

Hawaiian Punch drops Mexican

Written by Administrator
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Brian Viloria jumps as he celebrates his victory over Mexican Julio Cesar Miranda. (AP photo)

HONOLULU — Fil-Am Brian Viloria won a unanimous decision over Mexico's Julio Cesar Miranda Saturday night to capture the World Boxing Organization (WBO) flyweight

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championship.

The Hawaiian Punch jumped and pumped his fist in the air when he was announced the new world champion.

The former Olympian was in tears as his father gave him a bearhug and proudly lifted his son in the air as the crowd roared.

The 30-year-old Vilorio controlled the fight from the start, flooring Miranda in the opening minutes and landing body blow after body blow throughout the fight.

"I started off quick and I think Miranda got caught by surprise. But like a champion he came back," Vilorio said.

"I give him a lot of credit. He fought his heart out and I also fought my heart out because I really wanted this."

Vilorio, who grew up about a half-hour west of Honolulu in a blue-collar, former sugar-plantation town of Waipahu, was badly bloodied but walked away with the belt.

Judges Robert Hoyle (98-91), Ruben Garcia (96-93) and Tamotsu Tomihara (97-93) favored Vilorio (29-3, 16 KOs), who claimed his first title at 112 pounds.

He previously held the International Boxing Federation (IBF) and World Boxing Council (WBC) light flyweight titles at 108 pounds.

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The 31-year-old Miranda (28-4, 16 KOs) was making his fourth title defense since he beat Richie Mepranum to win the title in June 2010.

The Mexican had won his last five fights by knockout with none of the contests going beyond eight rounds.

His last fight was a fourth-round technical knockout (TKO) over Arden Diale in February.

Miranda struggled to make 112 pounds, taking a couple hours to shed two pounds at the weigh-in last Friday in Waikiki.

He said the long flight and having to cut weight affected him.

“It was a tough fight. Very difficult,” Miranda said.

When asked if he was surprised by the judges’ scorecards, Miranda said, “I would love a rematch.”

With the hometown crowd chanting “Brian! Brian!” Viloría hit Miranda with a hard right to the body in the opening round, sending the Mexican to his knees.

With Viloría’s corner yelling, “Body shot. Body shot,” Viloría landed several left hooks during the fight, while dancing away from several attacks and keeping Miranda’s power at bay.

Miranda did land a jarring left to Viloría’s head in the fourth that seemed to momentarily take the steam out of Viloría.

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The Mexican opened up a big cut over Viloría's right eye in the eighth round.

Viloría wiped his brow and licked the blood with a smile at the end of the round.

With Miranda switching stances, Viloría hit him with a straight right to the head that sent the Mexican sprawling into the ropes in the seventh.

Miranda picked up the punching, but never got Viloría in trouble.

With Miranda on the attack, a bloodied Viloría stayed away in the final seconds and dropped to his knees when the final bell sounded, raising his arms in the air.

Viloría returned to the ring for the first time since knocking out Liempetch Sor Veerapol in the seventh round in November.

Viloría last held the IBF light flyweight title, but lost it to Columbia's Carlos Tamara in January 2010.

"This is something I've been wanting since last year when I lost the world title. I wanted to get back on the horse again and I did that tonight," Viloría said.