

The eyes of all serious fight fans, and all of the Philippines, will be trained on Manny Pacquiao on Saturday evening in Las Vegas, as Pac Man attempts to win a title in a fourth weight class, against a durable, likeable Chicagoan named David Diaz.

I submit that there is no region quite like the Philippines when it comes to idolizing a fighter; the archipelagic nation comes to a grinding halt when Pac Man gloves up. The dotting moms send their little ones to interact with other little ones, and hope the kids don't get into trouble as mamma allows herself to fixate on Manny, beloved Manny, and soak in his brilliance and mastery. The working stiffs in the factory manage to sneak in a one hour smoke break, made possible by the fact that the foreman has also taken an early lunch, and has his eyes glued to a TV set, as he wills Pac Man to get the better of the latest Mexican to suffer his fury. Even the criminals, the dope dealers, the petty thieves, the organized cartels of evildoers, all of them cease their nefariousness long enough to marvel at 12 rounds of Pacquiao's superlative efforts, before they get back to their own seedy dealings.

This Saturday showdown with Diaz comes at a particularly poignant time for the nation, which last Friday/Saturday felt the lash of typhoon Fengshen, which left more than 100,000 homes devastated and killed more than 1,000 people. Everyone is hoping electricity will be restored everywhere in time for the Saturday fight, which takes place at around 11:30AM Sunday, Philippines time. And everyone is hoping their idol, Pacquiao, delivers another stellar performance, and secures another crown, and allows them to forget the devastating wake Mother Nature left behind last week.

I am not capable of formulating sentences that convey the level of devotion Filipinos feel for their God of pugilism, so allow me to spotlight a comment offered in response to the latest Ron Borges column by "Ricbee."

"Hello Pinoys all over the world. This is my first time to write in such a topic. I'm a big PAC MAN fan. Being a Filipino, it's all out for our country, a boost to everyone's morality. On the 28th of June, every single Pinoy will be stucked again to their own TV sets, bringing the crime rate down to zero. This is again the time wherein we Filipinos forgets the price of rice. It'll be another silent Sunday here in the Philippines, as our boxing king do his best on the LIGHTWEIGHT DIVISION. All I can say is that, let us all PRAY TOGETHER for our beloved kababayan, though as of now, getting himself into fight mode, but yet still this humble Pinoy MANNY is thinking about the people who suffered under the force of typhoon FRANK. He's about to go to war with a fellow that knows no danger. To all Filipinos, always remember that when it's MANNY PACQUIAO - DANGER is just a letter away from ANGER.. Peace to all OZAMIZNONS ! LONG LIVE THE KING OF THE RING - THE PAC MAN!!!!"

Well said, Ricbee; we at TSS keep our fingers crossed that Frank's devastation will fade as soon as humanly possible.

TSS Prediction Page: Readers Rule

Written by Michael Woods

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Enjoy the fight.

Feel free, Pac Man and Diaz fans alike, to offer your prediction on the Saturday night fightfest, which will be offered on pay-per-view in the US.