



TEOFIMO LOPEZ EDGES ROLLY ROMERO BY DECISION TO CAPTURE WBA WELTERWEIGHT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN THRILLING MAIN EVENT OF PBC PAY-PER-VIEW EVENT AVAILABLE ON DAZN & PRIME VIDEO SATURDAY NIGHT FROM T-MOBILE ARENA IN LAS VEGAS

*Yoenli Hernandez, Gary Antonio Russell & Carlos Utria
Score Victories in PPV Undercard Bouts*

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Premier Boxing Champions

LAS VEGAS – August 22, 2026 – Teofimo “The Takeover” Lopez became a three-division world champion with a narrow majority decision over two-division champion **Rolly Romero** to earn the WBA Welterweight World Championship Saturday night in the main event of a PBC Pay-Per-View event available on DAZN and Prime Video from T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas.

After the fight, Romero expressed his disagreement with the decision, while Lopez shared an inspirational message about his return from defeat to world champion.

"I got hit with two punches the whole fight that barely grazed me," said Romero. "I was never in any trouble. When I heard 114-114 I knew it was a robbery."

"If you lost and you come back, then you never lost, because you're a winner," said Lopez. "I'm a true example of what winning is. It's about not giving up."

Round five featured the most dramatic moment of the fight, as Romero opened up a significant cut over Lopez's right eye, and hurt him with a series of punches that included a left hook and a looping right hand. A bloodied Lopez showed impressive boxing IQ to survive the ensuing onslaught from Romero, and was able to make it to the next round.

"I expected something similar to this, but more combinations from Rolly," said Lopez. "He was staying composed and listening to his corner. We had to push the fight. He hit me with a shot that woke me up. I told him he has to do better than that. I was just buzzed. I got right back to it."

I stayed cool, calm and collected. We have the ring experience. That's what's helped me throughout my journey."

From there, it was Lopez's speed and boxing ability that took over, as he consistently used his footwork to flummox Romero's offense. The strategy kept Romero from ever putting together a serious offensive charge, which bore out in the CompuBox stats as he failed to land double digit punches in all but the fifth round. Overall, Lopez enjoyed a 124 to 73 edge in punches and landed a career-high 62 jabs to keep Romero at bay.

Romero looked to have gained some of his momentum back in the waning seconds of round 11 when he knocked Lopez off balance again with a left hook heading into the final frame. After another highly-competitive round, the judges scored the fight 114-114, 115-113 and 116-112.

"I just had to stay busy and keep my range against a strong puncher," said Lopez. "I'm just looking forward to the next thing."

In the co-main event, undefeated top middleweight **Yoenli Hernandez** (11-0, 9 KOs) kept his perfect record intact with a majority decision over Argentina's **Francisco Daniel Veron** (17-2-1, 10 KOs), controlling the 10-round affair and earning the nod by scores 98-92 and 99-91, overruling a 95-95 card.

"It was a very interesting fight," said Hernandez. "It was war, and you could see which of the two was better prepared physically."

Ranked in the top two by the WBA, WBC and WBO, Hernandez showed his potential as a future world champion once again, displaying a combination of savvy boxing and vicious power-punching to pile up rounds against the determined Veron. While Veron held an edge in punches thrown (809-649), Hernandez easily outpaced him in power punches landed (122-45) and overall connected with an impressive 31% of his shots.

"I liked that Verón was the type of fighter who applied pressure," said Hernandez. "That's exactly what I was looking for in an opponent. It was really good for me to face a fighter like that."

Hernandez was able to recover from his shakiest moment in the fight, which occurred late in round five when he was caught off-balance by a shot and was forced to retreat to the ropes. Veron was unable to take advantage of the opening, and was too often unable to break through Hernandez's high guard.

"I was never going to stand still in front of him," said Veron. "I had him rocked a few times, but he knew how to withstand it. I don't know what I was missing. I caught him off balance with a hook that landed clean, but he responded very quickly. That would have dropped anyone at 154 pounds."

"This was a fight that gave me valuable experience," said Hernandez. "I got the victory, and now I'm waiting for my big opportunity."

The pay-per-view also saw top contender **Gary Antonio Russell** (22-1, 13 KOs) punctuate a dominating performance with a 12th-round knockdown to win the Interim WBA Super Bantamweight Title over **Victor Santillan** via unanimous decision (118-109, 118-108 twice).

"He said that I was predictable, but we saw tonight that my skillset was better," said Russell. "He's a tough opponent but we stuck to the game plan."

"I lost fair and square," said Santillan. "But I thought the fight was going to be different. I wanted to work more to Russell's body with my hands held higher."

In a battle of southpaws, the fight was contested largely on the inside, with Russell's speed advantage helping him rack up double the power punches landed of his opponent (170-85). The defending champion was never able to get his offense going, and was unable to land more than 13 shots in any round and was held below 10 landed in eight rounds.

Santillan attempted to change the tide by focusing on the body attack, but Russell showed no ill effects from the shots and continued to outwork and out land the champion. For Russell, he becomes the third member of his family to reach champion status, following in the footsteps of his brothers Gary Jr. (former WBC Featherweight World Champion) and Gary Antuanne (reigning WBA Super Lightweight World Champion).

"It feels really good. The only thing that's missing is my pops," said Russell, referencing his late father Gary Sr. "Outside of that, it feels wonderful. We want to keep collecting belts and keep the dynasty going."

In the opening seconds of round 12, well ahead on the cards, Russell got the best of yet another exchange on the inside, this time connecting with a right hook to the temple that put Santillan down. While Santillan was able to see the final bell, Russell had already done enough to walk away as the newest 122-pound champion.

"The last round I really wanted to take it to him," said Russell. "I felt like I had taken all the other rounds clear. I wanted to finish strong and give the fans what they came to see...We're gonna get back in the gym and see what the best move is for me. Hopefully it's another champion. There are a lot of great opponents at 122 pounds and we're looking to see them."

Opening up the pay-per-view, unbeaten super lightweight prospect **Carlos Utria** (15-0, 11 KOs) eked out a split-decision victory over 140-pound contender **Israel Mercado** (13-2-2, 7 KOs) in a spirited contest that saw one 96-94 score for Mercado overruled by scores of 97-93 and 96-94 for Utria.

"We'll keep working," said Utria. "I have a few things I need to fix. I think the travel took a toll on me, more than anything. I don't think I got enough rest; it was nothing but traveling."

"I thought I won the fight," said Mercado. "I've been here many times before. I've been on the downside of decisions like this. This fight meant a lot, but we keep moving forward."

The nip and tuck nature of the fight was reflected in the punch stats as they threw and landed a nearly identical amount of punches with Utria connecting on 152 of 593 shots to Mercado's 157 of 587 rate. In addition, Mercado landed 94 power punches to Utria's 93, with the two fighters never separated by more than nine punches landed in any of the first nine rounds.

"I had him buzzed with a couple shots," said Mercado. "I had him backpedaling. I out-jabbed him, threw better combinations and my defense was on point. I've never felt better after a fight."

The fight was highlighted by several high-octane rounds, especially in the back half of the fight. The final three rounds saw each fighter increase their activity as they looked to pull away on the scorecards, with the two fighters combining to throw 202 punches in the final round. In the end, Utria swept rounds six through nine in the eyes of two judges to put him in a position to edge the cards in the end.

Exchanged words after several back and forths in round 3, round 8 most active round of the fight with both landing clean shots

After the fight, the victorious Utria sent a message back to his native Colombia in light of the recent earthquake in his home country.

“Colombia, thank you for your support,” said Utria. “My team’s t- shirt was a tribute to my people. I wanted to bring them some joy after this terrible tragedy. Stay strong, Colombia!”

Prior to the pay-per-view, a three-fight PBC Prelims presentation streamed live on DAZN and Prime Video topped by rising middleweight star **Marco “El Tiburón” Romero** (15-0, 13 KOs) delivering vicious onslaught on his way to a first-round stoppage (2:33) of **Kahlil Mitchell** (6-2, 4 KOs).

The streaming action also featured sensational 19-year-old super welterweight prospect **Joseph Brown** (8-0, 5 KOs) cruising to a unanimous decision over **Alton Wiggins** (3-3-1) by the score of 60-54 according to all three judges, plus super lightweight prospect **Aldo Blancas** (3-0, 2 KOs) dropped **Ricky Mamone** (0-1-1) in round two on his way to a unanimous decision (40-35, 39-36 twice).

The event was promoted by TGB Promotions, in association with Takeover Promotions.

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