The following is a story by Jack McCabe, in last year’s 9F. He won his class story-telling prize with his entry ‘The Magic Gloves’. This is one for all you ‘fight fans’.

**The Magic Gloves**

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, the WBU Welterweight champion was getting ready for his tough challenging bout against Ying Yu, Hong Kong’s finest. The crowd believed that Ying Yu should win, but the odds were stacked against him because the champion El Ashley Jr. had the referee in his corner. It was his cousin!

We believe that if Ying Yu tries his hardest, the judges would know who the real winner should be. There was a bit of a round at the weigh-in when Ashley Jr. threw Ying Yu off the scales to the floor and shouted in Ying’s face ‘PUNK’. Ying thinks the fight should be in Hong Kong and the referee should be changed but as it is only three days away they did not bother. Outside the MGM Grand, Ying Yu’s great supporters were not too happy with this decision.

With great odds stacked against Ying, he still believed he could beat him and was training extra hard for the title to come to Hong Kong for the first time ever. As Ying Yu was training his heart out, Ashley Jr. was relaxing, confident he could beat him. He only said one thing and that was ‘I’ve got a plan’.

So two days before the final showdown, Ashley Jr. still had great confidence that Ying Yu would be down for the ten count. There was one hell of a lot to expect from these great professionals. The excitement was palpable.

Still two days to go and Luigi, Ashley Junior’s cousin, was walking towards Ashley’s locker, unaware that Ying was standing two lockers down. Luigi stood, with one foot against the locker, bobbing his head slowly and whistling silently. It looked as if he was waiting for something or someone, and just then, out of the steam of the showers and with a great big smile on his face sauntered El Ashley Jr. ‘I see you’ve come alone cuz’, Ashley laughed.

‘Have you brought it?’ Luigi asked.

‘Yeah’, Ashley replied.

They injected mercury into Ashley’s glove and then high-fived each other.

Suddenly the drips coming from the showers stopped and the champ and referee had disappeared. The only water drops that hit the ground were the tears of a true champion, Ying Yu.

Ying whispered ‘If only it was a fair fight’, then ran to the exit.

‘Ladies and gentlemen, we are here at the MGM Grand, where tonight you are going to see the fight of your life’.

Meanwhile, backstage Ying Yu was getting taped up. This should be a good one.

As Ying Yu is getting ready, the over-confident champion El Ashley Jr. is just kicking back and said that ‘he is already ready’. Now that they are both ready it’s time for the final showdown.

‘Entering first, from Hong Kong, weighing in at 143lbs, Ying Yu’.

‘Entering second, from Las Vegas Nevada, weighing in at 163lbs, the WBM Welterweight champion, Ellllll Ashley Jr.’
‘The referee for this match shall be Luigi Franchesgo, from Rome, Italy’.

‘Touch gloves’.

So the time we have all been waiting for is finally here, and there goes the bell. Ying Yu swings and connects, that looked sore…… and again and busted open the champion. Then the champion with his quick speed and agility attacks Ying Yu like a puma and a few hard hitting body shots puts Ying Yu stumbling back and forth. This could be it, El Ashley Jr. swung and the mighty Ying Yu weaved his way past that hook. Now Ying Yu desperately wants this title and was still attacking his opponent. The champ looked sore. Ding, the bell went for the first round. There were a lot of cuts and bruises in that contest.

As the second round came to an end Ying Yu was victorious in both rounds, but could the next thirteen rounds make any difference. Ying Yu won the third with ease. It’s almost like El Ashley Jr. wanted to get rid of the title. The fourth round began. Ying Yu danced about the squared circle and sped in with four left jabs to the face. Now El Ashley Jr. started to fight back with a few heavy jabs to the face and I could have sworn I saw a tooth come out of the contenders’ mouth. Now this is good, it was toe-to-toe, and eye-to-eye. It was all to live for; they were both destroying each other. This must be the longest three minutes in their lives and it eventually ended with a big bang. The crowd was going absolutely crazy and so were we. It was the best match I have ever seen!

As the rounds commenced, these men were beating each other to a pulp. We were at the last round and it was a draw, 7 – 7, this was the hardest round of all. So they both danced around the ring, both exhausted. Ying Yu swung and missed. El Ashley Jr. with a good deal of body shots sent Ying Yu back to the corner. The contender was in great pain and I didn’t think he could continue anymore, but fought back and with great will put the champion on his back. There went the bell. Now, both contender and champion waited on the judges’ decision.

‘Now ladies and gentlemen, the winner and the NEW WBU Welterweight champion, Ying Yu’, yelled the announcer.

‘Have you anything to say?’ reporters said quickly.

‘Yes, check his gloves’, Ying Yu replied.

So the doctors checked El Ashley Junior’s gloves and found a great deal of mercury there. The judging panel was so disillusioned and outraged with him that they decided to bar him from ever boxing again and the true champion stood tall……………..

By:  Jack McCabe 9F