

JOHN MOLINA OUTPOINTS RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV; DEMETRIUS ANDRADE DELIVERS STATEMENT KO VICTORY AND DEJAN ZLATICANIN WINS 135-POUND TITLE SATURDAY ON SHOWTIME®

VERONA, N.Y. (June 11, 2016) – John Molina outpunched Ruslan Provodnikov in an all-action fight by revealing a new weapon in his arsenal, a sharp and steady jab. Molina captured a surprising unanimous decision in a 12-round junior welterweight bout that featured fierce exchanges throughout Saturday on SHOWTIME from Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona, N.Y.

In the co-feature on SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING, Demetrius Andrade delivered a statement, knockout victory over Willie Nelson, staking his claim as one of the world's best in the stacked 154-pound division. In the opening bout, Dejan Zlaticanin knocked out Franklin Mamani to earn the vacant 135-pound world title and make history as the first native of Montenegro to win a world championship.

Molina and Provodnikov promised a war, and they delivered. But what surprised many was the volume of punches and effective jabbing from Molina (29-6, 23 KOs), a veteran more known for engaging in brawls than his boxing prowess. Molina threw nearly 1,110 total punches, including 643 jabs compared to just 265 for Provodnikov, who failed to close the range on his naturally bigger opponent.

“We knew we had to outwork Provodnikov,” said the 33-year-old Covina, Calif., native. “It was a fight that we needed. Ruslan

Provodnikov is a very notable name. He's a tough, tough guy. He kept moving forward.

"People don't realize I had my amateur career in the pros, and now it's my time to step out and shine. I have a new trainer. Shadeed (Suluki) showed me how to throw punches and use my power."

Molina vs. Provodnikov was scored 116-112, 117-111, 115-113.

"I think it (the scorecard) was self-explanatory. A fighter knows when they won a fight. I won that fight and it was going to be hard to take it away from me."

The judges agreed on nine of the 12 rounds, a relatively high percentage according to SHOWTIME analyst Steve Farhood.

"Today the decision was the right one," Provnikov said. "Molina won the fight – he was better tonight. Everything was scored the way it should have been.

"We expected that he was going to box, he was going to move. We expected him to do that. It wasn't my night. Maybe I don't have the same hungriness as before. I'm not going to make excuses, but it was hard for me to find my groove tonight.

"I don't think it's that (the layoff). There are no excuses. I lost the fight tonight. I couldn't find the hungriness. I have to sit down and think of why that happened.

"I'm sorry if I disappointed."

Undefeated former world champion Demetrius Andrade put on a masterful performance against top-10 ranked Willie Nelson, flooring the former world title challenger four times including once in the opening round and emphatically in the final round to close the show (TKO 12, 1:38).

With the win, Nelson, who landed a staggering 57 percent of his power punches in just his second fight in two years, moved

one step closer to earning another shot at a title fight. Andrade, who never lost his belt in the ring, is now the second mandatory challenger for the WBC Super Welterweight World Title, currently held by Jermell Charlo.

"I'm coming to get those belts," said the 28-year-old Andrade. "People can't run no more. The best have to fight the best. I'm coming for them.

"I came back, I'm stronger. Me and my team worked hard. We figured out what we need to do to take it to the next level. I'm ready for the Charlo brothers. I want them."

Andrade was on his way to pitching a shutout, delivering a statement performance after months of frustration from "boxing politics." The former WBO 154-pound champion targeted the head and the body of Nelson, relying on a steady diet of combos to floor the 6-foot-3 Nelson in the first, 11th and twice in the 12th.

"I'm young enough and my reaction time is still going," Andrade said. "Willie Nelson is a true champion. He pushed me to the limit where I had to figure out what punches to throw. But I put the pieces of the puzzle together and got the knockout, baby.

Nelson, of Cleveland, dropped to 25-3-1 with 15 KOs.

"He was tough," Nelson said. "I was forcing my shots too much. I felt like I was getting back into the fight, but he was crafty and mobile.

"I am ready for whatever is next and, despite what happened tonight, I am here to stay. My career won't end like this."

In the opening bout of the SHOWTIME telecast, Zlaticanin blasted late-replacement Mamani with a third round TKO (:54) to win the vacant WBC Lightweight World Championship.

The 32-year-old Zlaticanin (18-0, 10 KOs) became the first

native of the Southeastern European country of Montenegro to capture a world championship.

“I’m very proud. I made Montenegro proud,” Zlaticanin said. “I want to thank my fans that came to support me. I think I made my country proud. I think they will be delighted. I don’t think they know what this means, but in a few days they will know.”

The southpaw Zlaticanin pounced with a powerful straight left that had Mamani in trouble just seconds into the fight. The Bolivian, who was also aiming to become the first native of his homeland to win a title, survived the round but he was in trouble again in the third. Zlaticanin staggered with an overhand left and followed with a series of unanswered blows that forced referee Charlie Fitch to halt the contest with Mamani (21-3-1, 12 KOs) defenseless against the ropes.

“I knew that I would knock him out. He stood too close to me.

After the fight, Zlaticanin called out Jorge Linares, the WBC Lightweight “Champion in Recess”, who pulled out of a tentatively scheduled match with Zlaticanin due to an injury.

“I want Linares next. He can’t run from me anymore.

In undercard action on SHO EXTREME, Willie Monroe Jr. (20-2, 6 KOs) won a unanimous decision (96-92, 95-93, 99-89) over John Thompson (17-2, 6 KOs) in a 10-round middleweight matchup of former world title challengers. Monroe scored two knockdowns, one in the second and another with a straight right jab in the fifth.

In the opening bout on SHOWTIME BOXING on SHO EXTREME, Russian heavyweight Andrey Fedosov (29-3, 24 KOs) scored four knockdowns en route to a sixth round TKO (1:33) of Mario Heredia (11-2, 9 KOs, 1-2 in WSB).

Saturday’s event from Turning Stone Resort Casino was promoted

by Banner Promotions and DiBella Entertainment.

Saturday's SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING tripleheader replays Monday, June 13 at 10 p.m. ET/PT on SHOWTIME EXTREME. The SHOWTIME BOXING on SHO EXTREME telecast replays Tuesday, June 14 at 10 p.m. ET/PT on SHO EXTREME.

Brian Custer hosted the SHOWTIME telecast, with Mauro Ranallo calling the action, Hall of Fame analyst Al Bernstein and former two-time world champion Paulie Malignaggi commentating and Jim Gray reporting. Barry Tompkins and Steve Farhood called the SHOWTIME EXTREME action. In the Spanish simulcast, Alejandro Luna called the blow-by-blow and former world champion Raul Marquez served as color commentator. The executive producer of SHOWTIME CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING was David Dinkins Jr. with Bob Dunphy directing.

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