

PIER 32 PUNCHOUT



DINO VOURNAS/Examiner

Big hook: Joaquin "Killer" Gallardo of San Leandro, right, let Salvador Montes of Pomona know who was in charge of this fight.

Lewis outslugs Davis in brawl

By ALEX BROWN
Special to The Examiner

There's nothing pretty about Terrance Lewis, nothing textbook about his technique.

But since when were professional heavyweight fights decided on graceful aesthetics?

Following nine rounds of bludgeoning at Pier 32 last night, Lewis emerged victorious over opponent Robert Davis, knocking out the Gulf War veteran with a crisp left hook that resonated right across the Bay.

For Lewis, who improved his career record to 30-8 with 21 KOs, the win served as sweet justification for a fighter who has endured his share of misfortune.

"I've been robbed a lot in the past but I have now knocked out the last two guys I've fought, and I want a belt," he said. "He couldn't beat me. I controlled the whole fight. I'm the strongest fighter in the heavyweight division and I proved that tonight."

Davis, meanwhile expressed his displeasure with the decision to stop the fight, remonstrating with officials long after the final bell. He was not counted out, the referee opting to call off the bout after Davis' head hit the canvas hard following Lewis' punch.

"On five previous occasions he's been knocked down by guys and beaten them," said Davis' manager Steve Munisteri. "We thought the decision was premature."

From the opening round it appeared the fight would go in one of two directions — either the bitter Davis would outlast his rival, or Lewis would end the bout early with a thundering blow.

And in the first round, Davis looked the sharper of the fighters, pinning his larger adversary against the ropes and peppering him with body blows and head shots.

Even at this early stage, the power of Lewis was obvious. On several occasions in the middle rounds, Davis looked to have Lewis in trouble only to have his advances answered with either a bone-jarring right cross or an equally powerful left.

Tempers began to fray. Midway through the second round, Lewis landed a succession of blows — the flurry



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Battle royale: Terrance Lewis knocked out Robert Davis in the ninth round. Below, the two went toe-to-toe throughout much of the 10-round fight.



ending with both men crashing to the canvas in a manner usually reserved for those on Vince McMahon's payroll. By the end of the round, Davis' knees had begun to buckle noticeably and the fight seemed destined for an early curtain.

Another knockdown in the next round only confirmed that theory in the minds of the capacity 2,500-strong crowd.

However, Davis wasn't ready for the showers just yet.

At the urging of his corner,

the Ohio-based fighter regained his composure, rediscovered his ring movements and set about staging a comeback. His defense, though, remained a concern. Though Lewis was telegraphing his right hook, Davis was powerless to repel the blows. They stung and even though Davis was landing more scoring punches, their relative effect was minimal.

But hope lay in the fact that the hulking Lewis was

tiring, with Davis conserving his energy while weathering Lewis' fusillade during the middle rounds. After eight rounds, two judges had the fight scored even while one had Davis slightly ahead.

Cue the ninth.

With the contest slipping away, Lewis reached into his arsenal for a final assault — a left hook as powerful as it was precise and one which connected cleanly with Davis' jaw.

"I had that fool walking right into that punch," Lewis said. "How could they (the judges) have him winning the fight? I'm the grim reaper. I'm the quiet assassin."

"People don't realize how strong I am. He wasn't strong enough for me. Now give me some real fights."

The final verdict on last night? From a fan's perspective, the promotion struck a chord, despite the fact that neither fighter would find himself in the household-name category. The quality didn't seem to matter.

Professional heavyweight boxing is back in the Bay Area, and based on this case study, it certainly has a place.