
SHOOTING IT OUT WITH THE CEBUANOS AND ILONGOS

by
V. MANUEL
Secretary, N. R. P. A.



Sec. V. Manuel, manager and coach, wonders why one of his boys made such a lousy score. He is pointing to a tangent hit made by a NRPA shooter

* * *

This is not a gang warfare. Nor is this a grudge shooting.

This is a narration of the highlights of the last inter-club shoot held at the progressive City of Cebu on April 30th and May 1st, this year, interlaced with the adventures of the N.R.P.A. teams and crammed with the headaches of their coach.

When the whistle blew on the first day of the shoot and the contestants took their respective positions in the firing line, the N.R.P.A. squad was quite certain that the Cebuanos as well as the Ilongos were good shots. Although the N.R.P.A. boys were calm and determination discernible in their eager faces, there was a feeling of numbness slowly

creeping from the tips of my toes and coming up, up, and finally gave me the jitters when the outcome of the slow fire stage of the first event was known. N.R.P.A. was badly beaten and despondency nearly assailed me. It was then that I managed to command and bring together my scattered faculties and told the boys that unless we made each shot count, we would have to be relegated to the scrap heap of the vanquished. However. . . .

When the smoke of the first battle cleared it was apparent that the N.R.P.A. had the situation well in hand when Teddy Kalaw piled so many points in the timed and rapid fire stages that the Cebuanos, who were confident at the start, wore long faces then. My hopes soared up to the stratosphere. I was then sure that we would emerge victorious despite the fact that the Cebuanos and the Ilongos, the eternal allies, were bent upon breaking the offensive let loose by the invaders from Manila. The U. P. boys, badly handicapped, and seeing that it would not help them any to block the path of the N.R.P.A. changed tactics. They concentrated their attention to covering the steady advance of the N.R.P.A. with a relentless barrage to occupy either second or third places in all the encounters. Lt. Capili, the genial U. P. coach, was a glutton for details, and thanks to him several points were not lost by both his team and ours.

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The Crack shots of the Cebu Gun Club who formed the Pistol and Rifle Team in the last Inter Club Tournament, held in Cebu April 30 and May 1st, 1939. From left, sitting: Judge T. Arnoco, S. Avellanosa and S. Farol. Standing: T. Esquero, Dr. D. Recio and Lt. H. C. Pacaña.

If you would ask me just how the N.R.P.A. slaughtered everybody in easy fashion, I'd tell you that it was in the main purely a psychological trick that we played on the Cebuanos. At first I was not aware of it, and it was only when our boys were setting a fast stride that I remembered all about it. Here it is.

When we received the invitation of the Cebuanos to shoot it out with them in Cebu City, I wrote them a letter to the effect that the N.R.P.A. was only waiting for a chance to vindicate its defeat at their hands for the Montilla Trophy, and that Cebu was on the spot. I followed this letter with another wherein I told the Cebuanos that the boys have been constantly practicing and that they were in the pink of condition. Their guns were red-hot, so to speak. And when I chanced to pass Cebu on my way to Mindanao, one week before the shoot, I told the captain of the Cebuanos that our shooters were the pick of the land and that with the easy course scheduled in their program, everything was a cinch.

But. . .

Before giving an account of the shoot, let me tell you first about the progressive City of Cebu.

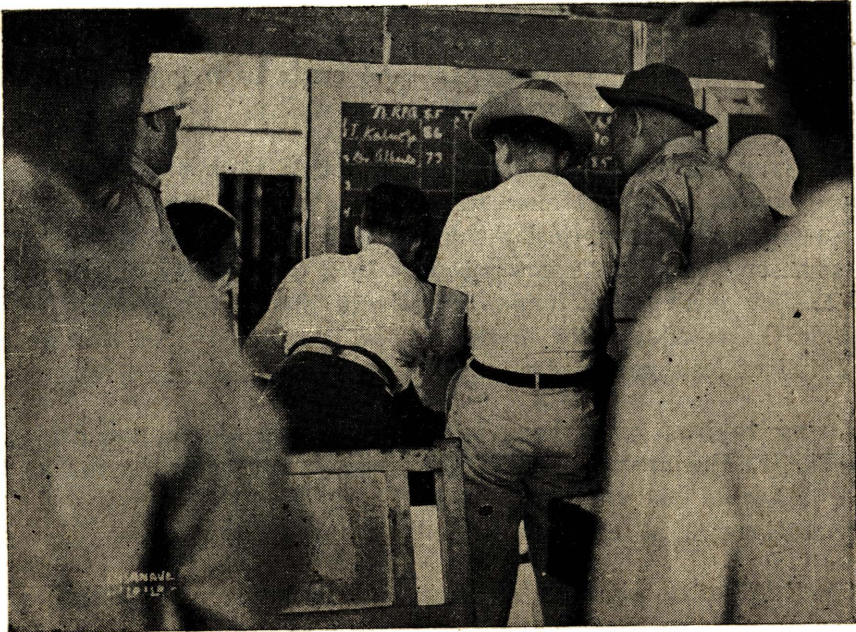
Cebu City is so much like Manila, with the exception, of course, of the hot spots in the bigger city, that one invariably feels at home in Cebu. Besides, the people are courteous, including the taxi-drivers. However. . .

A coach will have lots of head-aches, if not a serious nervous breakdown, managing a shooting team in this southern city. In the first place, you must consider the taxi-drivers.

"Señor, quiere taxi? Quiere goodtime?" A wink of his eyes meant many things.

One is usually accosted in this manner by the taxi-drivers on the side walks or immediately after putting his wobbly feet on Cebu shores. At the waterfront one is sure to be mobbed by these drivers.

Another thorn in your side is the ricketty "tartanilla" that topples back, nearly throwing you out, when you get in for a ride.



Sec. V. Manuel is here watching the scorer put down the right scores on the blackboard. To his right stands Judge Arnoco, President of the Cebu Gun Club. On the blackboard can be seen the first scores for slow fire: T. Kalaw, 86 — Dr. Alberto, 73 (both N.R.P.A.)

* * *

I became coach of the N.R.P.A teams by adoption. When I passed Cebu City again on my way back to Manila, one day before the shoot, I was told by the boys that Judge Jaranilla, our official team manager and coach, was not available for the reason that he was then in Baguio handling an important case. And the boys being without a "father", had to adopt me, and this was how I happened to take the place of Judge Jaranilla as coach of the team.

When one of your boys is frequently asked by taxi-drivers the same question, day and night, in mono syllables, "Quiere taxi, quiere. . . señor?", you would certainly jump three feet and explode.

Baltazar is a good fellow, but he has a quality of intrinsic value to the taxi-drivers. He has the stamp of a foreigner and the mein and gait of an oppulent "hacendero", so that these hustlers group around him. But, as usual, good old Balty shoo them away as quickly as they come to him, and you can then breathe easily. Hurray for Balty, he can take care of himself!

And what about Villamor? This south-paw easily gets sea-sick, but he can be cured just as easy by luscious curves. When he made passes to the waitresses at the Eden restaurant, without having his block knocked off, and assured one of them "marami cuata sa maynila", I thought for a moment I'd pack up and beat it.

Then you have Teddy Kalaw in your hands to worry about. He is the most reserved, but the most romantically inclined among the lot. And in Cebu there are romantically inclined girls too. What would you do when you see Teddy make goo-goo eyes to a pert, pretty cashier at the Elite, and by your watch it was already in the neighborhood of eleven o'clock in the evening prior to the shoot? And on top of this he goes to bed full of ice-cream sodas.

Trying to keep your boys within your folds is an arduous task. Jaranilla, Jr., the anchor man of the team, is still groping in the "innocent" stage of his virile manhood. So, he has to be protected from all temptations at all cost.

"Doc" Alberto, who can diagnose any sickness and determine the heart-beats of any girl just like that, with a snap of his fingers, makes things too hot and tumultuous to suit a coach, whose inclinations are dangerously wavering along the same lines as those of his boys. Castelo had the presence of mind to bring along his own coach. His wife took care of him.

April 30th was a Sunday, and the boys went to church quite early.

The first day of the shoot was a hot one. When I say hot, I mean HOT. Heated discussion prevailed all around during the first hour between an I.R.A. shooter, the captain of Cebu, and yours truly. It all started when "Doc" Alberto refused to take his place at the firing line because the line was not in proper alignment with that of the targets. The I.R.A. fellow said he could shoot in any crooked position; yours truly said that if he could do it he must be a contortionist; then the Cebuano butted in and said that we were both cross-eyed and that the lines were in proper alignment. The umpire all the while desperately kept on blowing his whistle trying to keep up a semblance of order. After this verbal skirmish, the umpire finally had the situation in hand, blew his whistle very weakly, and the fire works begun.

Taking their positions at the firing line the N.R.P.A. squad, composed of Kalaw, Villamor, "Doc" Alberto and Castelo, shot it out in an

easy fashion and copped first place in the National Match Course, for center fire hand guns, 21 points ahead of Cebu. And they did this feat after having been badly beaten in the slow fire stage, and yours truly came close to buckling down. U. P. came up from very far behind and took third place. Individual honors went to Teddy Kalaw who took 1st place, Villamor, 2nd, and Dr. Recio of Cebu, 3rd.

The next event was the individual International Course for small bore rifle, 40 shots, metallic sights at 50 meters. Although this event lacked the enthusiasm shown in team events, it was, nevertheless, interesting from the point of view of individual honors. The result was very upsetting for the home teams. Our Jaranilla, Jr. took first honors one point ahead of Pijuan of I.R.A., who placed second, while Farol of Cebu finished third.

It was already well past one o'clock in the afternoon when the order "cease firing" was given. Everybody then had an awful void deep in his stomach, so that all available means of transportation had to be mustered to transfer the casualties to the eating place in the city. A succulent lunch was served at the LIDO, a famous eating joint in the City of Cebu. The genial hosts, the Cebu Gun Club, were untiring in their efforts to make everybody happy, despite his hunger. The occasion was a lively affair, everybody talked at the same time.

With everybody fully loaded with a "supply" enough to last a week, the contestants were all geared for the order of "commence firing" at exactly two-thirty in the afternoon.

The third event for the day was the Dewar team match. Baltazar, Villamor, "Doc" Alberto, and Jaranilla, Jr. defended the colors of the N.R.P.A. The shoot was very closely contested. The Cebuanos, after the 50 yard stage, made an effort to rally but the N.R.P.A. again took

DR. V. DE DIOS

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first honors after the scores for the 100 yard stage were verified, barely two points ahead of the home team. U. P. again was satisfied with third place. Jaranilla, Jr. was the highest individual pointer.

When we hit the hay that evening, tired, but happy, we had already won 2 cups and 12 medals. The boys pretended to be asleep, but the fact was that nobody could sleep on account of the excitement, and each one was thinking of what the next day would bring. Teddy sneaked away for more ice-cream sodas.

The next day, Monday, May 1st, it was even hotter. The I.R.A. folks were up quite early, and as if to taunt the N.R.P.A. took their breakfast at the Eden where the Manilans get their meals. The Ilongos were determined to massacre the boys from Manila, and they told us so.

The order to "commence firing" was given at exactly ten in the morning. The first event was the individual slow center fire shoot at 50 yards. Iloilo entered only one shooter. The entry was a "gaucho" who got tired of riding the pampas of Argentina, came to the Philippines and became a "Pinoy". Incidentally he was the only one of the visiting teams that boasted of a private directory of the City of Cebu, inside out, compiled in just one night.

Teddy romped away with first honors, scoring one point ahead of Avillanosa of Cebu. Farol, also of Cebu, placed third. During this event, the I.R.A. boys shot their big guns in practice, since it was popularly conceded that they would down everybody with their Springfields. Lunch was brought and served at the ranges, and a much livelier day was had by all.

After a respite of two hours, the umpire announced the last event, the 30 cal. rifle shoot, 40 shoots at 200 yards. Teddy, "Doc" Alberto, Baltazar and Jaranilla, Jr. picked up the cudgels for the N.R.P.A. After the first string of 20 shots, I knew our boys will make a good showing. My prediction became true. The N.R.P.A. downed its keenest rival, the I.R.A., by 49 points, so that we again took first place, while Iloilo had to content itself with second place. The U.P. boys, after a good scolding by Lt. Cabili, were able to creep up to third. Individual honors went to three of our outstanding riflemen; Teddy Kalaw, Dr. J. C. Alberto, and Victor Baltazar.

When all the results have been verified, a caucus was held by the representatives of the Cebu Gun Club, Iloilo Rifle Association, the

U. P. and the N.R.P.A. It was decided to hold the next inter-club shoot in the City of Iloilo in 1940 to coincide with the Carnival in that city. The national championships are to be held in Manila, the N.R.P.A. to act as hosts, in 1941.

I have to express here my appreciation for the efficient manner in which delicate problems regarding questioned scores have been satisfactorily solved by the committee headed by Mr. Mariano Nava of Iloilo. A tribute should also be extended to Judge Arnoco, president of Cebu Gun Club, for his cooperation with this committee.

In the evening I set loose all my wards. I was very glad that I had no more responsibilities in my hands. A couple went to see the Cebu Carnival; Teddy celebrated our victory with more ice-cream sodas; others hired a taxi and went for a ride, and what a ride! Only Villamor remained at the hotel on account of a previous engagement with somebody from Manila who was selling cosmetics. When I laid in my bed that night, I was satisfied that our boys were reliable, well behaved, and that there was never a finer bunch of straight shooters than they.

The following day, May 2nd, we said good-by to our hosts and all our friends. When we boarded the s/s "Panay" that morning, we experienced a mixed feeling of happiness and sadness. We were happy because we gloriously won the shoots and that we were coming home to our loved ones. And we were sad because as the boat cast off her moorings, we were leaving behind us our newly made friends who have all been good and courteous to us. I can say here that the bonds of friendship that tie together all the members of the gun clubs that participated in the shoot, have been strengthened by the frank cordiality of the hosts, the Cebu Gun Club, and by the spirit of high sportsmanship shown by everybody.

I also wish to add that I am certain that the Cebu shooters will make a better showing next time. It was their first shoots and naturally they were somewhat rattled, in other words, more or less nervous.

All in all the N.R.P.A. teams won three cups and 21 medals.

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