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By JOSEPH G. LARIOS

(Journal Group Link International)

Manny Pacquiao and his Trainer, Freddie Roach, Offer to Train Amateur Boxer

CHICAGO (*jGLi*) – The road of the Philippines' hope to snare its first ever Olympic gold hit a bumpy road recently when Filipino American amateur boxer Julian Santos Chua fractured his left hand in a street fight with some youngsters in his Lafayette

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Indiana
, hometown.

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Some neighbors eager to test his mettle “jumped at (him at) a party and he had to defend himself.”

His doting mother, Dr. Ronette Chua, told this reporter that when her Julian was injured at the end of May, the hand X-ray result in their hometown emergency room “was negative for fracture.”

But a follow-up X-ray was recommended by Manny Pacquiao’s personal physical therapist in Los Angeles

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“because of delayed healing.” It turned out there was “evidence of a hairline fracture on the scaphoid bone.”

Dr. Chua explained, “It is not unusual for hairline fractures to not be seen on initial acute films. So (plaster) casting did not occur until four weeks from the injury.”

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A neonatal specialist, Dr. Chua believes her son's layoff from training is really "no time lost" because he has learned "big life lessons from the incident while awaiting full recovery." Julian is now focused "on running a lot more than he used to in order to improve his endurance."

Julian did not respond to this reporter's request for interview.

TRAINING ON HOLD

Julian, 19, was supposed to be immersed into serious training on June 1 at the end of his high-school classes after getting an unexpected encouragement from his idol Manny Pacquiao and Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach. Mr. Roach offered to train him at Roach's "Wild Card" gym in Los Angeles before he got involved into street fighting.

But he had to wait for a few more weeks until his fractured hand is completely healed.

From his boxing stance viewed on [youtube](#), Julian appears to be an orthodox boxer, with his

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right hand being his dominant hand.

Mrs. Chua is not showing any concerns, saying the injury will “most definitely not” discourage him from pursuing his dream as a professional boxer.

Ronette told this reporter, “We believe that there are reasons this may have happened; it still serves a bigger purpose. Julian is now running a lot more than he used to in order to improve his endurance. Punching with strength is only half the story. The other half is staying ability.”

When he was interviewed by host Jannelle So over “[Kababayan LA 18](#),” the only daily Filipino-American TV show based in Los Angeles

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California

last month, accompanied by his friend and booster, Hermie O. Rivera, a veteran Filipino sports reporter, Julian was still wearing a plaster cast.

When Mr. Rivera introduced Julian to Mr. Roach last March inside the “Wild Card” gym, Mr. Roach was so impressed with Julian after a 45-minute workout with Julian while Pacquiao was closely watching by. Roach told Rivera, “You have a winner in this kid. It’d be a shame if you won’t stick by him.”

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ROACH TO TURN HIM “SOMEBODY SOMEDAY”

Freddie Roach even offered to help Hermie make the kid “a somebody someday.”

And Pacquiao chimed in, “Hey, Hermie. Let me also help you with this kid. I like his fighting style, you know.”

The unexpected compliments from the Future Hall of Famers were beautiful music to the ear of Julian, who acceded to the advice of Hermie that he joins the tryout to represent the Philippines in the Olympics in London in 2012, when Julian turns 21.

Hermie, who has a knack for discovering raw boxing talents, believes Julian, an undefeated Golden Gloves champion in the Midwest, has got what it takes to bring the first Olympic gold in any event for the Philippines. “He takes in punches as

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much as he dishes.”

Hermie was instrumental in launching the careers of world boxing champions Luisito Espinosa and Morris East as boxing manager.

With Freddie Roach, who has trained Olympic medalists, among them, Amir Khan, a reigning world champion, Julian could not have found a better mentor and trainer.

What boggles the mind is that if Julian can come close to his professional boxing dream and he has the mixed martial-arts talent of undefeated Floyd “Money” Mayweather, Jr., possibilities are unlimited. Julian was blackbelter in taekwondo at the age of nine and a wrestler in his sophomore and junior years. At 13, he was leaning towards boxing.

THERE IS LIFE AFTER MANNY

While training with Roach, Julian, a fresh high-school graduate, could still be enrolling in

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college.

Julian's Mom said he is leaning towards medical field, midlevel provider like a nurse practitioner or physician assistant/nurse anesthetist, perhaps even proceed to medical school, if his other dreams in sports allow.

The 155-pound, 5-9 Julian is willing to visit the Philippines again for the third time. Hopefully, that visit will be a charm when he tries out for the Olympics that could open up for his boxing professional career.

This early, Hermie, said Julian, a Lafayette native, has now wrapped up his requirement as a dual Filipino citizen, which will be first thing he will be asked to produce by the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines before he can parade his boxing skills.

Of course, his Mom, Ronette, a native of Pateros, Metro Manila, and his Dad, Henry Chua, a native of Pasay City, and Hermie Rivera, will be there, too, to lend their support.

Fil-Am Amateur Boxing Prospect Injures Left Hand But Pacquiao Says His Future Looks Bright - Mabuhay

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Rivera believes if Julian delivers his promise, it is safe to say that there will still be life in Filipino boxing after Pacman. (lariosa_jos@sbcglobal.net) # # #

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