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Combat Zone 32 — The Rock

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TOM MOREAU OF TEAM VALOR WINS UNANIMOUS DECISION in COMBAT ZONE 32 MMA ACTION AT ROCKINGHAM PARK



by Lynn Snierston

SALEM, NH — Tom Moreau needed all of his considerable skills, the raucous support of the home crowd, and three full rounds to defeat Robert Conner of West Virginia by unanimous decision in

exciting mixed martial arts (MMA) action in the sold out Sports Club at Rockingham Park on Friday night.

Conner, who had not lost since 2007 and won his last four fights by submission, was a very late replacement in the Combat Zone 32 main event after Moreau's original opponent was scratched. But Conner, who wrestled for West Virginia University, gave Moreau a tough battle throughout the match and would not allow Moreau to execute any submissions in the last round.

"I had new gloves about 45 minutes before the fight and I was having trouble with my punches and strikes early on," said Moreau who hails from Derry, NH and runs Team Valor. "He's real strong. I knew how strong he was but he still caught me off guard at times. He made me work real hard. He's a very tough kid but I was able to work my way out of his submission attempts. I heard all of the support in the room for me and that definitely helped me win."

Connor said, "He was able to slam more punches on the ground and that was the difference."

Moreau, ranked 10th in the Northeast in the 170 pound division, improved his pro record to 6-1 while Conner slipped to 7-2-0.

In the co-main event, Brent Kinberger of Manchester, NH, lost his second straight contest to fall to 5-2-0 after Chad Holderness of Boulder, Co improved his record to 8-2-0 when the judges declared him the winner by unanimous decision.

Kinberger, from the Militech Fighting System in Hooksett, NH, used a combination of skill, determination, and patience to win the second round after Holderness, representing Wai Kru Studio, had been the better fighter in the opening stanza. In the final round, Holderness was rocked by an unintentional low blow to the groin and was clearly still in pain when he was able to resume the action. But neither of 170-pounders was unable to land any dramatic hits in round three.

"I thought that Brent won the fight," said Ed Carr, the owner of the NH Militech franchise. "He had more controls, more reversals, and better positions in the second and third rounds. He was better at basic wrestling and Jiu-Jitsu. We always tell our guys not to leave it up to the judges. But it was a good fight and Holderness is a very good fighter. We have a lot of respect for him."

Kinberger, 37, was giving his opponent a 14 year age advantage in the match.

The amateurs started the night with seven fights of three rounds each and in the first, Logan Moore (0-2-0) of Kingston, NH and Team Tuff and George Lynch (2-0-0) of Roslindale, Ma and Connors MMA lasted the distance before Lynch, who won the trophy for best of the amateurs, was declared the winner by unanimous decision in the 150-lb. class. The next fight for 155-pounders was more spirited as Peter Wellman (1-0-0) of Salem, Ma and Team DWMMA got the crowd into it when he took control early on and bloodied Kris Kloets (0-1-0) of Gilford, NH and Lakes Region Valley Tudo with repeated strikes to the face and head before the referee stopped the action in 2:12 of the first round and Wellman notched the TKO in his debut.

Next up two local amateurs battling in the 145 pound class, John Santos (2-3-0) of Derry and Team Fury and Jesse Menize (0-2-0) also of Derry but the Premier Fight Team, gave the crowd what it came to see with an intense battle through 2:21 of the first round. That's when the referee called the action and gave Santos the TKO and his second career win in what was his best effort in the cage to date.

It then took only :27 of the first round between Wayne Alquist (1-1-0) of Meredith, NH and Lakes Region Valley Tudo and Keith Nelson (0-2-0) of Marietta, NY and Team Bombsquad before the referee deemed Nelson had enough of the contest for 170-pounder and stopped the fight.

Rockingham remained the lucky locale for Taylor Trahan (3-3-0) of Lisbon, NH and Team Kaze, who notched the third straight of his three career wins here and evened his record in the next battle in the 145 pound class. Trahan, only 18 years old, submitted Jason Earl (1-2-0) of Marietta, NY and Team Bomb Squad by arm bar in 1:18 of round 2.

Another Team Fury Fighter, Lamont Milton (3-0-0) of Lynn, Ma, and Adam Toussaint (3-3-0) of Berwick, Me and Team Havoc brought the crowd to its feet and got the room rocking as they battled evenly in the best fight on the card to that point. The well matched 145-pound amateurs displayed their mixed martial arts skills and showed plenty of heart and toughness before Toussaint took the upper hand in round three and got Milton on the ground and reigned down strikes. But Milton was able to break the hold and survive until the bell. Then the judges awarded Milton the win by unanimous decision so he remained undefeated, but those in the crowd who offered a chorus of boos did not agree.

In the highly anticipated rematch between Peter San Antonio (2-1-0) of North Andover, MA and Pro Star MMA and David Spero (1-2-0) of Atkinson, NH and Premier Fight Team, who thrilled the room in an intensely fierce and brutal battle back on August 21st, it took another full three rounds to reach the conclusion. But this time it was San Antonio who was declared the victor by split decision in the 145 pound division.

After intermission the pros took over for the next seven bouts of five minute rounds and Keaton “Thunder” Van Thof (0-2-0), of Salem and Team Tuf, didn’t have time to garner the support of his hometown crowd as the referee stopped the fight for 170-pounders in only 1:26 of the first round and gave Mike Winters (1-0-0) of Cortland, NY and Team Bombsquad his first win as a pro by TKO.

Then it was the heavyweights fighting at 205 pounds and Jamie Fellows (0-1-0) of Meredith, NH and Lakes Region Valley Tudo was bleeding profusely from his nose and face after two full rounds with Jesse McElligott (1-0-0) from West Roxbury, MA and Connors MMA. But after both the ring doctor and the referee looked at him in his corner, he answered the bell for the third round. Fellows, with his face and torso covered in blood, showed a lot of grit and hung in for almost the full third round until the referee deemed he had taken enough punishment at the 4:26 mark.

Next up 155-pound pros from two of the top studios in the Granite State, the Militech Fighting System and Gracie Barra NH, got the crowd up and screaming at the early action. But it took only 1:36 of the first round before Steve Butler (1-3-0) of Billerica, MA and Gracie Barra forced John Levasseur (1-1-0) of Hooksett, NH and Militech to tap out by rear naked choke hold. Butler had the benefit of Dennis Olson, currently the fourth ranked MMA fighter in the Northeast, in his corner.

In the last pro bout before the co-main events, Adam McQuaid (1-1-0) of Manchester, NH and Team Burgess was no match in the 170 pound category for Anthony Kaponis (2-0-0) of Meriden, CT and Team Dog Pound.

The referee stepped in and stopped the fight at 4:56 of the first round.

Combat Zone 33 will take center cage next at the Meadowbrook Performing Arts Center in Gilford, NH on June 19th during the Laconia Bike Week events.

The results for Combat Zone 32:

George Lynch (2-0-0) of Roslindale, Ma def. Logan Moore (0-2-0) of Kingston, NH by unanimous decision

Peter Wellman (1-0-0) of Salem, MA def. Kris Kloets (0-2-0) of Gilford, NH by 1st round TKO

John Santos (2-3-0) of Derry def. Jesse Menize (0-2-0) by 1st round TKO

Wayne Alquist (1-1-0) of Meredith, NH def. Keith Nelson of Marietta, NY by 1st round TKO

Taylor Trahan (3-3-0) of Lisbon, NH def. Jason Earl (1-2-0) of Marietta, NY by arm bar round 2

Lamont Milton (3-0-0) of Lynn, MA def. Adam Toussaint (3-3-0) of No. Berwick, ME by unanimous decision

Peter San Antonio (2-1-0) of North Andover, Ma def. David Spero (1-2-0) of Atkinson, NH by split decision

Mike Winters (1-0-0) of Cortland, NY def. Keaton Van Thof (0-2-0) of Salem, NH by TKO in round 1

Jesse McElligott (1-0-0) of West Roxbury, MA def. Jamie Fellows (1-3-0) of Meredith, NH by TKO 4:26 round 3

Steve Butler (1-3-00) of Billerica, Ma def. John Levasseur (1-1-0) of Hooksett, NH in round 1 by rear naked choke hold

Anthony Kaponis (2-0-0) of Meriden, CT def. Adam McQuaid (1-1-0) of Manchester, NH by TKO in round 1

Chad Holderness (8-2-0) of Boulder, Co def. Brent Kinberger (5-2-0) of Manchester, NH by unanimous decision

Tom Moreau (6-1) of Derry, NH def. Robert Conner (7-2-0) of Martinsburg, WVA by unanimous decision.