

Pacquiao: I have to win to make my history in boxing

'It's easy for Hoya to say he'll KO me'

by FRANCIS OCHOA
Inquirer.net

OSCAR De La Hoya wants to make the biggest fight in Manny Pacquiao's career a really short one. Like, say, five rounds.

The Filipino ring icon, however, feels the Golden Boy will have a difficult time making good on that threat when the two fighters mix it up on Dec. 6 in a card billed as

the "Dream Match" at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

"He says he's going to knock me out in five rounds," the pound-for-pound champion said in Filipino, reacting to reports posted on the Internet that De La Hoya's camp is eyeing a bout that will not go beyond five.

"It's easy to say he'll knock me out in five rounds. But it's going to be difficult for him to do it."

Pacquiao expects De La Hoya to go all out right at the opening bell, a charge trainer Freddie Roach said on Tuesday he wants his ward to match.

And the 29-year-old southpaw believes he has what it takes to go toe-to-toe with boxing's Golden Boy every single second of the match.

And he wants to make every second count if only for one important reason.

"I consider this the biggest fight in my boxing career, the biggest fight of my life," Pacquiao said. "*Kailangan ko manalo para makagawa ng history sa boxing* (I have to win to make my history in boxing)."

Pundits say part of De La Hoya's reason in trying to finish the fight

early is actually because he can't carry himself past five rounds. But Pacquiao is not counting merely on that.

"We don't know what the result of the fight will be," Pacquiao said in Filipino.

And Pacquiao, who trained frenetically for three full hours Wednesday, added that even if De La Hoya wants to win via the full route, he'll be ready for that.

"*Kaya kong makipagsabayang ng 12 rounds sa kanya* (I can fight with him for 12 rounds)."

Pacquiao said he's looking out for De La Hoya's left—hook and straight—especially since he believes their stances will take the sting out of the Golden Boy's jab.

"He might not use the jab as often because I'm a southpaw and he's right-handed," explained Ring Magazine's No. 1 pound-for-pound fighter.

Pacquiao said he has lost nothing climbing to 147 pounds, the weight at which the megabuck bout will be fought.

"My power is there, my speed is still there. My power, in fact, has gotten stronger. I've been sparring with bigger guys and I've been able to take their punches. I think I can

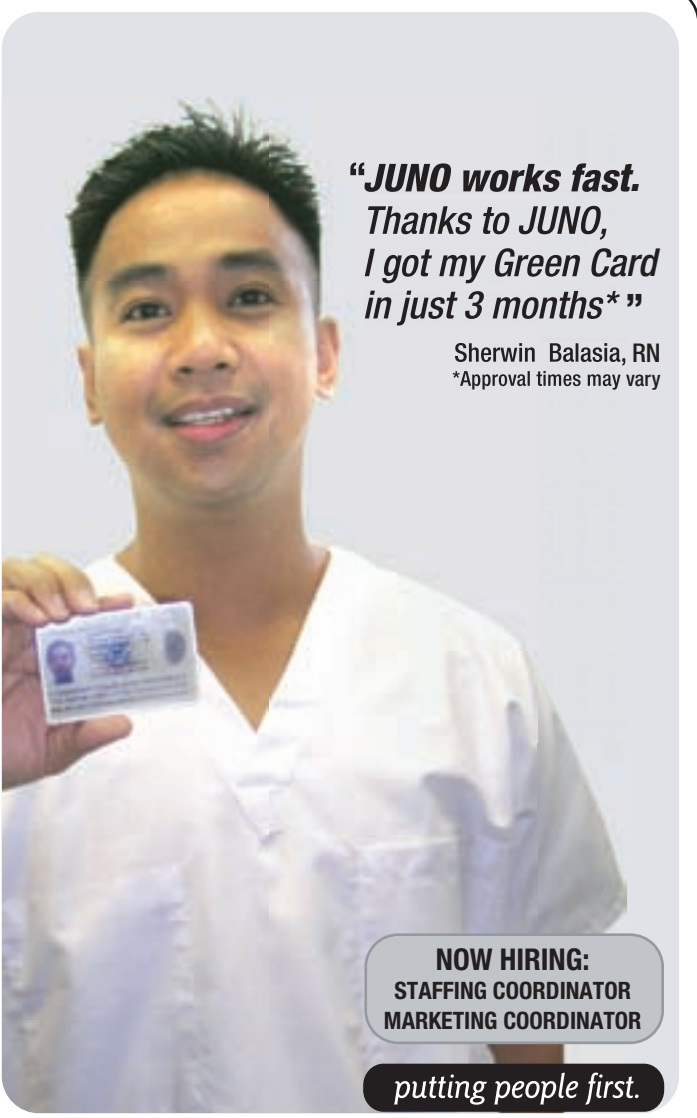


File photo shows Manny Pacquiao with a copy of *The Asian Journal*.

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Dundee sees some kinks in Pacman armor

OLDSMAR, FLORIDA—His 87-year-old eyes may no longer be as sharp as they used to be, but boxing legend Angelo Dundee remains analytical and insightful.

Even with his thick glasses, Dundee can still spot a flaw in a boxer's arsenal.

He'd seen one gaping hole in Manny Pacquiao's fighting style and had passed it on to Oscar De La Hoya along with other tips deemed to be helpful when the two ring icons tangle on Dec. 6 at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas.

According to Dundee, he sees a flaw from Pacquiao that he also

noticed to help Leonard upset Marvin Hagler.

"I noticed Hagler, as great a fighter as he was, had to step before he punched," Dundee said. "Now this kid Pacquiao does that same thing. Oscar will tear him to pieces if he does that."

Dundee even offered a prediction: De La Hoya in a decision.

Of course, Dundee is expected to pick De La Hoya, who plucked him out of retirement to help him prepare for the acknowledged pound-for-pound king.

Dundee, who is assisting Nacho Beristain in training De La Hoya, will not work the corner on fight night, but he's been reviewing

tapes of Pacquiao's fights and offering his opinions on strategy and technique to De La Hoya.

Lending help for a major fight for the first time in years—and maybe the last time in his career—has Dundee invigorated.

Dundee was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1994. He trained 15 world champions, including Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard, George Foreman, Carmen Basilio and Jose Napoles. He worked major boxing scenes with his promoter brother Chris Dundee.

Dundee now wears thick glasses, is stocky and bald. His once pale skin is full of wrinkles

and blemishes, so much so the deep scar on the right side of his neck—from surgery to repair a clogged artery—almost goes unnoticed.

"Ever since Angelo has been here, there's a new energy floating in the air, you know?" De La Hoya said from his training camp in Big Bear City, California, when Dundee was there for a week. "The fact that we have a legend in the sport of boxing here in the gym...it's like a breath of fresh air having Angelo. The stories that he tells you, the Sugar Ray Leonard days, the Ali days and the little tricks up his sleeves." (AP)

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