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## More Sports

# Annual Philippine Wrestling Showcase in California raises proceeds for local clubs

InterAKTV · Monday, October 1, 2012 · 2:40 pm

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The Inaugural Philippines Wrestling Showcase in Vallejo, California, USA in 2011 paid immediate dividends as the Wrestling Association of the Philippines (WAP), led by President Albert Balde, recruited Vallejo native Julie Gonzalez to compete for the Philippines in an Olympic qualifier in China in a bid for the 2012 London Games.

While Gonzalez did not qualify, her opportunity was groundbreaking and inspiring for many Filipino-American wrestlers.

This was evidenced by the increase in participation at the 2nd Annual Philippines Wrestling Showcase held in Vallejo, California on September 27, 2012. Seventy grapplers hit the mat, which was up from 42 in 2011.

The Showcase was again hosted by the Springstowne Wildcat Wrestling Academy which, coached by Middle School Director Jason A. Guiducci, led the field with 38 wrestlers in the middle school division. Amazing talent also came in from local cities Benicia, Fairfield and Daly City to delight the late-afternoon crowd.

The High School/Open Co-Directors were Jeremiah Esguerra, Michael Lim and Julie Gonzalez. Lim

came out of retirement to ignite the crowd in the opening match and Esguerra picked up one Showcase win, running his total to three in the first two events. Gonzalez went unopposed. The trio helped bring in a solid class of wrestlers for the evening card, which was led by Louie Puno, a former California State Medal winner. Puno went 2 and 0 on the night.

Aside from showcasing the aforementioned talent, the 2nd Annual Showcase set the mission to raise proceeds to purchase wrestling singlets for the Quezon City Wrestling Club, who were featured in James Betia's article "From Piggery to the Training Gym to Champions", which outlined a passionate group of wrestlers who share singlets when they compete due to lack of equipment and funding.

While the 2nd Annual Showcase was able to cover the procurement of 20 wrestling singlets, Quezon City recently received a donation of uniforms from Minnesota's St. Vincent de Paul's Royals wrestling team just prior to the event. WAP president Albert Balde recognized the goodwill efforts and identified three clubs in Laguna, Taytay and Ifugao who would greatly benefit from the uniforms.

Upon arrival of the singlets Mr. Balde plans to deliver the uniforms to Taytay and Ifugao in time for the 2012 Batang Pinoy or Philippine Youth Games.



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