

Friday evening, after **Chris Arreola's** lightning fast victory over **Joey Abell** at the Pechanga Resorts & Casino in Temecula, it seemed every conversation was about the amazing physical transformation of Arreola's body and the refinement of his boxing skills by the new training staff. Not only did Arreola get serious about

losing weight and building up his leg strength, the former top contender looked years younger and better grounded each time he unloaded a punch on the visitor from Minnesota.

As a result, Joey Abell (27-5, 26 KOs) turned out to be Arreola's thirtieth victim at just 2:53 of the first round. Referee **Tony Crebs'** abrupt halt of the contest was not a popular one, not with the home viewers, not with the Pechanga crowd or with Abell. It was one of those, what-just-happened, quick and decisive acts of a compassionate referee who when looking into the boxer's eyes decided he was too hurt to continue.

From the outset, you knew in your heart one or the other combatants wouldn't last. Why? Because these two giants stood unafraid toe to toe to exchange their powerful blows. After Abell threw a left hook that was partially blocked by Arreola's glove, he followed with a second that landed. Arreola's reaction when feeling Abell's power? He smiled which had to intimidate Abell. Every time there was a hint of Abell gaining the least bit of confidence, Arreola answered with a quick combination. Before long Abell was staggered by a hard right and fell backwards with his head going through the ropes. From that point on, he was in the neutral corner receiving a good pummeling, one that consisted of at least three unanswered shots to the head.

As fast as the ref's call was to end the fight, so came this spontaneous kiss to Abell's cheek from Arreola. Like a youngster opening a present on Christmas morning, Arreola ran about the ring throwing kisses and saluting the fans who have stuck with him. The kissing of women, hugging of men and waving to his faithful went on for so long, the show's producers had to ask for an escort to get Arreola out of the ring and down to the waiting Teddy Atlas who needed to complete his ESPN2 Friday Night Fights wrap-up. For the remainder of the night, Arreola graciously went from one well-wisher to the next signing autographs and having his picture taken with his many fans.

As Arreola has stated in the past, "Don't ever feel intimidated by me. No one appreciates their fans more than I do. You see me on the street, come right up to me. Buy me a beer."

The Press Conference that followed cleared the air on the spontaneous kiss. "Hey, that's the

way I am. I couldn't hit him anymore, so I kissed him."

When asked about his rededication, he answered, "Monday, early, I'm going right back to the gym." That drew a snicker from his trainers. "No, seriously, the year 2010 was my worst year ever. I don't ever want to go through that again. I want to fight at least four times in 2011. This is my profession, fighting ... and I love it."

Asked about the conditioning and his ideal weight, he answered, "My ideal weight is somewhere between 238 and 244. I'm not running but my conditioning coach has me on the Stairmaster which I hate like a m.... and this thing called Jacob's ladder. It's a b....! For this match-up we didn't concern ourselves with reaching any specific goals as far as weight on the scale. With all the things we were doing, the weight just came off naturally."

Seeing is believing. Arreola is definitely back and that means the other heavyweight contenders better come prepared if they plan to challenge him.

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