cristobal (15-3, 11 KOs) of the Philippines in an eight-round super lightweight contest. In the opening bout of the tripleheader, undefeated bantamweight prospect Saul Sanchez (11-0, 6 KOs) battles Mexican Brandon Benitez (14-1, 6 KOs) in an 10-round bout.

Friday's ShoBox telecast immediately follows the premiere of ALL ACCESS: WILDER vs. BREAZEALE at 10 p.m. ET/PT on SHOWTIME.

Tickets for the event, which is promoted by Banner Promotions and Thompson Boxing, are priced at \$125, \$75 and \$60 and can be purchased online at www.thompsonboxing.com or by calling 714-935-0900.

FINAL WEIGHTS, REFEREES AND JUDGES

Featherweight 10-Round Bout

Ruben Villa – 125 lbs.

Luis Alberto Lopez – 125 ½ lbs.

Referee: Thomas Taylor; Judges: Dr. Lou Moret, Max DeLuca, Fernando Villarreal

Super Lightweight 8-Round Bout

Michael Dutchover – 138 lbs.

Rosekie Cristobal – 137 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.

(Contracted weight is 138 pounds)

Referee: Zachary Young; Judges: Carla Caiz, Max DeLuca, Dr. Lou Moret

Bantamweight 10-Round Bout

Saul Sanchez – 118 lbs.

Brandon Benitez – 117 lbs.

Referee: Raul Caiz Jr.; Judges: Dr. Lou Moret, Max DeLuca, Rudy Barragan

Note: All refs and judges are from California

Here's what the fighters had to say before they weighed in at the Doubletree Hilton in Ontario.

FINAL QUOTES:

RUBEN VILLA

"I thought I had a decent performance in my fight against Ruben Cervera on ShoBox and it's great to be out there again on TV and in my first main event.

"Boxing fans are starting to know my name. A lot of them don't know I had wins over Devin Haney, Shakur Stevenson and Gary Russell in the amateurs and have stayed active since turning pro. I'm ready for this and to can't wait to be a main event fighter on ShoBox.

"I know I'm in one of boxing's toughest divisions and I look up to all the top guys at 126 pounds. Shakur Stevenson and I have talked about fighting in the future, and it might just happen someday."

"My training team of Max Garcia and Dean Familton have me

ready and I'm more prepared for this fight than any I've ever been. I am confident that style is going to confuse my opponent.

"If I'm up 8-0 I'm not going to mail it in and just run around, but I won't get careless either. The wins are important and we will get it however we can.

"This is going to be a step-up fight for me because Lopez is coming off a huge win and has a lot of confidence. I've gotten better in my last three training camps dictating the pace and going forward. I want to be a multi-dimensional fighter.

"I just turned 22 years old last month and I'm still developing. I know I'm known for putting on clinics and I know that inner beast is in me.

"I won't give him a chance to take advantage of what will make him successful. I'm not a slow starter, but I'll take my time to figure out what I need to do to get my opponent out of there."

LUIS ALBERTO LOPEZ:

"I wasn't supposed to win my last fight and it was in America so I'm coming in with a lot of confidence. I know now I can go outside of my country and my comfort zone. I believe in myself and know I can do it.

"I would call my opponent a good boxer without much power. We respect Villa's record but he hasn't fought anyone.

"My nickname is 'venado' which means deer in Spanish. I got it from my speed in soccer growing up.

"Most of my opponents have been too slow for me. I can move so I'm looking forward to being in there with someone with speed. I can change up strategies depending on what he shows.

"I was 19 years old when I started and had only 12 or 15 fights in the amateurs and turned pro after only one year. I

have boxing in my blood and fought 2,000 fights on the street, and most of those I won.”

MICHAEL DUTCHOVER:

“You won’t believe how excited I am right now. This is my TV debut and I’m actually very calm and just ready to go.

“I’m not worried about the last-minute change in opponents. I know he’s a tall southpaw, but that doesn’t worry me. It’s nothing I haven’t seen before.

“I’ve sparred with world champions and some other southpaws in the past like Jessie Magdaleno. We’ve done some mitt work from the left stance and we’ll be ready for whatever my opponent brings. I’m going to have to use my angles against a taller fighter.

“I believe my ring generalship and my ring IQ is going to win out over an inexperienced fighter.

“My older brother Junior Dutchover has always pushed me and always says, ‘Someday that is going to be you on TV.’ And here we are and it’s actually happening tomorrow night.

“I had a good amateur career and my progression as a pro is right where I want it to be. This is the biggest opportunity of my career and I need to take advantage of it.

“Ruben Villa and I are very close friends and we go way back in the amateurs. We went 1-1 and I was 13 or 14 at the time. I also fought Devin Haney also in the amateurs.”

ROSEKIE CRISTOBAL

“I took this fight on short notice because it was the biggest chance I’ve ever been given. I have been in the gym, working out at Freddie Roach’s Wild Card Gym in Hollywood. I have sparred with Ivan Baranchyk and other top guys. I’m ready to go.

“My style is aggressive and technical – it depends on my

opponent. I just want to give a good performance.”

SAUL SANCHEZ

“This is my first time on national TV and I’m excited. I’m ready to give everyone a show. I’m a come forward fighter and exciting to watch.

“I haven’t fought since I broke my left pinky during round six of my last fight against Luis Saavedra in October. I didn’t have surgery and just put it in a splint. I felt a little pain when I first started hitting the bag.

“I’m quiet outside of the ring but once I get in the ring I let it fly. That’s why they call me ‘The Beast.’

BRANDON BENITEZ

“I’ve been mostly fighting in Venezuela so I know a lot of people may not know me. This is my opportunity to show my skills. I’m more of a skilled boxer but at the same time I can fight on the inside and be aggressive.

“I’m so happy to be here and appreciate the opportunity to fight. It really is a dream come true.

“I’ve studied my opponent a little bit and he looks like a strong fighter who likes to crash in the ring, and we look forward to that. But I want to box.”

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