

The Month in Sports: The Third Man in the Ring

By CARROLL D. ALCOTT

Three weeks ago, Saturday evening, March 24, three referees of boxing bouts required police protection to save themselves from the crowds who attended as many cards staged in and near Manila. Rafael Ortega, one of the third men who finds employment at the Olympic Stadium, was stoned after he had rendered a verdict that failed to please. I think it was a bad decision. Rush Terry was given the nod over Blatting Guillermo, when he did not deserve as much as a draw. The men are a pair of gym horses in the preliminary class.

A shower of rocks, preceded by hooting, and Ortega was escorted from the building by the police.

The other two cases of the same sort occurring that night affected Kid Nanoy, former bantam-weight champion of the Orient, and the veteran Manila fighter Elino Flores. Nanoy was mobbed at Pasig after he had rendered what many stated was a fair verdict. At Orani, Elino Flores, who had been designated to decide a bout, gave an honest opinion and then had to fight his way out of the stadium. Elino has had but sworn off refereeing. It was certainly a bad night for the third man.

The decision handed down by Ortega at the local stadium was deserving of criticism, as are at least fifty per cent of his verdicts. He is not a referee in the strictest sense and would probably do much better at plumbing or shoemaking. But as referees in the Philippines go he does well enough, it would be unkind to emphasize his faults when there are so many more of his profession quite as bad.

Saturday night, March 31, Mike Toomey, Manila's most popular judge of professional fistic encounters, rendered a decision in the case of Irineo Flores and Kid Johnson that was disagreed with by the minority. Mike gave the verdict to Johnson after Flores had made the Filipino miss many of his punches—enough to lose the bout. But there was little razzing of Mike.

Toomey no doubt based his opinion on the fact that Johnson was the aggressor. He had no other basis, the exchange of solid punches

was in favor of Flores. This prompts the thought, what does it profit a fighter, even though he do the forcing, who fails to hit his opponent? Assuredly he appears silly in the eyes of the average fan and even witless. He might as well save his efforts. Missing punches has lost more fights than any one other failure I know of, and it should have lost for Johnson when he fought Flores. Happily, Toomey did not receive a great deal of hissing. Had he given the fight to Flores, he probably would listen to criticism for many days.

The Flores-Johnson incident proves that the crowd is not always a good judge; but the referee's decision was the popular one. Those that disagreed with the verdict were principally ringiders and their opinion was probably the most correct. Their boos were in the minority and made little impression. But Ortega's unpopular decision was productive of stonings. The crowd was right, but there are many times when it isn't. The antagonism of Manila sport fans toward umpires and referees is working to the detriment of baseball and boxing. Men who are capable of developing, refuse to stand behind the catcher or go into the ring, for the simple reason that it isn't worth the effort, considering the abuse taken. And grandstand umpires are seldom right. If Manila is to have more and better referees, more sportsmanship must be shown by the fans.

Baseball. Outstanding sport developments in Manila during the month of March were few in contrast with previous months of the present athletic season. Baseball as played by the Philippine Baseball League was the most important and several new angles were thrown on the present scene of hostilities.

The Eagles, tailenders when the league completed its first half of the season schedule, have evolved into one of the strongest nine Manilans have witnessed in action for many years. At this writing, they are tied with Meraleo for the league leadership and there is little prospect of them dropping the tie. Apparently nothing

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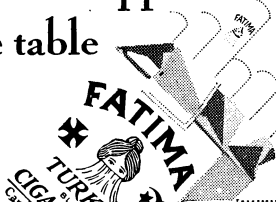
"You must go back now, Ned," he said huskily, pushing at the chair. "I'll be all right. And you take care of yourself too. Go back to your room now, Ned, and . . . and pray!"

They wheeled Goofy away, but he hummed as he went, the rollicking verses of *Parley Wood!* He holds his engineer's ticket now—as good a man as there is on the Pacific. And he isn't Goofy any more. Let any man dare call him that! He's Ned McGill, with a record as clean as a slate. About the *Monooga* and her devilish capers. Cap McGill thinks now that God merely moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. Maybe He does, maybe He does.

PERSONNEL PROGRESSING

The Wood-Forbes report found the Philippine civil service crowded with 582 Americans and 12,561 Filipinos drawing from the treasury a total of P16,669,318. The next year's bill was P18,295,497 for 614 Americans and 13,143 Filipinos; the next year's P18,943,283 for 604 Americans and 13,726 Filipinos; the next year's P19,654,205 for 562 Americans and 14,167 Filipinos; the next year's P21,209,239 for 526 Americans and 15,212 Filipinos; the next year's P22,620,910 for 506 Americans and 16,339 Filipinos; the next year's P24,562,532 for 462 Americans and P17,756 Filipinos; and the next year's bill, that of 1927, was P26,491,026 for 484 Americans and 19,165 Filipinos. All the figures pertain to regularly and permanently appointed persons alone. The increase in personnel between 1920, furnishing the latest data for the Wood-Forbes report, and 1927 was 6,506, almost exactly 50%; and the increase in total remuneration during the same period was P9,831,708, or approximately 65%. In 1920, American salaries averaged P4,076.48 and Filipino salaries P1,138.20, the average of all being P1,268.30. In 1927, American salaries averaged P4,225.96 and Filipino salaries P1,275.54, the average of all being then P1,348.22, which was the basis upon which 1928 operations began.

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short of plague will cause them to break.

In spite of their strength, the Eagles lack the ability to play consistent baseball. They have the Indian sign on the Conductors, but Cavite and the Scouts, the two weakest teams in the loop, can trounce the All-American selection with too constant regularity. They should be at least four games in the lead of the Carmen, judging from the brand of baseball they are capable of playing.

Errors are still largely responsible for the losses that are being chalked against the Eagles. They have succeeded in plugging a minimum figure in the making of bingles, but even so the chances they do miff are costly. One wild throw will send a game already won into the loss column and such throws are too frequently made by members of the Eagles roster.

Nig Mayhall, Eagle moundsman, is the outstanding pitching sensation in the league at present. Mayhall had eight victories and two losses to his credit on April 1, in addition to a pair of Frank Merriwell that saved as many games for hurling teammates.

Mayhall possesses an outstanding faculty for pulling games out of the fire. The 31st Infantry sergeant staged his first piece of sensational pitching on Sunday afternoon, March 11.

With the bases choked by a trio of Meralco runners, in the last inning, Nig took the mound, relieving Scott, who had been rapped heavily in the latter cantos. He retired the side and saved the game. A double would have meant a tie score and it was a bad hole in which to send a cold pitcher. But the Bruin lived up to all that was expected of him and more too, by fanning Regis, one of Meralco's heavy artillerymen, and ending the game.

Mayhall repeated his performance under almost exactly the same circumstances Sunday afternoon, March 25. He relieved Scott in the last frame, and retired the side to give Scott a victory over the Scouts. The final score was 4 to 3 and when Nig took the mound the count stood in serious danger of being knotted, there being no outs. When he retired the side there was a runner on second and third. A double would have won the game for the Scouts while a single would have tied it.

The performances that Mayhall has turned in during recent games deserve a great deal of credit. He has earned the right to be called the outstanding hurler in the league and the possibilities of his going far in baseball, if he decides to return to the United States in the near future, are many. He possesses pitching brains, good control and an assortment of balls that combine to give him the change of pace necessary to win games.

In spite of the possession of Mayhall, the success of the Eagles in the present race for the pennant depends largely on Bobby Robinson's ability to hold his present team together. The Harkins brothers, Louis and Joe, are scheduled to return to the United States on the next transport, but, I understand, have arranged to go on the July boat, thus eliminating one problem. Frazer is likewise slated to leave this month, as is also Agrusa. Both can be spared, but not handily.

It is hardly necessary to review in detail the performances of the league teams during the past month. April 1 saw the Eagles and Meralco tied for first position with ten victories and six losses. Cavite has apparently recovered from its hitting slump and won its games on March 31

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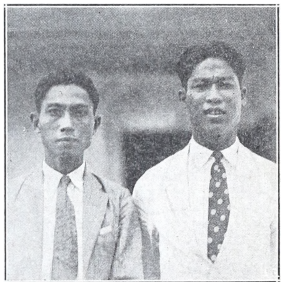
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maintained a fighting spirit throughout the schedule and are to be commended for their gameness.

Hitting and field averages have varied but little since the middle of February. The Eagles and Meralco are clouting the horsehide with sufficient regularity to keep them at the top of the remainder of the season. Cavite has a decided edge on the Scouts. The same is true of fielding.

In the wake of the high class of baseball being played at Nozalea park, a keen interest has followed on the part of the fans. It is safe to say that baseball is gaining its oldtime popularity in the Philippines and another season of the sort we are now experiencing will mean a great deal to the future of America's national sport in this country. The game should be improved, as it is rapidly becoming the foremost line of athletic endeavor in the Orient. Now the leading competition in Japan, it is gaining a strong place in China. Certainly a country flying the American flag has no right to let the game slip.

This month, Manilans will be furnished with an opportunity of seeing how the local sons of swat stack up against the best that Japan has produced. The Daimai, famous professional



THE 1928 PHILIPPINES DAVIS CUP TEAM
Left: Guillermo Aragon, captain, and brother of Francisco Aragon, ranking P. I. player, who was unable to make the trip. Right: Lope Yagayo, student sensation who defeated his present teammate in the Davis Cup eliminations held here.

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club of Osaka, is scheduled to reach the city on April 27, and the first game will be played on April 28. Three teams will be selected from the ranks of Philippine league players to accommodate the visitors, and it is not necessary to say that the selections are good ones. One All-star Filipino, one all-star American, and an all-star team of both Americans and Filipinos will comprise the homeland defense.

The local players will have the edge on the Japanese in hitting power. The Daimai possess only one .300 hitter, while the rest range from .195 to .295. But their team average for the season of 1927 was comparatively high, .254 being the figure. If local stars can succeed in hitting Daimai hurlers as hard as they do their own, then interesting developments can be expected.

Boxing. It appears that Stewart Tait, one of the fathers of the boxing industry in the Philippines, will still remain in his chosen profession despite his selling the Stadium, at least the majority of stock thereof. Tait has retained a block of stock while his right hand bower, Bernabe Gutierrez, still remains as matchmaker and one of the incorporators of the new organization.

As a further indication of Eddie's inability to leave the glamor of the arena, he has announced his intention of leaving for New York on or about April 15 for the purpose of securing a team of boxers for performance here. He will be gone about four months, according to his present plans, and he hopes to bring back a group of men who have sufficiently attractive records to induce Manila fans to part with lucre enough to make the jaunt profitable.

On the surface, it appears that the old régime is still to be very much in evidence, for a time at least. It is a good thing Tait has given Manilans a place to spend an enjoyable Saturday evening and he knows the game. His influence should be a decided help in starting the new corporation off on the right foot, and the fact that he wishes to bring new blood into the islands is a move in the right direction. Now, if the new organization would only open a school for referees.

The first fights under the new management are on this month's schedule. And several good ones have been lined up. Kid Moro is to fight Garcia. Montañez appeared against Sarmiento on the evening of April 7. Kid Johnson and Joe Hall, the colored invader, will probably be among the main event attractions within a few weeks although it is hardly probable that they will be matched against each other. Garcia will likely be one of the first opponents for Hall. If not Garcia, then Kid Moro. Certainly, Hall has plenty of men waiting to walk into the ring with him.

Last month was productive of two outstanding fights, the first being between Kid Moro and Kid Johnson on March 8. Johnson lost the scrap simply because of his lack of boxing wits. Nevertheless, the fight was close and there were many who believed that Johnson should have been given a draw. It was one of the best battles I have witnessed at the Stadium this year and more of the same sort would be welcome.

On the evening of March 31, Johnson fought Irineo Flores and actually lost although the decision was given to him. It was a fair fight and produced some fair slugging. I have already explained my views on this battle elsewhere in this article. Repetition would prove monotonous.

Manila will lose one of its best box office attractions in things fistic when Pete Sarmiento packs up his gloves and leaves for Australia. The nucleus of the Sarmiento family is booked for the last of this month and three bouts await the head of the house when he arrives in Sydney. He has been guaranteed 25 per cent of the gate receipts which means that Pete will soon be able to pay off the mortgage. It is a safe venture that Don Pedro will make money on his trip for he still has enough of his oldtime form and spirit left to make a good fight. One thing he will profit by keeping his blows up, leaving no room for doubt in the minds of the Aussies.

Yachting. I have been waiting patiently for some one to build a yacht or buy a pair of sails capable of beating the Limbas, J. C. Rockwell's Star boat. I hold nothing against the Limbas or Commodore Rockwell. I think the Limbas is a fine boat and that the commodore is an excellent yachtsman, but matters have reached such a stage that I can write Monday morning's headline on the report of the Sunday yacht races with my eyes closed and an Ostermoo thrown over the typewriter keyboard. It is merely a matter of saying *Limbas Wins Another Race*.

A little competition now and then is a good thing for any sport. A few more boats would be welcome, given matters, make the races better and insure greater success of the yacht club. However, the races that have been sailed during the past month have been close and hotly contested. The sport is gaining a strong foothold in spite of a slow start, which is indicative of what perseverance will do. It should continue to develop.

Other sports common in Manila provided nothing sensational during March with the possible exception of Lope Yngayo's victory in the Davis Cup elimination matches and Francisco Aragon's refusal to make the trip to Europe. Guillermo Aragon was substituted, a fact that has weakened the chances of the Philippines to make a good showing. Francisco announced that his sporting goods business was responsible for keeping him home, but as a matter of fact, a clash with the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation officials was the real reason. Aragon wanted more expense money than the federation was willing to pay. He withdrew until almost sailing time, when he announced his unwillingness to go. But it was a bit too late; and, besides, Francisco's attitude on the matter hadn't taken any too well.

Golf. The big events in golf are over for the time being, although the amateur championship tournament is in the wanes. Last month was taken up with club tournaments.



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