

## Ref in Donaire bout under fire

Written by Administrator  
Sunday, 06 March 2011 16:13

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**Referee Russel Mora at the Nonito Donaire Jr. and Fernando Montiel fight in Las Vegas on Feb. 19. “The Filipino Flash” destroyed the Mexican with a second round technical knockout. □ (Reuters photo)**

MANILA — Russel Mora, the third man on the ring when Nonito Donaire Jr. knocked out Fernando Montiel last week in Las Vegas, is in hot water.

The World Boxing Council (WBC), through its president, Jose Sulaiman, wants the veteran referee reprimanded by the Nevada State Athletic Commission.

Sulaiman said Mora, with a credible record as a boxing referee and judge since 1997, should have stopped the fight the moment Montiel went down.

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Montiel, a three-division world champion who's never been knocked out before, took a solid left hook to the temple in the 55-second mark of the second round.

He fell flat on his back, arms stretched, legs twitching as if he was having a seizure.

His eyes dazed, he tried to beat the referee's count.

Montiel was on his knee when he fell once more to the canvas before managing to get up on his feet.

But it was pretty obvious his mind was somewhere else.

Mora, a Golden Gloves champion in New Mexico in 1980, and who has officiated 243 fights, should have known better to have the fight stopped right then and there.

He motioned to Montiel to walk toward him, and the 31-year-old Mexican didn't.

Montiel couldn't even raise his gloves, and it was the referee who grabbed them, to wipe them off his shirt.

Then Mora let the fight continue.

Smelling blood, Donaire went for the kill, landed a left hook and missed with a right.

Mora jumped in to stop the fight.

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Experts believe it was a little too late.

But they all should be glad that Mora is now up and about, nothing serious, nothing to worry about.

“It was a fateful decision, a criminal act,” Sulaiman told [boxingscene.com](http://boxingscene.com), referring to Mora’s decision to let the fight continue.

“Montiel was in a poor state and after telling him (to) walk to it and he does not, and after asking him to raise his arms and he does not, he still allows him to continue.

“We are going to send a letter to the commission to put him (referee) in training before placing him in another championship fight. We will object to this referee whenever we can,” Sulaiman added.

### Great danger

Sulaiman said Montiel was exposed to great danger when the fight was allowed to continue after the knockdown.

Mora was back in the ring on Saturday, officiating Jessie Magdaleno first-round knockout of Jamie Gutierrez in a scheduled four-rounder at the Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas.

Mora has officiated five fights involving Filipinos, including Michael Farenas’ knockout of Arturo Valenzuela in 2007, Ernel Fontanilla’s draw with Manuel Sarabia in 2008, Ana Julaton’s draw with Johanna Mendez in 2008, Gerry Peñalosa’s loss to Eric Morel last year, and Richie Mepranum’s loss to Julio Cesar Miranda, also last year.

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Donaire knew it was over the moment he landed the left hook that gave him the WBC and World Boxing Organization (WBO) bantamweight titles.

“I hit him with the left hook and I looked down, and I saw that his legs were twitching, and I knew that the fight was over,” he said.

But Mora, the veteran referee, had other things in mind.