

## Asians in American sports • Asian Americans in world sports

## Pacquiao uses smarts, not strength, to defeat Bradley

By Mike Street

Special to The Asian Reporter

The last 20 years have been good for Filipino boxing fans. Ever since his 1995 debut, their countryman, Manny “Pacman” Pacquiao, has electrified the boxing ring. His style featured fists that hit with blinding speed from every angle and with the power of a man many times his size, enabling him to become the first boxer ever to win a world title in eight different weight classes.

But Pacman’s skills have faded with age, leading to the first back-to-back losses in his career and murmurs that he should retire. In April, Pacman redeemed himself with a convincing victory against an undefeated opponent, silencing those murmurs and giving Filipino boxing fans the promise of more sensational victories to come from their champion.

The first of Pacquiao’s back-to-back losses came at the hands of Timothy Bradley in June of 2012, the same boxer Pacman faced last month. As I wrote in a previous column, Bradley won a split decision that few observers agreed with. Pacquiao had been the better boxer, but the judges awarded the fight to Bradley. Despite a rescoring that awarded Pacquiao the fight, the scorecards of the judges were final, and Bradley took the World Boxing Organization (WBO) welterweight title belt from Pacquiao.

Pacman had a shot at redemption in December of that year, facing Juan Manuel Marquez, the Mexican boxer he’d met three times before, ending in two victories and a draw for Pacquiao. This time around, Pacquiao was expected to win again, but he failed to meet those expectations.

Both fighters went down in the early rounds, and the two exchanged a flurry of punches in the waning seconds of the sixth round. Pacquiao left himself wide open while throwing a right, and Marquez met



**FROM BRAWLER TO BOXER.** Manny Pacquiao, right, of the Philippines, faces off against opponent Timothy Bradley in their World Boxing Organization welterweight title fight last month in Las Vegas. Pacquiao defeated Bradley in the bout, displaying smart, patient tactics. (AP Photo/Isaac Brekken)

knockout blow as his only game plan. Instead of the relentless strategy that allowed him to outpoint Marquez, Bradley swung from the heels, often finding that Pacquiao retained enough speed to dodge those blows, leaving Bradley pawing at empty air.

And when one of Bradley’s blows did land, like his tooth-rattling shot in the fourth round that must have made Pacquiao see stars, Pacman responded with ring generalship and determination. Avoiding the close confrontation that had doomed him against Marquez, Pacquiao waited for his chance to strike, landing tough shots against Bradley in the sixth and seventh rounds and then backing the younger man into the ropes and pummeling him remorselessly.

No more wading in heedless of the consequences, no more relying on fast hands and feet to compensate for errors in judgement. Pacquiao went from a brawler to a boxer, satisfied with a unanimous victory instead of the macho satisfaction of a knockout.

As the possibility of a superfight against Floyd Mayweather, Jr., fades amid the money-grubbing machinations of professional boxing, an aging Pacman showed he still possesses the skills he needs to be successful. His next opponent could be Marquez yet again, or the rising British boxer (and Pacquiao sparring partner) Amir Khan. Whoever it is, it will certainly be a younger man, giving Pacman another opportunity to display the smart, patient tactics of a successful older boxer — and Filipino fans another chance to cheer on their native son, one of the best pound-for-pound boxers of all time.

his lunging opponent with a jarring right hand that landed flush on Pacman’s nose. The Filipino boxer dropped to the canvas, out cold.

It was the first time he’d lost a fight by knockout since 1999, and many wondered if the 34-year-old might retire and focus on his legislative and commercial interests. Already a representative in the congress of the Philippines, Pacquiao also stars on a sitcom called “Show Me Da Manny,” hosts a game show called “Manny Many Prizes,” released the single “Sometimes When We Touch” in 2011, and owns the Filipino semi-pro basketball team “Pacman Gensam,” with whom he sometimes plays.

Instead of retiring from the ring, Pacquiao set out to prove himself. He took nearly a year off, the longest pause of his career, before last November’s comeback bout against Brandon Rios, a 27-year-old journeyman with a 31-1 record. Pacman gobbled up Rios easily, winning by unanimous decision, but could not knock the younger fighter out. That inability to put Rios down for good added to the doubts surrounding the aging Pacquiao as he

prepared to fight Timothy Bradley.

Bradley, for his part, was coming off the best year in his young career. Following his controversial split decision over Pacquiao in 2012, Bradley defended his WBO welterweight title against Ruslan Provodnikov in 2013, defeating the Russian in a toe-to-toe slugfest widely regarded as the fight of the year. Bradley’s next match, with Juan Manuel Marquez, was also close, but he won a split decision against the same boxer that had knocked Pacman out cold.

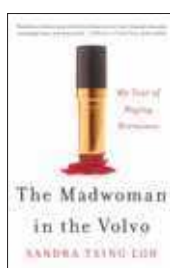
The stage was set for Pacman’s redemption, facing an undefeated Bradley on a roll of victories, even though many pointed out that Bradley lacked the power to knock out Pacman as Marquez had. Pacquiao took the long layoff as a chance to change up his style to one more suited to an aging boxer, relying on his smarts more than his strength.

Against Bradley, Pacman displayed those tools, which could help him extend his already impressive career. Although both fighters boasted they would knock out the other, Bradley seemed to have that

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Sandra Tsing Loh

May 5, 7:30pm, Powell’s City of Books (1005 W Burnside St, Portland). Join Sandra Tsing Loh as she presents *The Madwoman in the Volvo*, a candid yet funny tale of her roller-coaster ride through “the change.” Loh speaks hilariously and honestly about her life as a mother, a daughter, and an artist while recounting her efforts to maintain appearances during the epic hormonal changes of menopause. For info, call (503) 228-4651 or visit <www.powells.com>.



*The Madwoman in the Volvo*

## Sou Fujimoto

May 7, 6pm, Portland State University, Lincoln Performance Hall, Room 75 (1620 SW Park Ave, Portland). Attend a free lecture by internationally acclaimed architect Sou Fujimoto as part of the Portland State University School of Architecture’s “Unclad” lecture series. Fujimoto is a principal of Sou Fujimoto Architects, a Tokyo-based practice distinguished by its provocative buildings that combine material experimentation and structural subtlety with transparency and permeability. For info, call (503) 725-8405, e-mail <architecture@pdx.edu>, or visit <www.pdx.edu/the-arts/architecture>.

## Justin Go

May 7, 7pm, Third Place Books (17171 Bothell Way NE, Lake Forest Park, Wash.). Join Justin Go as he presents his debut novel, *The Steady Running of the Hour*. The book follows a young man’s quest to inherit the fortune left by English mountaineer Ashley Walsingham, who died in 1924 while attempting to summit Mount Everest. For info, call (206) 366-3333 or visit <www.thirdplacebooks.com>.

## OAME luncheon and tradeshow

May 8, 10am-noon & 1:30-3pm (tradeshow), noon-1:30pm (luncheon), Oregon Convention Center, Exhibit Hall D (777 NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Portland). Attend “The Future Is Now ... Dare to Think Big,” the 26th annual Luncheon & Tradeshow of the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME). The event is designed to help businesses increase networking with minority-owned companies, government agencies, and others while sampling their diverse products and services. The tradeshow is closed from noon to 1:30pm during the luncheon. For info, or to register, call (503) 249-7744 or visit <www.oame.org>.

## Jenny Han book event

May 8, 7pm, Powell’s Books at Cedar Hills Crossing (3415 SW Cedar Hills Blvd, Beaverton, Ore.). Join Jenny Han as she presents *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before*, a novel about what happens when all the crushes one has ever had find out how you felt about them — all at once. For info, call (503) 643-3131 or visit <www.powells.com>.

## “Confucianism and Society in Modern East Asia: The Case of Korea”

May 9, 6pm, Portland State University, Smith Center, Room 236 (1825 SW Broadway, Portland). Attend “Confucianism and Society in Modern East Asia: The Case of Korea,” a talk about the ways Confucianism has been intertwined with politics, economic development, and social change in modern Korea. The event also includes comments on how leaders in other East Asian countries are now seeking to revive Confucianism to deal with a wide range of social, political, and diplomatic problems. For info, call (503) 725-8576, e-mail <asianstudies@pdx.edu>, or visit <www.pdx.edu/asian-studies>.

## Portland Thorns FC vs. Seattle Reign FC

May 10, 7pm, Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison St, Portland). Watch Portland Thorns FC take on Seattle Reign FC in the National Women’s Soccer League. Portland’s squad features Mana Shim, Angie Kerr-Wozniak, Christine Sinclair, and others. Seattle includes Japan Women’s National Team Nahomi “Naho” Kawasumi, Megan Rapinoe, Stephanie Cox, and others. See related story, “NWSL kicks off second season” (AR, April 7, 2014), at <www.asianreporter.com>. For info, or to buy tickets, call (503) 553-5555 or visit <www.portlandthorns.com>.

## Sunday Parkways: East Portland

May 11, 11am-4pm, Bloomington, Ed Benedict, and Glenwood Parks (Southeast Portland). Walk and bike through southeast Portland neighborhoods and parks without motor traffic during a Sunday Parkways event. Entertainment and activities take place in the parks and along the two-way, seven-mile route, which has no start or finish. For info, call (503) 823-7599 or visit <www.Portlandsundayparkways.org>.

## An Equal Music

May 15, 1-2:30pm, Hillsdale Library (1525 SW Sunset Blvd, Portland). Engage in conversation about classic literature at a Pageturners discussion sponsored by Friends of the Library. The

book for discussion is Vikram Seth’s *An Equal Music*, a romantic tale about two gifted musicians. For info, call (503) 988-5388 or visit <events.multcolib.org>.

## Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet

May 15, 6:30-7:45pm, Hollywood Library (4040 NE Tillamook St, Portland). Engage in conversation about books at a Pageturners discussion sponsored by Friends of the Library. The book for discussion is Jamie Ford’s debut novel, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, set during World War II in the ethnic neighborhoods of Seattle and Japanese-American internment camps. See story by Josephine Bridges (“It could change the world,” AR, December 5, 2011) at <www.asianreporter.com>. For info, call (503) 988-5391 or visit <events.multcolib.org>.

## “Drink in China: Ales, Wines and Spirits”

May 16, 6-7:30pm (talk), 7:30-8:30pm (reception), University of Oregon, White Stag Building (70 NW Couch St, Portland). Attend “Uncorking the Chinese Past: The Archaeological and Chemical Discovery of the World’s Oldest Wines,” a free talk by Dr. Patrick E. McGovern of the University of Pennsylvania. The lecture illustrates the biomolecular archaeology behind the discovery of the most ancient alcoholic beverage in the world, recovered from a Neolithic tomb site in Jiahu, in China’s Henan province. For info, or to buy tickets to the reception (required), call (503) 973-5451 or visit <www.nwchina.org>.

## Disability Pride Festival

May 16-24; May 16, 7-9pm (reception), In Other Words Women’s Books and Resources (8 NE Killingsworth St, Portland); May 17, 7-9:30pm (arts panel & installation), Center for Intercultural Organizing (700 N Killingsworth St, Portland); May 17-18 & 20 (residency), Zoomtopia, Studio Two (810 SE Belmont St, Portland); May 23-24, 7-9pm (performances), Zoomtopia (810 SE Belmont St, Portland). Attend the Disability Pride Festival, a celebration with music, dance, poetry, and spoken word. The annual event, presented by the Disability Art and Culture Project, this year features Sri Lankan performer and writer Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarsinha. For info, or to buy tickets, call (503) 238-0723, e-mail <kafia2008@yahoo.com>, or visit <www.dacphome.org>.

## “Indonesia: Java &amp; Sumatra”

May 17, 8-9pm; repeats May 19, midnight-1am; Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB). Join host Megan as she explores two of the 11,000 islands in the Indonesian archipelago, learns about

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