

# The Inverness Courier

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## Academy boxers impress at Insch

by Graham Linton

THERE was a winning debut for Ross Houston and a significant triumph for Mitchell Dalton as the two Highland Boxing Academy members turned on the style at a show in Insch.

The two light heavyweights were equally impressive inside the ring with comprehensive victories in front of a sell-out crowd at the Bennachie Leisure Centre.

Organised by Insch Amateur Boxing club, the card featured home fighters in every bout, but both Houston and Dalton defied the strong support for their own men to each emerge victorious.

First up was Houston (21), who was making his debut against Gary Donald and despite a nervy start by the visiting boxer, he soon had the measure of his opponent, eventually claiming the win courtesy of a second round stoppage.

"Gary had a tremendous home support behind him and I think that showed in the first round by the way he came out strongly and managed to catch Ross with a few punches," said academy head coach Liam Foy.

"Ross did take a few shots, but as the first round went on, he found his composure and started to catch his opponent with a good combination of punches.

"He even managed to put Gary down on the canvas and the referee gave him a standing count of eight before letting the fight continue.

"Ross was straight back at him and had Gary on the ropes. He looked to be going down again only to be saved by the bell.

"The second round was similar to the first in that Gary came charging out, but Ross caught him with a hard shot and the referee decided to stop it.

"It's an absolutely sensational start for Ross and he's really put a marker down with this debut performance."

Dalton faced a stern test of his skills with the 17-year-old taking on Craig Paterson, who at 32, was close to being double his age.

Despite this significant difference, Foy insists he had no doubts about putting Dalton in this bout and he was proven right as the academy boxer went on to claim a unanimous victory on points.

"Mitchell was all over his opponent from start to finish," he said. "He could even have put him down a few times as Mitchell was catching him with combination after combination.

"He was very effective throughout the fight and it was great to see him win by a unanimous points decision.

"I'm delighted for him as he's had some very tough fights during his career already where the decisions have gone against him.

"However, I've known all along that Mitchell is capable and against Craig he produced the fight of his life."

Meanwhile, a squad of five boxers from the academy will be travelling to Aberdeen tomorrow to compete in the North District Schoolboy and Youth Championships.

Highland Boxing Academy's successful fighters Ross Houston (second left) and Mitchell Dalton (second right) are pictured alongside (left to right) Derek Duncan, assistant coach and club sponsor, head coach Liam Foy and Christopher Giubarelli, the academy'

