

Vera and Munoz Win at UFC 102

Viloria defends title

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL
AJPress

LOS ANGELES – IT was a good weekend to be a Pinoy fight fan. FilAm mixed martial arts fighter Brandon Vera and Mark Munoz won their bouts at UFC 102 in Portland, Oregon last Saturday August 29; and “The Hawaiian Punch” Brian Viloria defended his championship against a game fighter in Hawaii on the same day, respectively.

UFC 102

Munoz, whose undercard fight was not televised, recorded a split decision victory over Nick Catone.

According to Sherdog.com, Munoz used his wrestling background to corner Catone and drop him to the ground. The fight was close but Munoz escaped with the win.

For Munoz the win improved his record to 6-1. He also rebounds from the knockout loss against Matt Hamill in his previous bout.

Vera started off the televised pay-per-view UFC 102 card against Krzysztof Soszynski. Using his length and kickboxing style, Vera had little trouble disposing of the “Polish Experiment.”

Using his quick feet and timely punches, the Filipino was far more superior to his opponent Soszynski. Soszynski could only manage to clinch Vera a few times along the cage but that would occasionally backfire when Vera would sweep him to

the ground. Vera was never in any serious troubles.

All three judges scored the bout unanimously in favor for Vera. Vera improved his record to 11-3.

Hawaiian punch

Brian Viloria defended his International Boxing Federation (IBF) Junior Flyweight title against Mexican Jesus Iribe.

It was the first time in more than 30 years that Hawaii hosted a championship fight and Hawaiian fight fans got a treat when they saw their hometown hero come out with a victory.

Viloria, who was born in Hawaii, controlled most of the 12-round fight but was unable to score a knockdown. Iribe was

a game fighter. The Mexican looked tough and strong, taking all of Viloria’s best punches. On occasion, Iribe would taunt Viloria and land some vicious body shots. However, he could never do enough to rattle the FilAm.

With the hometown partisan crowd cheering for Viloria, it was hard for Viloria to resist anything less than a knockout. Even when Viloria appeared to be ahead on scorecards, the Hawaiian Punch tried to punch out the Mexican.

In the 12th round, both fighters slugged it out in the middle of the ring much to the excitement of the crowd.

All three judges scored in favor for Viloria. ■



Filipino-American Muay Thai champion Christine Toledo battled China's Zheng Yenan in Las Vegas last August 30. Controversy abound after judges used WulinFeng rules in scoring and declared Yenan winner. The heavier Yenan, who did not make weight requirements under the fight contract, is also China's National WulinFeng Champion.

AJ Press photos by Robert Macabagdal



Nevada DMV raises car ...

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after that until reaching the minimum at nine years, which is now 15% instead of five. The bill also raises the minimum government services tax from \$6 to \$16.

The registration fee increase, which affects the whole state of Nevada, was implemented by DMV last Sept 1, in accordance with the senate bill.

But motorists whose cars are less than nine years old will actually experience a decrease in the car registration payments because of the same bill.

“Owners of vehicles that are two to eight years old will find they are paying the same amount this year as last year. Their fees will go down in the following year,” the DMV said.

It added that “owners of vehicles that are one year old will see their fees go down by less than they would have otherwise.”

The \$33-basic registration fee for most private vehicles, meanwhile, remains unchanged.

Revenue generated from this new fee hike is estimated at \$50 million per year. It will go to the state’s general fund.

Meanwhile, the DMV also announced that it will soon be using postcards to notify motorists that their vehicle registration is due for renewal. “The department will save \$371,000 annually by using postcards instead of stuffed envelopes,” it said in a statement. (*Dymphna Calica-La Putt*)

Things are looking ...

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Mall magnate Henry Sy remains the richest Filipino, with a net worth of \$3.8 Billion. Sy, who owns the ubiquitous SM malls in the Philippines, increased his fortune by \$700 million this year.

Forbes cited the increase in the stock price of SM investments since December, as well as the increase in net income of the group’s interests in malls, retail, property in the first half of 2009.

Following Sy in the list is tobacco king Lucio Tan with a net worth

of \$1.7 Billion. Tan also owns the national lag carrier Philippine Airlines and has interests in beer brewing and mining.

Three in the list is Jaime Zobel de Ayala chairman emeritus of Ayala Corp., One of the country’s largest conglomerates. He has a net worth of \$1.2 Billion.

Andrew Tan, owner of the McDonald’s franchise in the Philippines, is fourth with a net worth of \$850 million. Rounding up the top five is John Gokongwei,

owner of Robinson’s department stores. Gokongwei, founder of JG Summit—a conglomerate with interests in airlines, telecoms, banking and real estate—is worth \$720 million.

Jollibee foods’ Tony Tan Caktiong is sixth with \$710 million, while Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., Chief executive of San Miguel Corp is seventh with \$660 million. San Miguel is the largest food and beverage conglomerate in Southeast Asia.

Enrique Razon, chair and president of International Container Terminal Services Inc. Or ICTSI, the largest container and cargo firm in the country is eighth with

\$620 million.

Senator and 2010 presidential aspirant Manuel Villar stood at number 9 with \$530 million.

Sen. Villar is the only politician to make it to the top ten list with \$530 million due to his real estate holdings in Vista Land & Lifescapes and polar properties.

But many in the top 10, including Lucio Tan, Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. and Enrique Razon, are known for political links during several administrations.

Rounding the top 10 is Metrobank founder George Ty with \$515 million. Metrobank is one of the largest commercial banks in the Philippines. ■

Big speech: Obama wants control of health debate

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama will deliver a major prime-time health care address to Congress next week, opening an urgent autumn push to gain control of the debate that has been slipping from his grasp under withering Republican-led attacks.

Scheduling of the speech next Wednesday, just a day after lawmakers return from their August recess, underscores the determination of the White House to confront critics of Obama’s overhaul proposals and to buck up supporters who have been thrown on the defensive. Allies have been urging the president to be more specific about his plans and to take a greater role in the debate, and aides have signaled he will do that in the address to a joint session of Congress in the House chamber.

The speech’s timing also suggests that top Democrats have all but given up hope for a bipartisan breakthrough by Senate Finance Committee negotiators. The White House had given those six lawmakers until Sept. 15 to draft a plan, but next week’s speech comes well ahead of that deadline.

It follows an August recess in which critics of Obama’s health proposals dominated many public forums. Approval ratings for Obama, and for his health care proposals, dropped during August.

Senior adviser David Axelrod had said Tuesday, Sept. 1 that Obama was considering being “more prescriptive” about what he feels Congress must include in a health bill. Axelrod said all the key ideas for revising health care are “on the table,” suggesting that Obama will not offer major new proposals. But he may talk more specifically about his top priorities, and perhaps add details to pending plans, to save a high-profile initiative whose defeat would deliver a huge blow to his young presidency.

The president hopes to “take the reins of this debate and take it to the finish line,” said an administration official who spoke Wednesday on condition of anonymity to discuss White House strategy. Obama hopes to put opponents in the position of having to propose their own plans or explain why they think it best to do nothing, the official said.

Many advocates of sweeping health care changes—which would include health coverage for virtually every American, greater competition among insurers and incentives to increase the quality of care instead of the number of medical procedures performed—welcomed the president’s more direct role. Obama and congressional Democrats clearly lost momentum during the August recess, they say, and the president’s high profile and still-considerable personal popularity are needed to change the dynamic. (AP)



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