

Burton is a worthy winner

Darlington heavyweight keeps his boxing compact to see off gritty Egobi

SIMON EUAN-SMITH
RINGSIDE



TOOTING
November 18

DARLINGTON'S **Chris Burton** put up a compact display, rarely wasting a shot, and took a 59-56 verdict over **Franklin Egobi** (Wandsworth) in an interesting six-rounder at the Leisure Centre.

Egobi (16st 7lbs) looked aghast when referee Ken Curtis raised Burton's hand, but I felt the verdict was correct. Two pounds lighter, Burton's work looked altogether neater and sharper. Egobi came forward and threw a lot of clumping shots, but Burton was more accurate.

By the end of the fifth there was a swelling on Egobi's right cheek and although he got close in the last, trying to deny Burton room to move, the better work still came from the northerner.

The show began with a good-value four-rounder that saw Hartlepool's **Craig Denton** (11st 7lbs) prevail over Wandsworth's **Eder Kurti** (11st 7 1/2lbs), referee Curtis scoring 39-37.

Denton used the right tactics from the off, forever crowding Kurti and preventing him getting his punches off. Kurti did have success at the start of the second, when he stayed on the outside for a while and worked the jab, but otherwise it was close-quarter stuff – which suited Denton better. Kurti couldn't match Denton's workrate.

Leon Senior (11st 9lbs), Sydenham, outscored Polish-born **Michael Banbula** (Slough) over four rounds, referee Marcus McDonnell scoring 39-37.

Banbula (12st 11lb) didn't show the same commitment as in his shock win over Jack Morris last month. Then he came out strongly for the first, and

Photos: Charles Albert



PRECISE:
Burton
(right) relies on his greater accuracy to outpoint **Egobi**

never let his rival get control. This time he stood off, pawing from out of range with his left – and the smaller, nippier Senior quickly took charge, beating his man to the punch and getting away before Banbula could retaliate.

Banbula occasionally switched to southpaw, was warned for headwork in the second and incurred damage to the right eye. Senior always looked a move ahead and a right to the body shook

Banbula near the end of the third.

Byron Vincent (10st 6lbs) of Northampton beat Bermondsey's popular **Charlie Collins** (10st 13lbs) on a third-round corner retirement, Collins having sustained a badly cut right eye. It was scheduled for six-tws.

Vincent looked ahead anyway and the boos that greeted the verdict were uncalled for. Collins tried to get the southpaw jab going but tended to fall

short. Vincent was quick, elusive and on target.

Collins bled heavily from the nose by the end of the first, and was cut in the corner of the right eye in the third. Near the end of the session, a solid right counter sent Collins reeling and at the bell trainer James Cook called referee Curtis over and signalled the retirement.

Former solicitor **Laura Saperstein**, Tottenham (10st 2lbs), won her pro debut, clearly outscoring Bulgaria's **Borislava Goronova** (10st) over four-tws. Referee McDonnell scored it 40-37.

The visitor was game but outgunned. Saperstein simply had too much skill, variety and strength.

A solid combination at the start of the second had Goronova unsteady, but she regrouped and bravely tried to join battle. A low punch in the last had the Bulgarian in distress, but after a brief respite she stuck it out to the end.

GOOD START:
Saperstein
(right) beats **Goronova** on her paid debut



Shoulder scare doesn't deter Wild

LEEDS
November 15

DESPITE damaging his right shoulder in the opener, **Carl Wild** took his unbeaten record to nine with a clear 60-55 points victory over **Clint "The Body" Johnson** at Elland Road.

Johnson (12st 12 1/4lbs) was no pushover, but there was a third element in the six-tws before yet another full house on the Kevin Spratt-Mark Bateson promotion.

For the psychology of Wild's manager Glyn Rhodes played a big part in Wild continuing to hold the whip hand despite wrenching his shoulder in a clinch.

For Glyn's answer when Wild (13st 4 1/2lbs) said he was in trouble came out

quickly and calmly: "You've got another arm. Use your left now."

Glyn does not believe in encouraging his charges to feel sorry for themselves or putting negative thoughts in their minds.

Binman Wild was back at work the next morning after it had been verified the shoulder was not dislocated. His boss said: "If it's be difficult carrying the bin, you can drive the lorry."

Johnson's best round was the fifth, when he defended well and countered effectively. Throughout, he worked well inside. But Wild showed that despite his sore shoulder he was not short on stamina or belief and finished with a surge, pressing his opponent with an eight-shot combination in a hectic last.

Another unbeaten record was

preserved when Leeds middleweight **Danny Reynolds** (11st 7 1/4lbs) scored a comfortable 60-54 win over Greek battler **Rocky Muscus** (11st 8 1/2lbs).

Despite the wide margin this six-tws was lively with both blasting off at top speed. Reynolds had a swelling below his left eye in the middle rounds, but he picked up pace as the contest wore on.

Sutton-in-Ashfield-based Latvian **Sergei Rozhakmens** (9st 9lbs) had to retire at the end of the second of six-tws with a cut on the bottom lid of his left eye. It ended what was becoming a tasty fight with local star **Craig O'Neill** (9st 2 3/4lbs).

O'Neill started briskly with a stream of four head shots but Rozhakmens soon responded with a big right.

O'Neill's punching was remorseless and he clinically finished the opener with a flurry to the head.

Both opened the second at a tremendous pace, but O'Neill had the edge in power. No stitches were needed, and the damage to Sergei's eye was not stopping the functioning of the lid according to the Board doctor. The Latvian's corner made the right decision retiring their man.

The six-tws set-to between **Adil Anwar** (10st 2 3/4lbs) from Leeds and Blackburn's **Graeme (Dezzi) Higginson** (10st) could have gone either way in an absorbing battle but referee for the night Phil Edwards marked 58-56 for Higginson.

PETER KEELING

