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RINGSIDE

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FINALLY. Yes, after all the talk about when John Duddy (11st 3lbs) would lose, it came to fruition as light-hitting Billy Lyell (11st 1lb), Youngstown, Ohio, performed due diligence along the lines of the hockey mantra of work hard, work hard.

It paid off with a well-appreciated 10-round split decision victory. Little Billy, trained by Jack Loew, of Kelly Pavlik fame, stuck it out during thick and thin, applying resolute pressure throughout the well-paced contest.

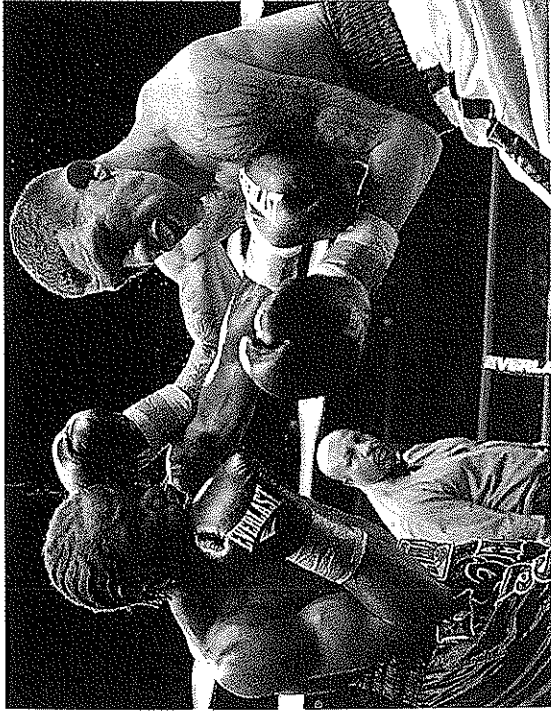
Lyell jumped out to a big lead, taking the first four rounds on two cards, and three of four on the third. Final scores in this no-knockdown punchout were 98-92 and 97-93 for Lyell, and 96-94 for Duddy. My card was 95-95, but if you had to pick a winner, Lyell certainly deserved the nod.

Both were cut, Duddy along the left eye in round three and Lyell on the bridge of his nose in the fifth. Neither had any significant influence on their behaviour. The notable difference was the right hand of Lyell, which he landed over and over again.

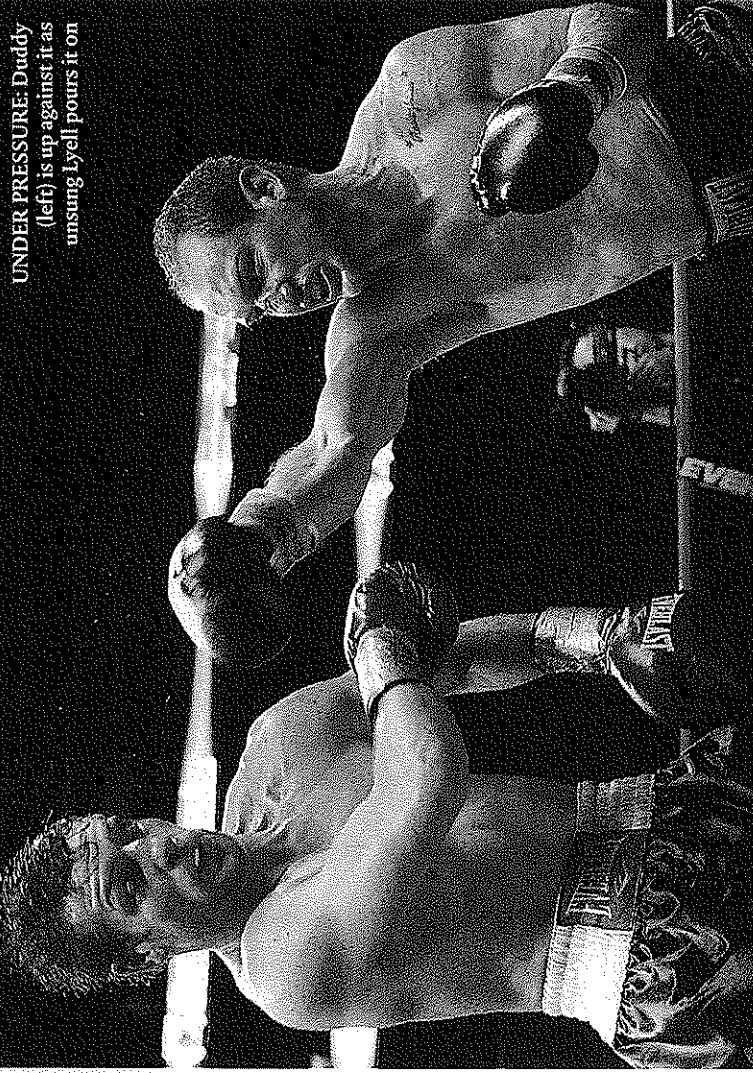
There was talk last year of matching Duddy with Pavlik. Could you imagine Pavlik's right hand landing so often? No, and that would be because it probably wouldn't have taken that many to knock out Duddy, who possesses zero defence.

Lyell, 24, who hung tough with monster man James Kirkland (1 ko 8) and dropped an eight-rounder to prospect Vares Martirosyan in his last outing, upped his overall to 19-7, but with only three early wins.

As for the once-fought-over (by promoters) Duddy, 29, a native of Derry, Ireland, is now facing a decision of his own: go back to Ireland and pile up meaningless victories, or remain in the New York metropolitan area and



THE DREAM IS OVER: Ouma (left) falls to the younger, fresher Rosado



UNDER PRESSURE: Duddy (left) is up against it as unsung Lyell pours it on

REALITY BITES DUDDY

The Derryman finds his level as little-known journeyman Lyell ends his unbeaten record

get probably bigger paydays, but suffer even more losses. He is now 26-1 (17).

The days of stamping his will on opponents is over and done for one-time IBF light-middleweight title-holder Kassim Ouma (11st), as the southpaw fell to relative neophyte Gabriel Rosado (11st 1/2lb), Philadelphia, via a 10-round split decision.

No knockdowns and little intensity, but it was close all the way. The judges saw it 96-94 for each boxer and a 97-93 for Rosado. My card had it for Ouma at 96-95, but I would not argue the

outcome. Ouma, 30, a native of Uganda – you know of that well-told story – but now residing in the cushy comforts of West Palm Beach, Florida, has clearly seen better days. He still fights in the same manner, but his shots lack any intensity and he more often is taking too much time between getting down to business.

His opponent, 23, is a gamer who lacks any real credentials save an eight-round verdict over Ireland's James Moore. At first he didn't look as if he had any idea on how to handle a veteran like Ouma.

Rosado, now 11-3 (6), used his legs to try and figure something out while moving about the ring. He was going 10 for the first time and as the rounds wore on he became a little bit more involved.

It was in those final two sessions, however, that showed the difference between a faded one-timer and a youthful practitioner at least giving it his all, even if it lacked style points.

Rosado, coming off a clear decision loss to prospect Fernando Guerrero on February 6, moves to 11-3 (6). Ouma falls to 26-6-1 (16) but has now dropped four of his last five. At least he's not getting stopped – yet.

"Hammerin'" Hank Lundy (9st 10lbs), Philadelphia-bred, but now boxing out of Providence, Rhode Island,

hammered Jason Cintron (9st 11lbs), Reading, Pennsylvania, throughout in taking this scheduled eight via knock-out at 1-36 of round five.

Lundy, now 13-0-1 (7), unloaded at his pleasure in each and every round. He finally put Cintron on his back with a right hand and two left hooks. It wasn't long after that the bout was halted. Cintron falls to 10-1 (3).

In another eight that ended early, Przemyslaw Majewski (11st 3lbs), Radom, Poland but stationed in Atlantic City, continued unbeaten at 10-0 (7) by beating up on James Lubash (11st 3lbs), Pittsburgh, winning by stoppage at 1-16 of round seven.

Majewski was in command

throughout, dropping a weakened Lubash in the sixth and again in the seventh. Two jabs later, it was stopped.

Lubash is now 13-2 (6).

A scheduled four finished off the introductory bouts as

Patrick Farrell (14st), Jersey City, New Jersey, treated his underscoring fans to a one-round stoppage of inept Doug Bowling (same weight), Wooster, Ohio.

Even matchmaker J Russell Peltz does what has to be done, and he admitted to me just before the bout started that it wasn't going past one. Farrell, now 2-0 (2), registered two knockdowns of the bewildered visitor before the merciful halt at 1-06. Bowling drops to 0-2.

Promoter – Main Events (Kathy Duva). Television – Independently packaged by the promoter. Venue – The Prudential Center.

OUMA FIGHTS THE SAME BUT HIS SHOTS LACK ANY INTENSITY