



In most sports, defense wins championships.

Tonight Fernando Vargas's lack of defense cost him a shot at a championship as well as his fight with "Sugar" Shane Mosely.

The lack of defense could have cost Vargas his sight as well. In a very gruesome scene, referee Joe Cortez finally stopped the bout in the 10th round due to Fernando's eye being completely shut and swollen to the size of a baseball, ending what was a very competitive and action packed fight before a packed house of 9,000 fans at The Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino.

Both fighters came to fight. There wasn't a whole lot of stalling during the 10 rounds. Shane proved his speed is still among the elite in the sport. He landed his right hand at will and Fernando's swelling started right away in the 2nd round, culminating in the 10th round when the fight was stopped, and Vargas completely unable to see out of that left eye.

Every round was close and hard to score. At the time of the stoppage, all three judges had it scored 86-85 on their cards, with two of the three judges having Mosely winning.

Shane was landing more due to his speed but it was offset by the bigger shots of Vargas. The quickness of Mosley's hands proved to be the difference as he went to work on the eye. As always, Vargas showed the heart of a lion, still throwing and landing good shots, and begging the doctor to let him continue from the 6th round on. With Vargas nearly blinded, the 9th was likely the best round of the fight, and the crowd roared it's approval when he was allowed to come back out for the 10th. However, a little over a minute into that round, the referee had seen

enough.

Could Vargas have continued? Probably, and he definitely wanted to. But the stoppage was the right call. The sight of the eye was hurting me as I looked on in amazement. The whole side of his head was swollen and the eye was closed completely shut; yet Vargas loudly protested the stoppage. That's what makes boxers a different breed.

Both guys were their classy selves after the fight. Mosley again said he knew it was going to be a war and that Vargas is a tough guy. Fernando gave credit where credit was due.

What is next for both fighters? For Mosely, he has two choices. Stay at 154 and possibly fight a guy like Ike Quartey or maybe take another run at a currently downtrodden Vernon Forrest, who beat Shane twice. A bout with Delahoya at 154 seems less likely now that Mosely is fighting for him. At 147 the options are Antonio Margarito, and ultimately Floyd Mayweather. However, Floyd appears poised to fight Zab Judah and then Delahoya, and who knows where the 34 year old Mosely will be when he dust settles from that sequence of fights.

Vargas on the other hand, has a much bigger decision to make. Does he hang up the gloves? He has been thru some major wars with a lot of punishment adding up. Age wise he is still young enough, but I don't know if his body can take much more. He is one of the toughest guys I have seen fight and the more I see him, the more I respect him. I just don't want to see him get beat up anymore.

What was a gutty performance in a great fight might have ended a very solid career.