

Ormond Defeats Suarez, moves to 5-0

By Declan O'Kelly

DUBLIN lightweight Steve Ormond (5-0, 1 KO) beat Puerto Rican Israel Suarez (1-2) by unanimous decision in a six round fight outdoors at Plattduetsche Park Restaurant, Franklin Square, Long Island on Saturday afternoon.

Ormond, who weighed in at 134 pounds, started out tentatively as it turned out that he was not expecting his opponent to be a southpaw.

In a close opening round, the busier Ormond took the fight to Suarez, whose long reach and guile proved difficult for the Dubliner to penetrate.

Nonetheless, Ormond pressurized Suarez onto the ropes and the more meaningful exchanges seemed to go his way, even if a couple of right hand body shots from Suarez did find their mark.

The second stanza saw a lot of defensive movement from Suarez, but Ormond was beginning to impose himself on proceedings in a round that ebbed and flowed.

However, with 15 seconds left Ormond landed a big left hook and made a strong finish that edged the round in his favor.

In the third, Ormond's conditioning and strength started to show and he began to wear down his opponent. Two sharp left hooks during this round highlighted the Irishman's upper hand in this stanza.

Suarez' output diminished rapidly, and he had the weary look of a fighter who wanted to stay out of trouble as much as anything else, though he still proved an elusive target and his right hand to the body was still scoring sporadically.

The later rounds saw Ormond dominate the

Trainer Pete Brodsky and Steve Ormond after the Dubliner's victory on Saturday.

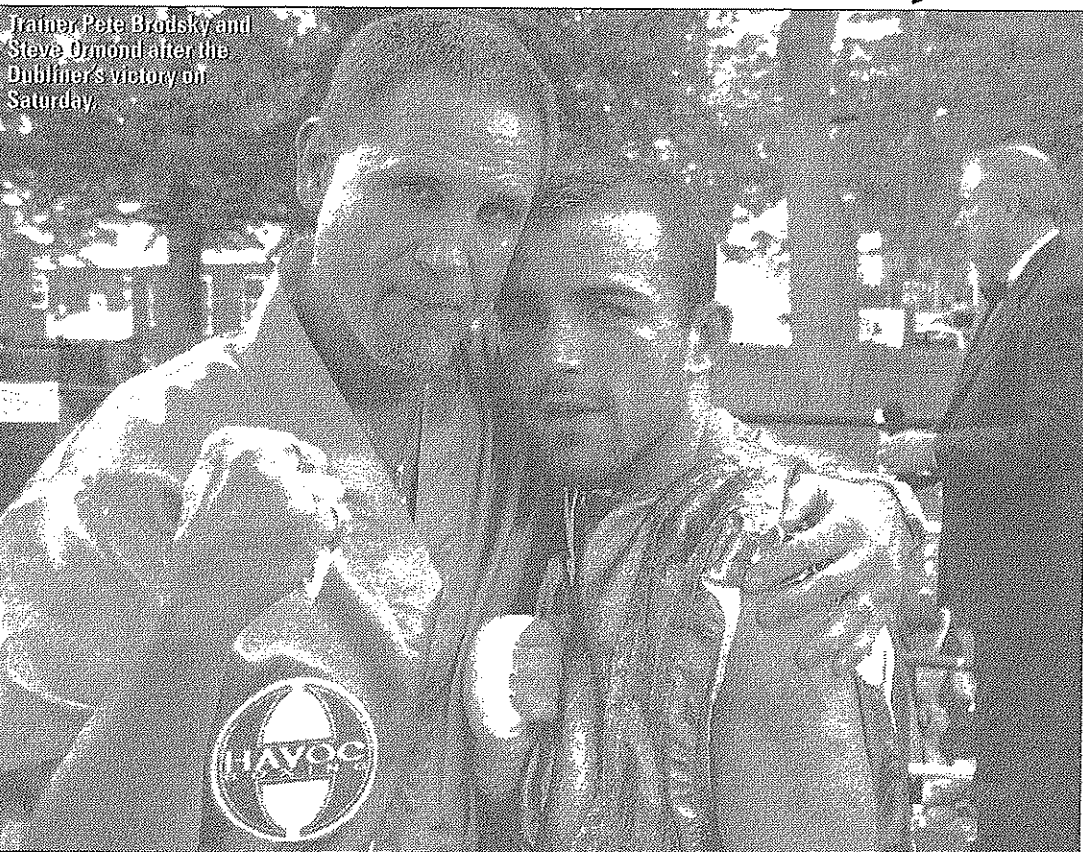


Photo by Declan O'Kelly

exchanges and do most of the fighting. While it may not have been his most explosive performance, Ormond did more than enough over the second half of the fight to leave the result in no doubt.

When the final bell rang all three judges found in Ormond's favor. Judge Carlos Ortiz scored it 60-54, while judges Tony Paolillo and Luis Rivera scored it 58-56.

"I thought he was a rightie but he was a southie and he was a tough guy. I hurt him in the body and knew he was gone but I couldn't get in," said Ormond after the fight.

"He was like a good amateur fighter; he would make you miss and hold you and turn you. I am happy with the win but not happy with the fight but that is the way it goes, you learn from these fights."

Ormond will not stay idle for too long and will have one more fight before the summer is out. Then he will head home for short break.

"I might have another fight in four or five weeks

and then home for a few weeks and then back again," said the Clondalkin native.

Trainer Pete Brodsky, while paying tribute to the slickness and skill of Suarez, felt his man was the deserved winner.

"Did I think the right score was 60-54? No disrespect, yes. I don't think he won a round because you can't win a round going backwards if you are not fighting going backwards," said Brodsky.

"Do I think Stevie could fight a leftie a lot better than he did, yes I thought he stayed in front too long. But Steve is obsessed to win and trying to impress everybody. He has great talent, and as soon as he can relax and feel at home he is going to show what a good fighter he is."

"I think, like any other man, he is fighting for survival, sometimes when you try that hard you try too hard and if you load up on every punch you can't do what you want to do. But if you take a step back and see what is going on, and he can do it in the gym, in

one or two more fights you will see him relax, and then you will see a very talented guy."

Also featured on the card was super middleweight Brian Hart from Woodside (1-1) who defeated Fasika Bezabeh by TKO in the second round of their fight.

Hart, who traces his Irish roots to Belfast, started out fast and his overhand right landed flush almost at will. Bezabeh was not offering too much in reply and Hart dominated the first round.

The second stanza was more dominance from the well-supported Hart, and a left hook to the head had Bezabeh in all kinds of trouble on the ropes. A follow up flurry of unanswered punches from Hart was enough to convince referee Wayne Kelly to step in and call a halt to proceedings.

"It went very well, I just tried to get my jab going, I was leading

with my hook sometimes and I was nailing him with my right hand and it seemed to work for me pretty well tonight," said Hart afterwards. "My left hook is my money punch and that set up everything else."

Hart, who is heading for a month long trip to Ireland and Europe, hopes to be back in the ring in early October.

Opportunity knocks for two Irish fighters this weekend when Oisín Fagan (23-6) and Eddie Hyland (12-1) fight for

the vacant super featherweight IBF international title at the National Basketball Arena in Tallaght on Saturday.

The winner of the fight will catapult right up the world rankings and holding this title could open up the chance of big fights down the line.

Headlining the card is Paul Hyland (16-0), who will fight Abdu Tebazalwa (12-5) for the vacant IBF International featherweight title.

An Irish amateur team fought an exhibition in Hempstead, Long Island last Saturday at Kennedy Memorial Park against Long Island fighters in an event organized by the Long Island Amateur Boxing Championships and Charities, Inc.

Middleweight Andy Lee (18-1) could be back in the ring in mid-August in Indiana. More updates on the Limerick middleweight next week.

Finally, John Duddy (26-1) will appear at Citi Bar in Manhattan Wednesday night for a meet and greet with Vito Antuofermo, Mitch Green, and Iran Barkley.

The Derry middleweight is still looking at options for his rebound fight since losing to Billy Lyell in April.

Admission is \$20. Call Citi bar at 212-772-1734 for more information.

GAA Shorts

By Cathal Dervan

GALWAY full-back Shane Kavanagh has been ruled out of action for at least six weeks after he picked up a hand injury in Saturday's impressive win over Cork in the All-Ireland SFC qualifiers. The Kinvara defender will now undergo surgery that will keep him out of Sunday's All-Ireland qualifier against Waterford...

MEATH will host Roscommon in the third round of the All-Ireland qualifiers in Navan this Saturday night at 7 p.m., while Galway will play Donegal in the fourth round in Sligo at 5 p.m. Kildare and Wicklow will also play on Saturday evening in Portlaoise while Kerry will take on Antrim in Tullamore on Sunday...

ROSS Carr wants to carry on as manager of the Down footballers despite his team's defeat

to Wicklow in the All-Ireland qualifiers last weekend. "I love this job — I love the county — I love everything to do with Down," said Carr...

DUBLIN will play Limerick and Galway will meet Waterford in the All-Ireland hurling quarter-finals on a double header bill at Semple Stadium this Sunday. The relegation playoffs will see Antrim take on Offaly at Parnell Park and Wexford face Clare in Portlaoise, both on Saturday...

JACK Kennedy has quit the Waterford squad ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland quarterfinal against Galway after he was substituted eight minutes before halftime in the Munster final defeat to Tipperary. Waterford corner-back Noel Connors is an injury doubt for the Galway game...

DUBLIN boss Pat Gilroy has refused to comment

on speculation in the media that star forward Mark Vaughan has been ruled out of inter-county action for the rest of the season and he struggles to overcome a back injury...

DEFENDER Brian Hogan has returned to training with the Kilkenny hurling squad after a 10-week absence with a collar bone injury. Full-back Noel Hickey is also back in the thick of it after his knee injury...

RONAN Fallon should be fit for Dublin's All-Ireland hurling quarter-final against Limerick, but teenager Liam Rushe is likely to miss out with an ankle injury picked up in training...

MEATH midfielder Mark Ward has rubbished claims that he has quit the county squad ahead of Saturday night's All-Ireland SFC qualifier against Roscommon in Navan.

Hurling Playoffs to Proceed

By Cathal Dervan

THE GAA are to press ahead with controversial relegation playoffs in the All-Ireland hurling championships despite protests from Wexford and Antrim.

Christy Ring Cup winners Carlow have been promised a place

in next year's championship, so Wexford, Antrim, Offaly and Clare must play off to see who drops down.

Antrim are adamant that they were promised a minimum three-year stint in the Leinster hurling championship and have protested at the playoffs which begin this weekend

when they play Offaly.

And Wexford boss Colm Bonnar has also slammed the proposals. Bonnar blasted, "I can't understand why they're trying to relegate one of the teams. Going down to the Christy Ring Cup could set hurling in this county back years. It's a joke."