

Roach battleplan: Keep Pacquiao out...

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the chin, but the three-time Trainer of the Year, is just making sure that the unexpected doesn't happen when the two fighters collide on Nov. 14 in Las Vegas.

"Manny has a really good chin because he has a big heart. Of course Cotto's power is a major concern for me but I really think that we will have no problems. I'm training Manny not to get hit," he said.

In a recent interview with doghouseboxing.com, Roach said it was Pacquiao, the reigning pound-for-pound champion, who decided to take on Cotto, the reigning WBO welterweight champion, and not Shane Mosley or Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Pacquiao must have seen something from ring-side when Cotto faced Josh Clottey a few months ago.

"Manny has always wanted to fight Floyd Mayweather Jr. The Mayweather fight got delayed because of injury and Manny needed a fight around year's end. After watching the fight Manny told (Bob) Arum that he could beat Cotto," said Roach.

And now that the fight contract has been sealed, signed and delivered, Roach said the battleplan is in the making.

"Of course. I have already watched several hours of Cotto's fights. I have been concentrating on how well he did against Shane Mosley. How he neutralized Shane's speed. Yes, we will have a great game plan for Cotto," said Roach.

Training for Pacquiao should begin by the second week of September, and based on early plans, the first week will take him to Baguio City, a great summer destination 250 kms north of Manila, and 1,500 meters above sea level.

Then the next four or five weeks will take Pacquiao to Mexico, in the resort town of Nuevo Vallarta, while the final push, probably the last two weeks, will see the Filipino icon training in Los Angeles or straight to Las Vegas.

Roach explained that Pacquiao can no longer train the whole eight to 10 weeks in the US.

"Because of immigration laws he must spend five weeks training outside America. The laws say we can spend 183 days (yearly) in America and that means the last three weeks of training will be here at the WildCard," Roach told David Tyler of doghouseboxing.com.

Michael Koncz, a Pacquiao adviser, said the boxer likes the idea of training in Mexico where he can give his fans more time to know him more, and how Mexican fight fans love him.

"He'd be very happy to do that as a cross-over star. Mexican fans love Manny. And when I was there recently all they asked me about is where's Manny. There was a rumor two weeks ago he was in Nuevo Vallarta, but it didn't push through and everybody I ran into asked about him.

"Manny will be happily surprised when we get to Mexico. He'd be surprised about his popularity there," Koncz added. ■

NV workers will get little relief from minimum wage hike

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from \$6.85 to \$7.55 an hour.

Similarly, overtime pay rules in Nevada were also changed. Employers must now pay one and a half times the regular rate when that employee with health benefits is paid less than \$9.82 an hour. An employee who does not have health benefits may receive overtime pay if that employee is paid less than \$11.325 per hour. The law states that overtime pay should be given to employees who work more than 40 hours a week or more than eight hours a day.

The Las Vegas Review Journal report stated that employers can

generally be expected to respond to the mandated wage increases by giving the required raise to certain employees. But this might also force these companies to regretfully cut employees work hours or, worse, lay off those whose salaries fall below the new minimum wage rate.

This poses a problem to this state whose unemployment rate during the first half of the year has already reached a staggering 12%, the worst in almost three decades. The figure is higher than the nation's unemployment rate of 9.5% in June.

Massive job losses, meanwhile, contributed to increasing foreclo-

sures in Nevada. At 6% the state had the highest foreclosure rate as of June.

A study by the Washington's Employment Policies Institute noted that, "Decades of economic research predicted that there would be an increase in job losses following minimum wage hikes, particularly among vulnerable groups like minority teens and adults without a high school diploma."

"A job at the previous minimum wage is much better than none at a higher rate," the study by Tim Miller, added. (*Dymphna Calica-La Putt*)

RP won't slip into recession...

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this year.

Technically, recession occurs when there are two quarters of negative growth.

"If we look at the leading indicators that I pointed out—cement production expanding, automobile sales expanding, overseas remittances growing, positive confidence of consumer and business, we cannot see how one can talk of a sudden downturn in the second quarter," Tungpalan said.

"The bottom line here is, as has been warned by those critical of our report, is that we are totally out of the recession and there are no signs that those who foretell gloom are right," he added.

In order to further support the growth of the economy, Tungpalan said that the country would be more aggressive in engaging the strong performing economies, particularly China, in order to draw more investments into the country.

Tungpalan pointed out that China has around

\$2 trillion in reserves and its government has directed its businesses to go out and invest in other markets.

"We should take advantage of one of the first movers to seize this very aggressive going out policy of China," he said.

Though China already has a lot of investments in several infrastructure projects of the government, Tungpalan said that the country is looking to attract more hard investments from the Asian giant.

The government is also looking to expand the huge tourism revenue potential of China.

More government support would also go into the high-end, non-voice business process outsourcing sectors such as animation.

Tungpalan noted that the BPO sector continues to be a bright spot in the economy, generating several thousands in employment at any given time.

He said that 90,000 jobs are expected to be generated by the sector this year while revenues are expected to hit \$5 billion to \$6 billion. ■

Minimum wage not an option but the law...

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TV, the NYS Department of Labor, Bureau of Immigrant Workers Rights, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and National Employment Law Project (NELP) at CUNY Graduate School of Journalism.

Gerstein, was joined by Maritere Arce, Director, Department of Labor Bureau of Immigrant Workers Rights; Hector Figueroa, Secretary Treasurer, SEIU; and Rajesh D. Nayak, Staff Attorney NELP as they briefed the media on the significance of the wage increase and the challenges in its implementation.

Gerstein said the Department of Labor (DOL) would ensure the enforcement of minimum wage. She explained that they have been very aggressive in implementing the law to ensure that all state workers receive what is prescribed by the law.

She said undocumented workers were also covered by the minimum wage and explained that the DoL does not ask for the immigration

status of a worker. "That is not relevant to our enforcement," she said.

"We have a somewhat modest increase but for every single New Yorker who earns minimum wage, this would be of help specially in this tough economy. We would like to tell the employers that we are vigilant in our efforts to make sure that workers get all of the money they are owed," Gerstein added.

Maritere Arce, Director, Bureau of Immigrant Workers Rights, said New York City's three million immigrant population was contributing \$229 billion to the state's economy each year, which accounted for 22.4 percent of the total New York State GDP.

She said the Bureau held training and know-your-rights workshops, town hall meetings and roundtable discussions to educate the workers about their rights and to encourage them to contact the DOL, should their rights be violated. She said the Bureau would welcome any partnership with community-

based organizations for the protection of immigrant workers rights.

Hector Figueroa, Secretary-Treasurer, SEIU welcomed the increase in minimum wage. "However we think this increase is not as much as is required in this challenging economy," he added. He said the SEIU would continue its outreach to the working class for the protection of its rights. He commended the work being done by the BIWR and the DOL but stressed that greater outreach was required in the immigrant communities.

"Americans 40 years ago earned more than the minimum wage earners today. If we know people who do not earn minimum wage, ask them to come forward and don't be afraid. They should demand from their employers what they deserve," Figueroa said.

Rajesh D. Nayak, Staff Attorney at National Employment Law Project, called the 10 cents increase in the minimum wage as "modest".

Citing different studies, he

said, many workers were not even being paid the minimum wage. A big majority of such underpaid workers were from immigrant communities. He pointed at lack of understanding and knowledge about the minimum wage amongst immigrants.

"Before people take action, they have to know about the law. But right now, a lot of workers have no idea about the minimum wage," he said. Complementing the efforts of DOL and BIWR, Rajesh stressed that creating greater awareness amongst immigrant workers about the

minimum wage and their rights required involvement of all the stakeholders.

The issue of tipped workers also echoed at the briefing.

Gerstein explained that for service workers, who received tips, the minimum wage was lower but the salary plus tip must always equal at least \$7.25 per hour. She said the DoL had completed several investigations against car washes in the city which were violating their workers rights. Replying to a question, she said it was illegal on part of any employer to withhold part of the tip from a worker - a

practice rampant in the livery industry. She asked all such workers to contact the DoL if they find their rights being violated.

Penalties for non-compliance with minimum wage laws include paying up to 200 percent of the amount of the missing wages, depending on the severity of the violation and other factors, and 16 percent interest on the unpaid wages.

Random sweeps are conducted in industries that traditionally employ immigrants and low-wage workers to ensure they are being paid properly. ■



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