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PHILEQUITY CORNER

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Life is interesting

There are many interesting things happening right now that capture the attention of people from different walks of life. Legal practitioners, sports afficionados, finance professionals, investors and even regular people all have something captivating to watch nowadays.

Politics, sports and finance

As an investment professional and sports fan, I have been following various current events and developments recently. During the day, I tune in to the live broadcast of the impeachment trial of the Vice President. In the evening, I watch tennis matches in the ongoing Wimbledon championships, especially the latest games of Alex Eala. Sometimes, I stay up late in the evening or past midnight for soccer games in the World Cup tournament. Football is the most popular sport in the world. Players such as Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Kylian Mbappe and Erling Haaland are always fascinating to see. Following all these comes on top of monitoring the latest developments in the financial markets.

Tennis darling

Alex Eala was already a tennis star even before Wimbledon. However, her remarkable run in the tournament turned her into a global tennis darling. Her impressive showing captured the hearts of both the fans and the media. She won three matches and became the first Filipino to reach the fourth round of a Grand Slam tournament. She had a thrilling win over the tournament's defending champion and world number 3 Iga Swiatek. She leapt in rankings from world number 158 in 2024 to number 50 in 2025 to her current ranking of number 32.

Pacquiao-like following

With her recent performance, Alex Eala has become the newest national sports icon. Many of us patiently waited at night to view her games. Various communities gathered and attended watch parties of her matches. Contingents of Filipinos and even international fans showed up in Wimbledon to see her play live. This is reminiscent of the wide following that Manny Pacquiao garnered as the whole nation stopped to tune in for his fights. This also reminds us of the outpouring of support for Hidilyn Diaz and Carlos Yulo when they made history and won their Olympic gold medals.

Life lessons from Alex Eala

Aside from her intense and lively on-court performances, Alex Eala has impressed fans and media professionals with her eloquence, intelligence and sincerity. Her remarks during interviews are insightful and relatable. Below, we share some direct quotes from her which contain inspiration and life lessons for investors, professionals, students, leaders and even politicians.

- “Everyone has days where they don't play their best tennis. I understand that's part of the job. I don't think I'm going to be playing the best tennis of my life every single day. I just have to kind of move forward and continue with my progress."
- " That's also what's beautiful about tennis. Every match, it's different. You're always finding solutions; the opponent is always finding ways to make you uncomfortable."
- “That day-to-day work and that work ethic is really what keeps me grounded and locked-in. The impact I have on other people and the inspiration that I can bring is a result of that work ethic.”
- “I think being a competitive athlete, especially at this level in general, of course comes with pressure. But everybody has pressure built into their lives.”

Though Alex Eala is only 21 years old, everyone can learn from her insights and unique perspective.

Unprecedented events in the stock market

Besides sports and politics, we are also seeing historic milestones taking place in the stock market. Last week, SK Hynix made the biggest foreign IPO listing in the US by raising $26.5 billion. This followed the IPO of SpaceX last month which was the biggest in history and amounted to $85.7 billion. We have seen these stocks, along with other AI-related stocks, move up or down by more than 10 percent in a single day. In my years in the stock market, I have never seen spectacular moves like these.

It’s over

Apart from the ongoing boom in AI and tech stocks, investors are closely monitoring events on the geopolitical front. Recently, Trump said that “in no uncertain terms, the ceasefire (between the US and Iran) is over!” This is a new stumbling block in the negotiations for a peace deal. Last week, Iran reportedly attacked three commercial tankers which prompted retaliation from the US. The renewed tensions fueled a rebound in oil prices and some volatility in the financial markets.

Markets adjust accordingly

The war between the US and Iran has highlighted the dependence of most countries on oil and the proportion that passes through the Strait of Hormuz. In this light, there are ongoing moves by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other Middle East countries to construct or expand pipelines to bypass Hormuz. In addition, the US has ramped up its crude oil production. It has turned into a net exporter of oil and is now the biggest oil producer in the world. Venezuela also has an important impact as it has the biggest oil reserves in the world. In recent years, there has been growing adoption of EVs and solar power. In the short term, there might be some volatility in the prices of stocks and commodities as geopolitical tensions flare up again. However, it appears that investors are starting to get used to the on-and-off negotiations and Trump’s chaotic way of dealmaking. Over the long term, adequate production and the declining dependence on oil should insulate financial markets and the global economy from oil price shocks.