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SPRINGFIELD, Mo.— Five-time world champion Cory Spinks won a unanimous decision over Sechew Powell on Saturday at the Shrine Mosque in Springfield, Mo., in an elimination bout to determine the IBF junior middleweight No. 1 ranking, and hometown cruiserweight B.J. Flores moved closer to a world title match by stopping Colombian veteran Hugo Pineda.

Spinks (39-6, 11 KOs), a former undisputed welterweight champion and subsequent two-time IBF junior middleweight champion, had been thought by some to be near the end of his career after losing the IBF 154-pound crown to Cornelius “K9” Bundrage in 2010.

Spinks rededicated himself to the sport but was still the underdog entering the ring this past weekend to face Powell (26-3, 15 KOs), the IBF No. 5-ranked contender. Spinks swept all three judges’ scorecards 116-112 and 115-113, twice.

“I was in perfect condition and felt like I could do anything I wanted during the fight,” Spinks said. “Powell thought he was going to pressure me, that I would be old and run from him. I

think he was surprised when I stood toe to toe with him and was the one bringing the pressure."

"He became more aggressive in rounds six and seven, and a local reporter wrote that I was in trouble, but Powell didn't give me anything I couldn't handle. I knew he was swinging for the fences in those rounds, so I let him go because I wasn't going anywhere."

Spinks also noted that he feels like a young fighter.

"I'm only 33 years old, I feel like new money right now," Spinks said. "I performed well in this fight, my second match with new manager Scott Hirsch and trainer Anthony Ham. I've won five world titles, I have a name and I think I bring a lot to the table for a marquee name, a world championship fight or both."

Promoter Don King attended the fight and was impressed.

"Sechew Powell is a good, dangerous fighter and certainly no light touch for Cory," King said. "I was proud of him on Saturday night."

"When he trains right and applies himself to the sport both mentally and physically, there is no question he poses a significant threat to anyone at or near 154 pounds."

Trainer Anthony Ham was pleased with Spinks' performance as well.

"Cory was in the best shape of his life," Ham said. "He dominated the fight with his jab and right hook. This is our second fight together, and I feel like Cory has won 20 of the 22 rounds since we teamed up. I think he will be even better in his next fight."

Manager Scott Hirsch said he had a reason for wanting to work with Spinks.

“I felt the reports a few years ago of Cory’s demise were greatly exaggerated,” Hirsch said. “I agreed to work with him because I felt he was just too good and had a lot left in his tank. He proved me right on Saturday against one of the best fighters in his division. The Spinks Jinx is back and ready to wreak further havoc in boxing.”

Highly ranked cruiserweight B.J. Flores (27-1-1, 17 KOs) availed himself well against notable veteran Hugo Pineda (39-6-1, 28 KOs). Flores’ supporters from his hometown of Springfield, M o.
, filled the historic Shrine Mosque, and
Flores
gave them what they came to see.

“I was calculated but aggressive in the first few rounds,” Flores said. “By the third, I knew where I was going to go. I cut him over the right eye in the second round with a left hook, and I floored him in the fourth. Every time I hit him I felt like I hurt him.

“I was going up and down with punches to the head and body, which confused him. Then I caught him with a good straight right hand for a knockdown in the fourth round. He barely made it up from that.”

Flores wobbled Pineda again in the fifth round before Pineda’s corner threw in the towel near the end of the sixth.

Promoter Don King liked what he saw in Springfield, Mo.

“I give B.J. a lot of credit,” King said. “He’s built a big following for himself in Springfield, and he gave the crowd a good show. “

“I enjoyed the people in Springfield and B.J. wants big fights and a world title shot, so the Show Me State is definitely in the mix.”