SACRAMENTO-Mexico lost the Boxing World Cup to the Philippines and just managed to avoid a sweep when Daniel Ponce De Leon knocked out Rey “Boom Boom” Bautista in the first round to salvage some national honor and keep his WBO junior featherweight title on Saturday.

The island nation of the Philippines captured the second annual Boxing World Cup in a dominating performance by its team of boxers before more than 4,000 screaming fans at the Arco Arena. Golden Boy Promotions sponsored the battle of nations.

It was loud and it was intense.

It took 2:30 for Ponce De Leon left hand to stop the total humiliation suffered by Mexican fighters against the well-trained Filipinos who won five of six fights.

A well-placed straight left hand to Bautista’s chin short-circuited the young Filipino’s legs and he crumbled to the floor. After about five seconds he got up and referee Jon Schorle began to count. He put his gloves up and the action resumed.

Ponce De Leon wasted little time in delivering three more accurate left hands on the point of the chin. The referee jumped in to halt the fight.

“This wasn’t for me this was for Mexico,” said Ponce De Leon a powerful southpaw. “My countrymen went down.”

Bautista, a talented Filipino fighter, was shocked.

“I feel embarrassed,” said Bautista. “Maybe it wasn’t my time to win.”

He wasn’t the only one embarrassed as one world champion lost his title with a single shot.

Mexico’s Jhonny Gonzalez was cruising along racking up the rounds against the smaller Penalosa. For nearly seven rounds the Mexican world titleholder used his reach and body punches to put in the rounds.

In the seventh, a couple of loud body shots by Gonzalez seemed to indicate the end for the southpaw Penalosa, but a missed right hand by the Mexican fighter was countered by a riveting left hand to the right side of Gonzalez’s rib cage and down he went…for the count.

“I was boxing a beautiful fight but I made a mistake and dropped my right hand and he connected with a great shot,” said Gonzalez who was making his third defense of the WBO bantamweight title. “I couldn’t get up. It hurt too bad.”

Penalosa jumped on the ropes screaming in jubilation.

“I’ve been waiting for this my whole life,” said Penalosa, who formerly held the WBC junior bantamweight title.

Z Gorres captured the IBF junior bantamweight Intercontinental title with an eighth round technical knockout of former junior flyweight champion Eric Ortiz of Mexico and clinched the World Cup for the Philippines.

“I’m proud to be the fighter who decided the World Cup,” said Gorres who used his speed and movement to disrupt Ortiz’s plans.

Despite a gritty effort from Mexico City’s Ortiz, the move up in weight from 108 to 115 pounds against a faster and stronger fighter proved far too overwhelming.

“I couldn’t do anything,” said Ortiz, who lost the WBC junior flyweight title to another Filipino Brian Viloria two years ago. “I’m very disappointed in myself.”

A clash of heads in the sixth round caused a big bump on the forehead of Ortiz that grew to walnut-size proportions later in the fight. But a cut on the left eye forced referee Raul Caiz to halt the fight on the advice of the ringside doctor at 2:15 of the eighth round.

In another junior bantamweight fight, AJ Banal proved his nickname “Bazooka” is not a misnomer as he dropped the taller Jorge Cardenas with a single right hook 28 seconds into the third round for a technical knockout. The Mexican fighter twisted his ankle on the way down and was unable to stand up.

“He hit me well but I twisted my (right) ankle,” said Cardenas (9-4-3, 6 KOs) from Los Mochis.

For the first two rounds the two fighters seemed to trade evenly with Banal’s punches coming straighter and truer. Cardenas was comfortable swinging his wide lefts and rights and paid for it when Banal countered a missed punch with a picture-perfect right hook to the chin that crushed the Mexican fighter.

“I studied him for a long time, then I hit him with a right hook,” said Banal (14-0-1, 11 KOs), who remains undefeated and is considered a hot prospect from the Philippines.

Banal’s win put his country ahead 3-0 for the World Cup.

“A lot of people have prayed to bring the World Cup back to the Philippines,” said Banal.

Veteran fighter Michael Domingo (32-14-2, 12 KOs), a Filipino from Libac, proved that if given time he could be a force despite more than a dozen losses. After six rounds he used his speed and skills to disarm power puncher Miguel Roman of Mexico in a junior bantamweight bout. All three judges gave Domingo a shutout 60-54 win.

Roman said the scores were too lopsided.

“I think I hurt him twice,” said Roman (21-1, 15 KOs) who suffered his first loss. “I needed more rounds. I thought it was closer.”

Two junior bantamweight veterans Diosdado Gabi of the Philippines and Jose Beranza of Mexico opened up the show for the fight card. Despite a size disadvantage the Filipino fighter fired stiff left hand counters all eight rounds to convince the judges he captured every round.

The judges scored it 80-72 for Dado.

“He moves too much,” said Beranza (30-10-2, 25 KOs) who fights out of Mexico City and is trained by Nacho Beristain. “He never hurt me, I think I hurt him.”

Dado said he was proud of representing his country and complimented his Mexican opponent.

“He was a strong puncher but he was flat-footed so I didn’t have any problems,” said Gabi (30-3-1, 21 KOs).

After the fight card was completed and the flags were folded back, Oscar De La Hoya presented the $500,000 World Cup that was made by Icelink to Team Philippines.

“I think we proved that we have great fighters too,” said Gorres.