

Josh Wagner wins unanimous decision in 10-round bout]

By Brian Lockhart

Orangeville boxer Josh Wagner won a unanimous decision in his Saturday night, February 25, fight at the CAA Centre in Brampton over Xhuljo Vrenozi.

The welterweight bout was scheduled for ten rounds and went the distance.

Wagner came to the ring with a 14-0 professional record.

His opponent, Vrenozi, is an Albania national who currently fights out of Peacenza Emilia Romagna, Italy. Vrenozi arrived in Brampton with an 18-5 record.

The first six rounds of the bout were fairly even as the fighters felt each other out, but Wagner was the clear winner in all rounds.

It was the seventh round where Wagner really started doing some damage, and Vrenozi began to look fatigued.

Wagner hammered Vrenozi in a corner in the eighth, and the Albanian dropped to his knee and took an eight-count.

A body shot in the ninth visibly stunned Vrenozi, and he staggered to the centre of the ring and again dropped to one knee. After a standing eight-count the fight continued.

Vrenozi lost his mouthpiece, then again. When that happens, the fight is stopped, the mouthpiece is cleaned, and the fight resumes. After the fourth time, the crowd was booing and heckling Vrenozi for the obvious stoppage so he could rest.

Wagner dominated the action for the remaining two rounds. He was given the unanimous decision by a large margin when the judges counts were tabulated.

"I won 100 to 87 from all three judges so I didn't lose a round and dropped him twice," Wagner said. "The game plan was to start slow then use my jab and jab the body often and slow him down because he's a mover.

"It got a little chippy in the fight. He was doing a lot of holding and headlocks. He got a point deducted for holding and that was well deserved. I'm happy with the performance ? it was good to go the full ten. Obviously I wanted the knock-out but I'm happy with the experience. It was a slow start, but I usually start a little slow and pick it up as I go, they get tired and I get stronger and stronger."

A ten-round bout is a gruelling experience for any fighter, but Wagner said he trains to go longer.

"I'm ready for 12 or 15 rounds. I'm a championship level fighter, I prepare well in camp so we're ready for 12 rounds."

Wagner is now ranked among the top 40 boxers in the world.

His next fight is already in the works, and he should be back at the CAA Centre at the end of April.