

## Boxing at Remington Park

# Zuhdi scores first-round TKO in professional debut

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Every journey has a starting point. On Sunday night, Oklahoma City boxer Noah Zuhdi took his first step.

Zuhdi jumped on Rafael Torres early and often in their lightweight bout, scoring a technical knockout 2:25 into the first round at Remington Park Casino.

Making his professional debut with no amateur experience under his belt, Zuhdi said he felt exceptionally calm entering the ring for the first time.

"This is the fun part," Zuhdi said. "Getting to this point was a lot of hard work and a lot of nerves, but tonight was like nothing I've ever felt before."

While Zuhdi was confident, his manager, former lightweight champion Sean O'Grady, was the exact opposite.

"Toward the end of my career, I never felt nerves," O'Grady said. "But training Noah and seeing him out there was one of the most nerve-racking experiences I've been through. It is so hard to teach someone, but Noah listens so well."

Zuhdi came in with a plan and never strayed from it. Af-

ter getting a taste of what Torres had to offer, Zuhdi said he knew he could press the action.

"I took that first blow and knew he couldn't keep me off of him," Zuhdi said. "You still have to respect your opponent, but I knew if I did what I've been taught, I was going to get him."

Torres, in his 16<sup>th</sup> professional fight, had no answer for the aggressive Zuhdi. With Torres keeping his hands high, Zuhdi looked downstairs and tagged Torres with a flurry of body punches.

The body assault led to the first knockdown and was the beginning of the end for Torres.

Zuhdi wasted no time and took advantage of the weakened Torres, causing the referee to stop the fight as Zuhdi was hammering the body with Torres covering up in the corner, much to the delight of O'Grady.

"My dad always taught me to never carry anybody," O'Grady said. "When you have a man ready to go, finish the job."

Said Zuhdi: "You can't let anyone off the hook. I'm a finisher. I want to get things done as soon as possible."

**SUNDAY AT REMINGTON PARK**