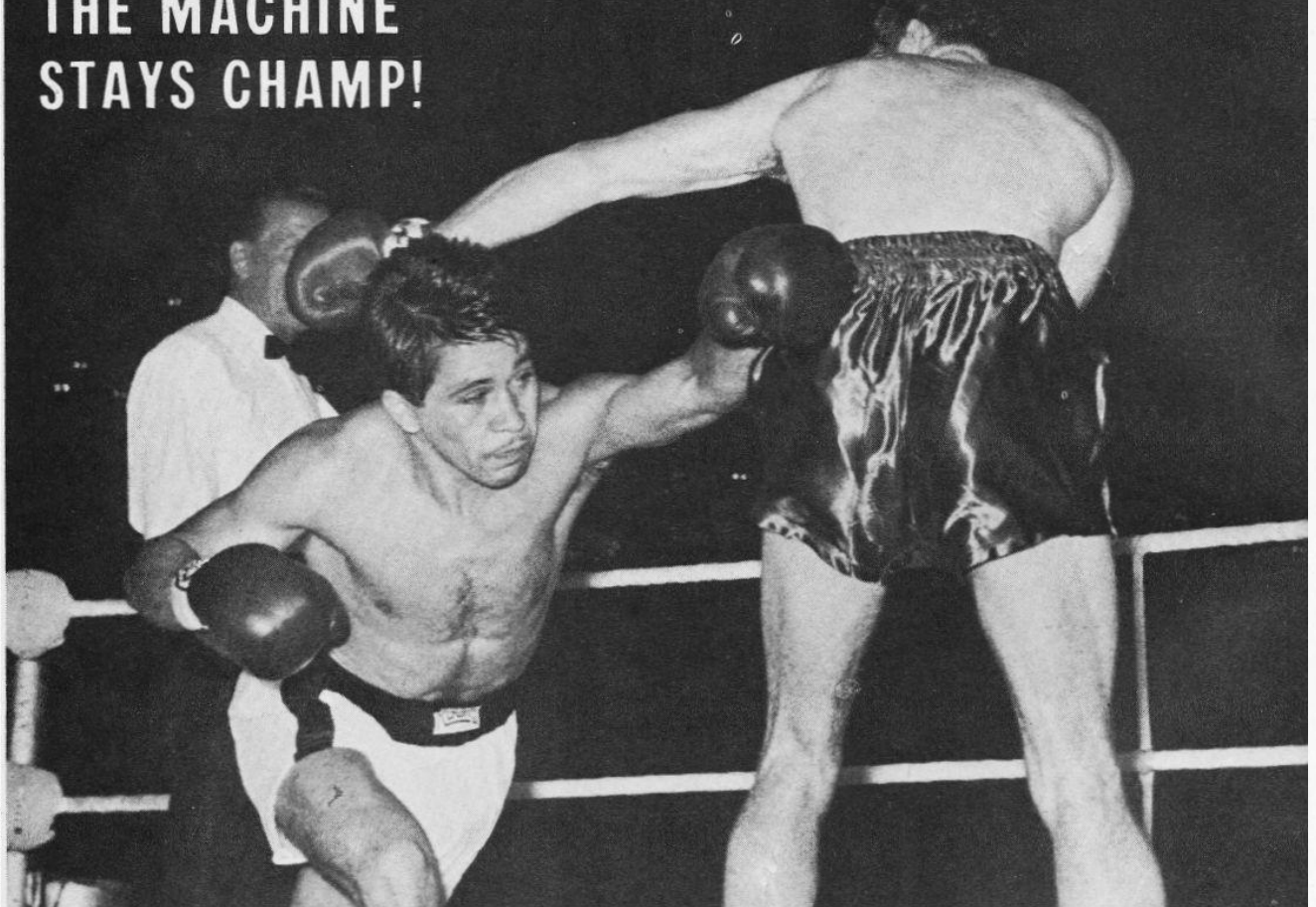


SALDIVAR

By REG GUTTRIDGE

THE MACHINE STAYS CHAMP!



The clever boxing of the Welshman was a revelation, but he was unable to hold off the aggressive champion, who kept the pressure on him from start to finish with a steady two-fisted barrage of punches to the head and body.

VICENTE SALDIVAR, a dignified, dapper Mexican who fights with the heart of a Rocky Marciano, stood listening to the thunderous applause of almost 18,000 sporting British at London's Earls Court. "Howard Winstone," he said, "put up a great fight. I'm quite prepared to defend my title against him again—in this country. Everything about the fight was marvelous, the crowd, the referee, everything."

And so say all of us.

For 15 punch-packed rounds bulldozing Saldivar, a southpaw, swamped British champion Winstone with punches. Yet for 12 rounds the battle swayed according to varying interpretation of pointing. Some of

Saldivar's punching were slaps, some were borderline.

Winstone, a workman in the Willie Pep mould, had fought with the artful precision of a bullfighter placing banderillas and stabbed Saldivar's face. Often the lighter-hitting challenger stung the champion.

But with five cuts covering his eyes Winstone could not stem the tide of punches thrown at him.

Sheer saturation reduced him to a slowing, bloodied target in the vital 14th. Saldivar, the stamina specialist, made certain a hometown decision would not rob him.

London school-master, Bill Williams, promptly raised Saldivar's hand—even after Winstone had in-

solently rallied at the finish—and critics feverishly checked their score-sheets. Unanimous newspaper opinion favoured Saldivar—but some called it close. There were 11,000

Welshmen ready to protest. But they refused to mar a wonderful fight. And when the Welsh fail to sing—they know they are beaten.

On fractional British scoring I made Saldivar a near, yet clear, winner—by half a point. I totalled eight rounds for Saldivar, six Winstone, one even. Some made Saldivar a clearer winner.

The champion, with superbly disciplined training, had worn Winstone down like a virus which he could not shake off. The Mexican, only

22, does not punch like Saddler, possess the frills of Pep or the economy of Bassey and Moore. But he has the ability to be the aggressor.

Winstone danced and jabbed with the grace of his countryman, Peerless Jim Driscoll. When he stuck to the hit-and-hop-it method he made Saldivar flounder. But pride and the emotional support spurred Winstone to trade punches when it was politic to box. Saldivar sapped Winstone's strength.

From the fifth Winstone was plagued with superficial cuts. Later Saldivar had a vertical split over his left eye. The referee did not hinder them with worrying inspections. The corner-men administered capably. Winstone stung left jabs repeatedly into Saldivar's face. But the Welshman with 55 experience fights compared to Saldivar's 26 could not smother every counter that came at him like balls bouncing off the floor.

Sometimes Winstone's confident science went past the edge of discretion and almost into disaster. But quality along with quantity of punches count. Winstone's blows were cleaner.

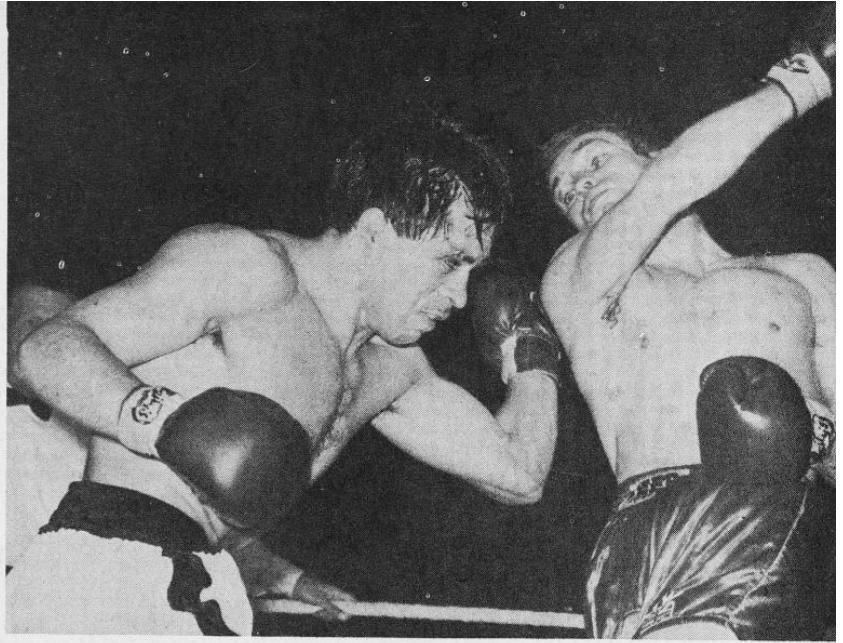
Saldivar responded to terse corner orders and though he fought with mouth open, and gumshield baring, he looked deceptive in a way cats sometimes appear drowsy before they spring. He clawed the weakening Winstone.

The sporting feathers swapped punches in a hellpit of sound—Sugar Ray Robinson lost his crown to Randy Turpin at Earls Court—to complete one of the most satisfying fights seen in Britain. Return? The Harry Levene promotion grossed 300,000 dollars—with the first East-West transmission to Mexico via Early Bird—so Saldivar can listen to reason.

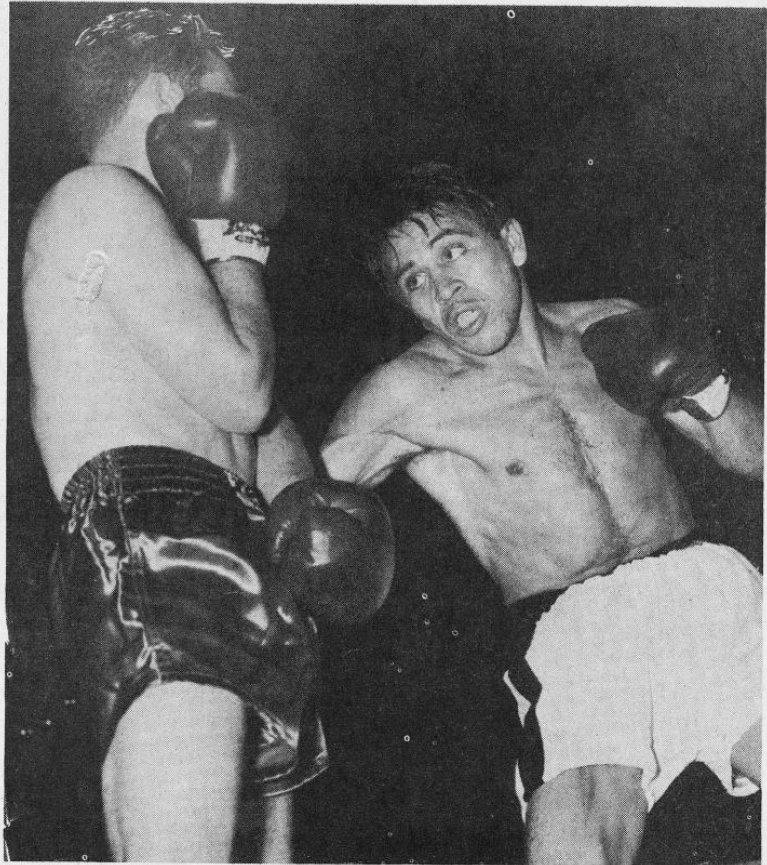
But Floyd Robertson, Ghana, the Empire champion, is favoured for a shot at Saldivar in Mexico City. The world champion has promised the President of Mexico a home show.

Humble Winstone kept his promise to "celebrate" with critics and chums at London's century-old Cafe Royal. He arrived wearing criss-cross plaster over his eyes and sun glasses to hide the bruises. "Just one of those things," he shrugged, "Saldivar just pipped it. The 14th round swayed it. He was so strong. But I gave my best."

"If you can meet with triumph and disaster and treat those two im-



Winstone landed some good clean blows, but was unable to stem the steady tide of leather poured upon him by the southpaw champion.



Winstone boxed beautifully, blocking many of the blows, but Saldivar would not be denied. He kept banging away, opened cuts around both of Howard's eyes.



The longer reach of the challenger came in handy to hold off the machine-like attack of Saldivar, but he couldn't stop the champion's offensive often.



Although he has his hand raised in the victory salute, Winstone was a well beaten fighter as his battered face attests. (Below) The champ has only a slight cut beneath his eye.



postors just the same . . . Kipling."

Among the observers were Jim Deskin, of the WBA, Ramon Valdesquez, of the WBC, George Parnasus, of everywhere, and promoters from Manila and Japan.

(Marring Saldivar's celebration was the k.o. of his spar-mate, Jesus Saucedo, by Scotland's John O'Brien. The Mexican feather was carried from the ring on a stretcher and taken to a hospital.)

Winstone drove home through wet and deserted Wales. He passed through gray-walled Quakers Yard

—birthplace of Jimmy Wilde, the last Welshman to win a world crown. (Wilde, incidentally, is bed-ridden at Barry, South Wales.)

As Winstone arrived in darkening Merthyr crowds poured into the streets to welcome him. Two thousand-odd proud Welshmen cheered their hero.

"I cried," said Winstone.

The Welsh, I predict, will only see Winstone at work once more. Manager Thomas is willing for him to quit now. But Howard presses for a British title defense against cocksure Frankie Taylor—a fight to satisfy his pride.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY!

PETER WILSON, Daily Mirror: "It was a decision with which I did not agree—but also one with which I would not quarrel."

GEORGE WHITING, Evening Standard: "This sawn-off Saldivar owes precious little allegiance to the canons of the Marquis of Queensbury—but, by golly, he can fight."

PETER MOSS, Daily Mail: "Winstone was forced to spend so much time on survival that he was not able to score nearly enough on his own account."

DES HACKETT, Daily Express: "Winstone came very close to winning, so very close that it almost burst the hearts of the Welsh. . . . I had the fight level by as late as the 12th round."

JACK WOOD, The Sun: "After 15 thrill-packed rounds there could not have been more than a quarter of a point between them. The Mexican just got home."

DONALD SAUNDERS, Daily Telegraph: "When the final bell sounded I, like the referee, was satisfied that Saldivar thoroughly deserved to remain champion."

STEVE FAGAN, Daily Sketch: "My scorecard showed gallant Winstone even by ten rounds . . . but I marked Saldivar eight rounds, with Winstone six."

THE TIMES: "Winstone won the last round, but clearly not the decision." ●

UNDERCARD TRAGEDY - Jesus Saucedo was taken to the hospital, where he drifted in and out of consciousness for the next week. He was flown back to Mexico on October 9, 1965, and he died there the following week.