

Donaire dominates Concepcion

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gust 15. "It was a good win for me," said Donaire Jr., who broke his left hand in the third round. "I think he would have went down earlier if he had weighed in at 115 pounds...I think that's the reason why I broke my hand. I think that extra pound he had was definitely an advantage."

Many Filipinos and boxing fans would be hesitant to watch a boxing event without the name Manny Pacquiao on the card but Saturday's (August 15), Pinoy Power event brought in 1,838 screaming fans, most were Filipinos.

The pro-Filipino crowd cheered on Pinoy boxers Mark Melligen, Bernabe Concepcion and Donaire Jr.

Rising star
Pinoy boxing prospect Mark Melligen started off the Pinoy Power event with a bang. The 23-year-old Pinoy from Bacolod City, Philippines looked stellar against Ernesto Zepeda of Mazatlan, Mexico.

"Mighty" Melligen peppered and bloodied up the Mexican with timed one-two punches

throughout the bout. The match culminated when Melligen knocked out Zepeda with a perfectly timed left cross that rocked Zepeda's head back. The Mexican slumped on the ropes before falling on his knees on the canvas. Referee Joe Cortez immediately stopped the bout.

This was Melligen's first fight for Top Rank. The organization signed the Filipino a month ago with high hopes.

Melligen said the bout was easy.

"I saw all of his punches coming in," said Melligen to the *Asian Journal*.

Trainer Edito Villamor said it was a good showing for Melligen especially against a veteran fighter like Zepeda.

"He was good," said Villamor. "He was good tonight but we'll go back to the gym to work more."

The real deal disappoints
It may have been a case of immaturity.

There was a lot of talk before the bout whether the 21-year-old Bernabe "Real Deal" Concepcion was ready and capable to dethrone a champion in the prime

of his career.

On Saturday, Concepcion proved hewasn't ready.

The real deal disappointed the pro-Filipino crowd when he was disqualified after he hit and knocked out Steven Luevano clearly

after the seventh round bell.

Concepcion was fighting for Luevano's WBO World Featherweight Title.

But the 28-year-old titleholder from La Puente, CA frustrated Concepcion throughout the bout. Pawing his right hand like a machine gun in each round, Luevano kept his distance and countered each time Concepcion would lean in.

Toward the final seconds of the seventh round, it seemed that Concepcion hurt Luevano and charged in. However, after the bell rang, Concepcion threw a right cross that landed flush to Luevano's jaw, immediately knocking out the champion.

Referee Jay Nady ruled Concepcion's punch intentional and disqualified the Filipino.

"Bernabe was excited he hurt the guy," said trainer Freddie Roach. "The crowd was yelling and yes, he did hit him late. The disqualification was justified but it was in no way intentional. It was accidental."

Bob Arum said he would immediately set up a rematch for

the two sometime in December.

Donaire dominates

Wearing yellow trunks to commemorate late President Cory Aquino, Donaire toyed with Rafael Concepcion of Panama throughout the 12-round bout.

Despite being outweighed by several pounds (Concepcion did not make the 115-pound weight limit), Donaire used his quick feet and timed counter punches to neutralize the bull-like Panamanian.

In the opening round, Donaire's overhand right opened a cut above Concepcion's left eye.

But the Panamanian had a lot of strength in his punches. In the second round, Concepcion landed a flush left hook to Donaire's head, which caused a small mouse under the Filipino's right eye.

Donaire said he broke or may have sprained his right hand while punching Concepcion in the third round. So in the following rounds, Donaire used his footwork and counter punches to avoid the charging Concepcion.

Judge Max De Luca scored the bout 117-111, Duane Ford had it 115-113, and Jerry Roth 116-112 all in favor for the Filipino Flash Donaire.

After the bout Concepcion had harsh words for the Flash.

"If I had known that it was a marathon I would have trained for a run," said Concepcion, referring to Donaire's elusive tactic against him. "I was expecting a real Filipino fighter. I wanted someone to fight, to stand up and fight...I knew he was a great boxer and technician [but] I hope you have more of a warriors heart."

Donaire said the Concepcion is the real coward.

"He's the guy that purposely did not make the weight limit," said Donaire. "I could have not went through with the fight and penalized him for not making weight but I did not want to disappoint the fans. He's the coward. He's the one that said he didn't care about the money or the title he just wanted the Panama and Philippines [boxing] rivalry...I won. I came in there and did my job." (*Joseph Pimentel/AJPress*)

Civic causes . . .

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to embody transformation. He knew that once the people learn the vision by heart, they would start doing something. "This is not about my campaign, this is about our situation and what we really believe in as a nation," he said.

It is from the sentiments of the Filipino people that Nick found what this battle is all about. "And this not only a change for me, but a change for all of us," he said.

He told us a story about a group which is called Bisyon Cafe. It is a very informal gathering where young people sit on the floor. A question is asked and discussed. And at the end, a vision for the country is concluded. "The youth today is looking for the change not only in the Philippines but also globally," Nick said. And he wants to encourage this idealism as he, himself, portrays it. Perhaps change is too big to envision. "It's too much to change the system immediately," Nick said. And he knew that the first step is to set the difference between a good government and a good governance.

There is a need for a reform from within, a need to strengthen the civil society and encourage responsible citizenship and accountability. "I have done enough outside the country. Now, I want to help my country," Nick said. And laughing, he added, "I returned my green card."

This man known also known as the father of organic farming walks his talk even shared his diet with us. "I laughed when I knew Obama's diet is fish and vegetables. That's exactly what my diet is. I drink banana shake and zero fat yogurt."

The journey has just started but Nick is not faced with fear. "Most key historical events are what people thought to be impossible. That's why I'm not scared of all the obstacles," he said. "Traditional politics is the white swan and now the black swan will appear." ■

Pinoy veterans in US . . .

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said he was recalled without any warning and given barely a month to leave his post.

Philippine embassy officials, veterans groups and community leaders were shocked by Lorenzana's unceremonious ousting, coming as it did six months after Filipino veterans were granted a \$198-million US compensation to be paid individually in lump sums of from \$9,000 to \$15,000.

Informed sources said Corpus was due to arrive in Washington within the next few weeks.

Lorenzana said he had no inkling he would be replaced and had to call his boss Defense Undersecretary Ernesto Carolina to confirm the newspaper report.

In an email to the ACFV, Lorenzana said "while I do appreciate your group's wishes (for me) to stay on as head of the OVA, I strongly believe that respecting the decision and wishes of the President on whom to appoint to this position takes precedence over our wishes."

He described Corpus as a great leader and said "if he brings to his new job, as I know he will, the same zeal, dedication and energy that he put to his past jobs in the AFP, OVA will be in excellent hands."

The US said it hopes to pay off by February 2010 all Filipino veterans who can rightfully claim they served Uncle Sam during the war but the deadline may not be met.

Veterans have been complaining of long waiting periods in the processing of their claims. (*Philstar.com*)

Las Vegas tourism still . . .

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Due to this, Sen. Reid filed last July 29 the Protecting Resort Cities from Discrimination Act of 2009. Aside from Las Vegas, the bill also cited other Nevada visitor and convention sites like Reno and Lake Tahoe.

Two days prior to filing the bill, the senator urged the Obama administration to remove Las Vegas from its list of cities that government officials cannot travel to for official meetings.

"I am writing to request that you reject or reverse any agency policy regarding official travel for your employees that discriminates against specific US cities, particularly Las Vegas and Reno," Sen. Reid said in a July 27th letter to US Attorney General Eric Holder.

During the Bush administration, several federal agencies have adopted guidelines that identify cities also known as resort or

vacation destinations as inappropriate venues for official agency travel and meetings.

"While Nevada is widely known as the world's most popular resort destination, it is also a great place to do business because it is affordable and there is plenty of meeting space," Sen. Reid in a statement.

"If it makes the most sense economically and logistically to hold a meeting in Las Vegas or Reno, then that's where it should be held," he added.

Sen. Reid believes that under the current economic downturn, now is the wrong time to discourage travel to any destination in the US, particularly Las Vegas.

"While President Obama did the right thing by reversing restrictions that were created under the Bush administration, my hope is that this bill will prevent future administrations from following Bush's lead," Sen. Reid said in a statement. (*Dymphna Calica-La Putt*)

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Sen. Manuel Villar . . .

FORMER congressman of Misamis Oriental Augusto Jun Baculio took his oath, along with mayors and vice mayors from Misamis Oriental and

Camiguin, took his oath as members of the Nacionalista Party. Senator Manny Villar, titular head and Presidential candidate of Nacionalista Party

administered the oath at the Laurel Mansion. Already this approach by the party and Sen. Villar to secure the grassroots in the political scene via recruiting membership from incumbent local executives and Congressmen has created a phenomenon in the upcoming presidential election of 2010. Already, Sen. Villar is the frontrunner in the presidential race as shown in surveys nationwide. (*AJPress*)

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