



## **GERVONTA DAVIS STOPS RYAN GARCIA WITH BODY SHOT IN ROUND SEVEN OF PAY-PER-VIEW MEGA-FIGHT SATURDAY NIGHT FROM T-MOBILE ARENA IN LAS VEGAS**

***David Morrell Jr. Defends Super Middleweight Title with  
First-Round Knockout in Co-Main Event of  
SHOWTIME PPV® Production***

***Bektemir Melikuziev and Gabriel Rosado Pick Up Victories In  
Pay-Per-View Undercard Bouts***

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**LAS VEGAS – April 22, 2023** – In a battle of undefeated superstars in the primes of their careers, **Gervonta “Tank” Davis** stopped **“King” Ryan Garcia** with a fierce body shot in round seven of their lightweight showdown that headlined a SHOWTIME PPV production Saturday night from T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas in an event presented by Premier Boxing Champions.

“Everything about this was exciting,” said Davis. “I was excited to be a part of this event. I remember coming up in the Golden Gloves and seeing Floyd Mayweather fight at MGM Grand. It was crazy. I actually just saw Rihanna perform at the Super Bowl, and I thought, ‘that’s going to be me one day.’ And we’re here. The reality definitely matches the dream. But the job is never done until I retire, so I’m going to keep my head down, stay humble and continue to work.”

“I’m good,” said Garcia. “‘Tank’ is a great fighter. I take my hat off to him. I know we talked a lot of trash leading into the fight, but he knows what it is. It’s all love at the end of the day. I was honored to be in the ring with a great fighter and I respect him a lot. You know how the business goes. But I want to say to ‘Tank’, you’re a good man.”

After years of build-up, two of boxing's most exciting and popular fighters went toe-to-toe in front of a sold-out crowd of 20,842, with the three-time, five-division champion Davis (29-0, 27 KOs) emerging victorious after landing a powerful straight left hand to the body that caused a delayed reaction from Garcia (23-1, 19 KOs) and eventually saw him take a knee.

"I didn't think that body shot would end it, but I saw his facial expression and that's what made me take it to him," said Davis. "It was a good shot, for sure. I thought he was going to get up but I like to play mind games, so when he was looking at me, I was looking at him trying to tell him, 'get up!' And he just shook his head, no."

"He just caught me with a good shot," said Garcia. "I don't want to make any excuses in here. He caught me with a good shot and I just couldn't recover and that's it. He caught me with a good body shot, snuck under me and caught me good. I couldn't breathe. I was going to get back up, but I just couldn't get up."

As referee Thomas Taylor conducted his count, Garcia attempted to rise to his feet but was in visible pain and was counted out at 1:44 in the round. It marked four consecutive knockouts for Davis, who owns the WBA Lightweight Title in addition to past conquests at super featherweight and super lightweight.

Following a cautious first round, it was Garcia who pushed the envelope first, blitzing Davis early in round two as he sought to land his signature power left hook. However, Davis quickly turned the tide, ducking under a left hook and returning fire with a powerful left hook of his own that put Garcia down. Although Garcia rose to his feet, he rarely was as aggressive following the first knockdown.

"The first knockdown was just him not knowing his placement," said Davis. "I knew that I was the smaller guy, and my coach was telling me in camp that he's going to come up with his head up, so just shoot over the top."

"I think I should have pressured him a little harder near the ropes," said Garcia. "I was giving him a little bit too much respect and I think that was my downfall. I think I gave him a little too much respect in the ring."

The body shots that eventually ended the bout were an important tool for Davis, who according to CompuBox landed 18 punches to the body throughout the fight. Both fighters landed an impressive percentage of power punches, with Davis connecting on 48% and Garcia at 42%. At the time of the stoppage, Davis led on all three cards, with tallies of 59-55, 59-56 and 58-56, and declared himself the new face of the sport.

"I'm definitely the face of boxing," said Davis. "Absolutely!"

In the co-main event, WBA Super Middleweight Champion **David Morrell Jr.** (9-0, 8 KOs) delivered a dominant first-round knockout over Olympic Bronze Medalist **Yamaguchi Falcao** (24-2-1, 10 KOs) to retain his title.

"I'm so excited," said Morrell. "This was a big moment and a big night for me, so a knockout in the first round is incredible. I think this is the best moment of my career tonight. It was a big event and I had a good fighter in front of me."

The 25-year-old Cuban phenom made quick work of the usually durable Falcao, who had never been stopped and hadn't been knocked down since 2018. After wobbling him early, Morrell scored his first knockdown with a right hook that forced Falcao to hold onto the ropes, prompting referee Celestino Ruiz to rule the knockdown.

While Falcao was able to rise to his feet, Morrell sensed his moment and delivered an even more powerful right hook that sent Falcao crashing to the mat, with the referee immediately waiving the count 2:22 into the round.

As he did in the pre-fight build up, Morrell continued to call for an intriguing super middleweight clash against unbeaten two-time super middleweight champion David "The Mexican Monster" Benavidez. The potential showdown between the 26-year-old Benavidez and Morrell would pit two of the division's top contenders and exciting young action-fighters against each other in a matchup of unbeatens.

"David Benavidez is next," said Morrell. "Where is he? I want to fight Benavidez. He's next, 100%. I don't want any other guys at 168-pounds. Just Benavidez. I respect Benavidez and his team, but inside the ring, I don't respect anything."

Additional action on the pay-per-view saw super middleweight contender **Bektemir Melikuziev** (12-1, 9 KOs) avenge the only loss of his career as he battered veteran **Gabriel Rosado** (26-17-1, 15 KOs) on his way to a unanimous decision victory. Melikuziev cruised on the judges' cards, winning by the tally of 99-91 three times.

"In the first fight against Rosado, I underestimated my opponent," said Melikuziev. "This time, we put the work in during camp. We went through everything. This time, the goal was to showcase my skills, box and punish him as much as possible too."

In their first meeting in 2021, Rosado stopped the then unbeaten Melikuziev in his tracks with a sensational one-punch KO. In the rematch, Melikuziev was able to avoid a repeat misstep and controlled the bout throughout, out landing Rosado in every round.

"I tried, but I was a step behind," said Rosado. "'Father Time', eighteen years as a pro, but I was game. I walked to him, I boxed him, I tried everything but I was a step too slow. " was a split-second behind. He's fresh, he's young and I'm happy for him. I knocked him out bad in the first fight and he made adjustments."

Melikuziev appeared to have his opponent hurt in round five when a straight left wobbled Rosado and nearly sent him into the ropes. Rosado had more success in the second half of the fight, but took too much punishment on his way to attempting to close the distance.

The 27-year-old from Uzbekistan held a wide margin on power punches landed (129-31) and held Rosado to just a 17% connect rate. After the fight, Melikuziev relished in making up for his lone defeat, while Rosado stated his intentions on retiring after a long career.

"This was the fight that I wanted," said Melikuziev. "This is the fight that I felt like I made a mistake in the first one, and I had this opportunity for revenge on such a big card. It's a pleasure for me."

"I don't make any excuses," said Rosado. "I was ready. Now it's time to wrap it up and give my knowledge to younger fighters with management and training. I want to share my experience with them, and maybe do some more commentating."

In the pay-per-view opener, exciting middleweight **Elijah Garcia** (15-0, 12 KOs) grinded out a unanimous decision victory over **Kevin Salgado** (15-2-1, 10 KOs) after 10 rounds of action. The 19-year-old Garcia won by scores of 95-94 and 97-92 twice.

"It feels great to get this win on a big stage," said Garcia. "I feel like I'm getting better with each fight. I know I have a long way to go, but I like where I'm at. I'm hoping to get right back in the ring soon."

"I felt like I won," said a frustrated Salgado post-fight. "By a small margin, but I should have won."

Mexico's Salgado got off to a strong start in the first three rounds, breaking through Garcia's defense and busting Garcia's nose to take control of the early action. Late in round five, Garcia started to find spots for his power shots and was stronger defensively, holding Salgado below a 40% connect rate for each of the remaining rounds after Salgado hit that mark in each of the first three.

"I was standing a little too still trying to fight on the inside," said Garcia. "Salgado is a tough opponent. He was real tough, real strong and I just had to move and box a little bit. Other than that, it was a good, hard 10 rounds. I give my opponent 100 percent props."

In round six, Garcia connected on a powerful straight left hand that pushed Salgado back and appeared to potentially hurt him before he was saved by the bell. Salgado returned in round seven to target Garcia's body, but was ultimately deducted a point by referee Robert Hoyle after multiple warnings earlier in the fight.

"I'm upset because I felt like this was a really good fight," said Salgado. "The referee kept getting in my way. I got a point deducted from me but didn't say anything when Garcia hit me in the back of the head. It felt like swimming against the current. Mexicans always come to fight against everyone and everything: The judges, the opponent, the refs, the home fans. None of that got in my way to keep me from moving forward."

The punch stats reflected Salgado's early lead as he held an 81-70 advantage in power punches landed through six rounds, with the final tally ending nearly even (139-138 for Salgado). Overall, Garcia out-landed Salgado in five of the last six rounds to clinch the victory and continue to build into his contender status at a young age.

"I just have to continue getting better in the gym every single day," said Garcia. "That's what it's about. I learned a lot today. It was my first time going past six rounds and I got the full 10. Fights like this will get me closer to a world title."

Prior to the telecast, action streaming live on the [SHOWTIME SPORTS YouTube channel](#) and [SHOWTIME Boxing® Facebook page](#) was topped by rising middleweight contender **Fiodor Czerkaszyn** (22-0, 14 KOs) dominating **Elias Espadas** (22-6, 15 KOs) on his way [to a ninth-round TKO](#). Landing big power shots throughout the action, Czerkaszyn wore Espadas down and eventually forced referee Mike Ortega to jump in and stop the fight 2:07 into the ninth-round.

The streaming presentation also saw sensational super welterweight prospect **Vito Mielnicki Jr.** (15-1, 10 KOs) [score a vicious fourth-round knockout](#) over **Jose Charles** (20-4-1, 12 KOs). After putting Charles on the canvas twice in round three, Mielnicki landed a perfect counter right early in round four that sent Charles crashing to the mat and prompted referee Robert Hoyle to wave off the action 33 seconds into the frame.

The event was promoted by GTD Promotions, TGB Promotions and Golden Boy Promotions.

Davis vs. Garcia will replay on SHOWTIME on Saturday, April 29 at 9 p.m. ET/PT, immediately followed by *ALL ACCESS: DAVIS VS. GARCIA EPILOGUE*.

Veteran sportscaster **Brian Custer** hosted the SHOWTIME PPV telecast while versatile combat sports voice **Mauro Ranallo** handled blow-by-blow action alongside Hall of Fame analyst **Al Bernstein** and three-division world champion **Abner Mares**. Three Hall of Famers rounded out the telecast team – Emmy® award winning reporter **Jim Gray**, world-renowned ring announcer **Jimmy Lennon, Jr.**, and boxing historian **Steve Farhood** as unofficial scorer. The executive producer was four-time Emmy award winner **David Dinkins, Jr.** with **Bob Dunphy** directing. Sportscaster **Alejandro Luna** called the action in Spanish on Secondary Audio Programming (SAP) with former world champion and *SHOBOX: The New Generation*® commentator **Raúl “El Diamante” Marquez** serving as the expert analyst.

The SHOWTIME PPV COUNTDOWN show was hosted by award-winning *MORNING KOMBAT* live digital talk show co-host **Brian Campbell**, who also serves as an analyst alongside Marquez on *SHOBOX*, renowned combat sports journalist **Ariel Helwani** and accomplished sports broadcaster **Kate Abdo**.

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