



Razor's Edge

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No Substitute for Victory: A Win Is a Win

NEWYORK, NY Mar. 17 (PinoyGlobal) - Consensus has it that last Saturday's Pacquiao-Clotey fight of the "decade," if you can call that a fight, was a mismatch by any yardstick. And if I may say so, it was not because Clotey is an inferior boxer because he is not. But it was because his mind was preconditioned with fear for the boxing prowess and legendary speed of Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao. Clotey was overly cautious to engage the defending champion in a bloody slugfest where the chances of him being brutalized beyond recognition, was very probable.

Unarguably, he was, as we used to say in the vernacular "na fefeathered" siya. Meaning, he was intimidated with the global acclaim that Pacman is the hardest puncher in the universe. Thanks to malungay (moringa) that his mother used to feed him daily in his youth for lack of meat due to their abject poverty. That in fact is what makes his difficult climb to international fame and wealth more glorious.

Clearly therefore, the reputation of Pacman as a knockout artist thunderously precedes him such that his opponents would either lie down before he hits them or do the Joshua way of covering his face with his fists all throughout the 12 rounds. Ridicule him if you must but he (Clotey) proved to be smarter than the bunch of crown hunters before him from the overrated Oscar de la Hoya down to the reputed boxer Miguel Cotto.

So in terms of our expectation that it would be a furious bronco-busting swashbuckling encounter - it turned out to be a masquerade dance featuring the new fad wherein

gloves are used as masks. Or as somebody said, his (Clotey) gloves were glued to his face. He feverishly protected his jaw to avoid the pathetic fate of those ahead of him who lovingly caressed the canvas as Ricky Hatton, David Dias and the half dozen Mexican champions did when Pacquiao's dynamite punches exploded on their jaws. The pugilist from Ghana survived and is now enjoying his fat purse (\$2-million) with admirers in his country (he is Pacman to his people). What's more he had no black-eye/s nor was he hospitalized for serious brain and or body injuries.

Frankly, in my layman's point of view, the fight was lackluster: it was the worst I saw of Pacquiao. But of course, a win is a win, for as the American Caesar Gen. Douglas McArthur would say, "There is no substitute for victory." To our people and the nation that bask on his numerous crowns, Pacman's win is immeasurably great. The frustrating bout was through no fault his. Boxing aficionado around the world saw that Clotey himself refused to engage Pacman in a blow-for-blow encounter. Manny was obviously frustrated with his adversary recoiling like a cobra backtracking from its striking stance that he hit Joshua's ears with his two hands, which was demeaning to his opponent's image as it is a no-no in the ring and the referee called Pacquiao's attention to it.

Maybe I'm wrong and I would readily accept being corrected. But with my keen eye I noticed that Manny was not as fast and hard-hitting last Saturday as he used to be when we would immensely enjoy him mercilessly pummel his adversaries with heavy blows coming in lightning speed. I

hope that it is not due to the telling effect of his barbaric profession, which invariably does to boxers who become punch-drunks after receiving heavy blows on their heads, face and body. There are rumors that one of Pacquiao's ears is already injured from previous fights.

No doubt about it. I am an ardent admirer of our legendary boxer Pacman. But personally I say that if he has some sense left in him, he should hang his gloves while he is on top to spare himself the tragic fate that befell great fighters like Muhammad Ali, Joe Luis, Roberto Duran and others who ended up physically wrecked, invalid or impotent to fight even a mouse.

Pacquiao has all the money to live a hundred lifetimes in luxury. Fame has become his middle name. He is not only idolized by our people, but by the whole world itself. There is nobody who hasn't heard the name Pacquiao. My own five year old grand daughter surprised me beyond words when she saw me exercising and out of the blue said, "Grandpa, you are like Pacquiao." I said, "What?! who told you that?" With the dignity of a child whose Christmas wish has been fulfilled by Santa Claus, she casually replied, "Oh, I know him." Mind you she is almost blonde and is as white as her Belgian-French father. That's how well known Pacquiao is that even foreign kids heard of his fame.

But let me hasten to say that in politics he is a total blunder, an anomaly personified. He is a complete tyro and has yet to prove that he can be elected as a dogcatcher against the veteran Congressman James Chiongbian of Sarangani province whom he will face in this election. Congresswoman Custodio of General Santos City, already tossed him to the garbage can in his first try to crash Congress via her district where she has hard-boiled, deep-rooted following.

Don't damn me yet because I also sincerely believe he is a great boxing icon, but not a politician. One thing is to smash the face of a boxer and another is to tangle with intelligent opponents in the halls of Congress. Debating on a subject concerning the destiny of the nation demands implicit knowledge of law, economy, peace and order, etcetera. These are matters that should not be trifled with even by a great boxer like him.

He has his own turf and excels in that realm (boxing) where his prowess and skills are indispensable for that trade. But delving on the cerebral is beyond his competence and he should leave them to the masters. Besides, he is too good and too clean for the dirty game of politics. For now everybody loves him and he has no enemies. But if he pursues his desire to be in politics he will not only create enemies, he might be a target of political enemies who have no qualms to hurt him.

His fans should have more sense than electing him to Congress as they showed him the first time he tip his toes in politics, years ago. What does he expect to do as a lawmaker mimic clowns like Catchpoy, Ponga or Elizabeth Ramsy? Doesn't he realize that every time he speaks in English he murders Shakespeare and Congress is not a cemetery to mutilate the bard from Avon?

For instance, how will he debate on the issue of corruption regarding the anomalous C-5 scandal in which his friend Manny Villar is thickly involved? Not unnoticed by the citizenry, Villarna usefully patronizes Pacman to win in the elections. Did Pacquiao allow himself to be used by a politician who has been found guilty of corruption by the Committee of the Whole in the Senate? I believe he is above being used as a tool of Villar for the sordid agenda of the latter. Pacman, please continue singing and boxing. And if possible be an action actor but not a politician. You are too clean for that.

You put the Philippines in the pedestal of respectability internationally. No so-called Filipino leader has achieved what you did abroad in terms of honor for the country. Keep it that way Manny. You are the greatest in your turf and we need you to keep our country in the eyes of the world where before it was vaguely known. Don't ruin that hallmark of great success that laced your colorful career which is the envy of your rivals and even political "leaders" in the country, by wallowing in the sewer of politics. You have transcended the hero image. You are a legend beyond compare.

Lastly, will you please beat the daylights out of that lying, show-off Floyd Mayweather Jr! Do it for the nation Manny. Mabuhay ka!