



LAGUNA-ORTIZ RETURN BOUT SEEMS LIKELY

By MARIO RIVERA MARTINO

Ismael Laguna of Panama, new lightweight champion of the world.

Panama Wild Over Its First Champion Since Bantie Brown

PANAMA CITY—(Special to The Ring)—Panama, which hasn't had a world title since elongated bantam Al Brown held one from 1929 through 1935, saw Ismael Laguna crowned king of the division with a split decision over Carlos Ortiz before 15,000 fans in Anoché Olympic Stadium.

The votes of Jersey Joe Walcott, former heavyweight title holder and local judge Ramon Mouynes, awarded the crown to Laguna. Walcott scored it 143 to 132 and the local official had an even bigger margin for his countryman, 149 to 137. He gave only two rounds to the champion.

Judge Ben Greene, who with Walcott had been brought in from the U.S., called the fight a draw, 145 to 145. Greene had to be escorted from the arena by the police.

The speed of Laguna, the forced weight reduction of the defending title holder, and his recent illness, caused the upset, according to Ortiz.

"He's not a strong puncher nor is he better than some of the other top challengers I've faced," said Ortiz, "but he is hard to tag. He doesn't stick around to get hit and I wasn't fast enough to catch him with perfect shots. I just couldn't get to him."

Ortiz said he felt confident he could reverse the decision. The 28 year old Carlos, who won the title from Joe Brown three years ago, successfully defended it four times. Known as the globe trotting champion, Ortiz placed his crown on the line in his native Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Japan and engaged in overweight matches in London, Honolulu, Boston, Tokyo and Manila.

The new champion, rated well up among the contenders for some time, moved and jabbed with speed and precision. The 21 year old victor has lost only two out of 41 battles, one to Antonio Herrera in Bogota two years ago, the other a questionable one, to Vicente Saldivar in Tijuana last June. He has scored 25 knockouts.

Alfred Aleman, head of a syndicate that has the champion sewed up for his next ten fights says he is in no hurry to make arrangements for Laguna's future.

"We shall screen all challengers. We have no return fight agreement with Bill Daly, who handles Ortiz's affairs, but if we can get a substantial offer for a fight in Puerto Rico we will listen," Aleman explained.

He has received an excellent offer from Flash Elorde for a fight in June in Manila. The junior lightweight champion's father-in-law, who promotes his fights, made the bid.

Harry Markson, Managing Director of Madison Square Garden, is eager to get Laguna into the Garden in an overweight match, but Aleman can't see it.

Ortiz, who suffered a deep cut inside his mouth early in the bout and a cut below the right eye in the fifth round, won't reenter the ring for several months.

"Carlos will have to become accustomed to the role of challenger," said Daly. "We have no return bout contract but may present Laguna in San Juan against Ortiz."

Asked to explain Carlos's one-sided defeat, Daly replied:

"Ortiz never before was idle so long as he was prior to this fight. He had only one match last year, a one-round kayo over an ordinary boxer, Dick Devola. That idleness undoubtedly contributed to the defeat."

Both Daly and Ortiz agreed with the decision.

Laguna scaled well below the lightweight limit, at 132 pounds. Ortiz came in a quarter of a pound below the 135 limit.

When the fight reached the final round, the crowd went wild. Even before the bell sounded, the fans screamed "Laguna campeon! El Tigre es el Nuevo Campeon!" (Laguna is the champion. The Tiger is the new champ).

Laguna fought a courageous, crafty and fierce fight and at no time did the American hold the upper hand. The Pana-

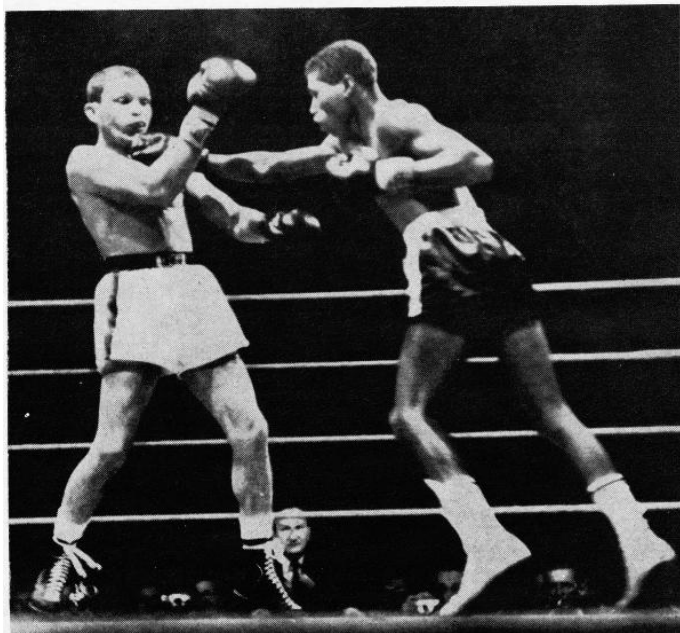
Laguna Wins Lightweight Title

manian used a good, snappy left jab and with his speed, there wasn't a chance for Ortiz to tag him with his Sunday punch.

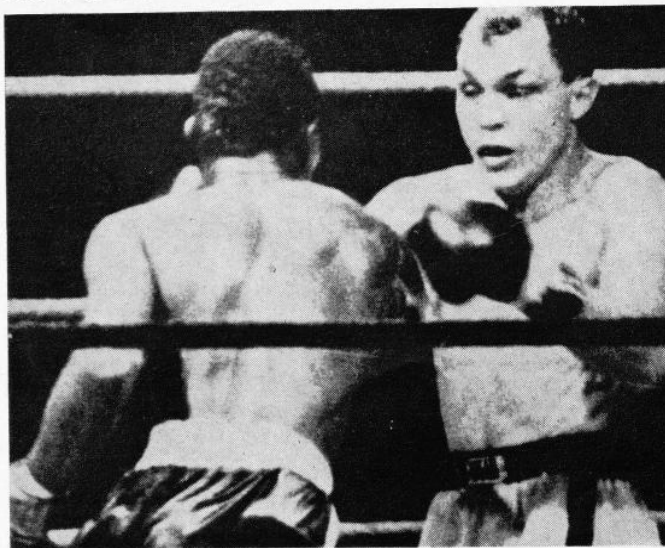
When the fight was over, Ortiz was a bleeding and battered ex-champion. The victory of Laguna set off an all-night celebration in Panama City.

Ortiz won the first and third rounds and held Laguna even in the second. Then the challenger spurted to win the fourth, fifth and sixth rounds by handy margins.

Ortiz came back strong to take the seventh, eighth and eleventh, but thereafter he faltered and Laguna piled up a commanding lead.



In the semi-final Julio Ruiz scored a decision in 12 rounds over Justiniano Aguilar for the featherweight title of Panama. This was their fifth meeting, with Ruiz now ahead, 3 to 2. Flyweight Eugenio Hurtado scored a close decision over Zenon Rios in 10 rounds.



Laguna lands stiff right cross to the chin of Carlos Ortiz which helped to jar the world lightweight champ loose from his crown in split 15 round decision at Olympic Stadium in Panama City. The outcome was a surprise to the boxing world which had Laguna tabbed as the underdog.

Ortiz never did solve the speedy offensive tactics of Laguna, seen here crashing through the champ's defenses with a smashing right hand that momentarily stuns Carlos. It is punching like this that loses the crown for the champ.

PANAMA CITY, Panama, April 10—Ismael Laguna, relatively unknown outside his native Panama, upset Carlos Ortiz and became the lightweight champion of the world tonight, scoring a 15-round decision in their title bout.

Ortiz, a Puerto Rican-born New Yorker, weighed 134 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds for his fifth defense of the title he won from Joe Brown three years ago. Laguna came in at 132, three pounds under the class limit.

Jersey Joe Walcott, the former heavyweight champion who was the referee, voted for Laguna, as did a Panamanian judge. The other judge, Ben Greene of New York, called it a draw.

Laguna, a 21-year-old from Colon, opened a cut over Ortiz's eye in the sixth, survived Ortiz's furious rally in the ninth and mixed it freely with the champion in the last two rounds.

The defeat ended Ortiz's 12-bout winning streak that began before he won the title from Brown in Las Vegas in 1962. He had defended the title four times successfully since then. In his last previous defense, a year ago in San Juan, P. R., he had defeated Kenny Lane of Muskegon, Mich.

Many of Laguna's followers jumped into the ring as soon as the fight had ended, certain that he had won. The announcement of the decision was delayed several minutes until the ring was cleared.

Laguna has a record of 38 victories in 40 bouts, but most of his previous 39 bouts were against little-known Panamanian opponents.

He had always fought as a featherweight and this bout was his first in the lightweight class. His speed helped him win the title from the 28-year-old Ortiz, whose record is 44-5 with one no-decision.

A crowd of 18,000 saw the bout at the Olympic Stadium.

The fight originally was scheduled for Feb. 15, but was postponed the day before when Ortiz suffered a stomach ailment.