



POC Online

26th SEA Games Special Issue



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The RP Campaign in the 26th SEA Games

On the 11th day of the 11th month of the 11th year of this century, the 11 Southeast Asian nations: Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam begin their quest for gold in the 26th Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games) in Indonesia. The games will be held in Jakarta including part of West Java and in Palembang, the capital of West Sumatra.

This biennial multi-sport event is officially regulated by the Southeast Asian Games Federation under the supervision of the Olympic Council of Asia and the International Olympic Committee. The meet, which originally started as the Southeast Asian Peninsular Games in 1959, began with the rationale that a regional sports event will help promote cooperation, understanding and relations among countries in the Southeast Asian region. In 1977, the SEAP Games Federation changed its name to Southeast Asian Games Federation, admitted the Philippines and Indonesia, and changed the name of the sporting event to the Southeast Asian Games. Of the 26 regional meets (including this year's event) held since 1959, the Philippines has hosted three SEA Games – in 1981, 1991 and 2005. The Philippines topped the 2005 meet with 113 gold, 84 silver and 94 bronze medals for a total of 291. In 2007, the 24th edition of the Games in Nakhon Ratchasima (Korat), Thailand, the Philippines placed sixth with 41 golds. In the 25th SEA Games in 2009 in Vientiane, Laos, the Philippines finished fifth with 38 golds.

The 26th Asian Games will feature 42 sports, 51 disciplines and 545 events. As of date, the RP delegation will be participating in 39 sports, 49 disciplines and 313 events.

With this 26th SEA Games Special Issue, POC Online will bring the news of the national team's campaign to the nation.

We cheer for our athletes and pray for their safety and victory.

Benjamin I. Espiritu
Editor-in-Chief

Football: RP vs. Vietnam

By: Clarito Samson

Jakarta—Blessed with some good fortunes during the draw a week ago, the Philippines pits a new breed of players against Vietnam in group B on Thursday in the first match of the 26th Southeast Asian Games that would be a significant part of the history of the 50-year-old Gelaro Bung Karno football arena.

Touted here as the team of the future, the Filipinos meet the gritty Vietnamese at 4 p.m. (5 p.m. Manila time) in a match that could handsomely position the winner for one of two cross over semi-final seats opposite the “group of death” bunch in group A.

In the only other match of the day, Myanmar eyes to join the mini semis scramble in group B, taking on Laos at 7 in the evening also in the field which reminds Indonesia of its prestigious Asian Games roots in the 1960s.

Philippine coach Michael Weiss would not second guess the strength of Vietnam although he said that the video-scouting of its play in the recent Exim Cup in Hanoi will be a substantial basis in preparing the game plan.

“We are ready for Vietnam although we have players that just arrived and have not practiced that much with us for this tournament,” he said.

The two other nations in group B are Timor Leste, which appeared to have developed its team in a manner akin to the approach of the Philippines using Europe-trained players, and Brunei Darussalam that is not regarded as a major threat for the top two slots in the group.

In group A are all title contenders Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand and the less heralded team of Cambodia.

“The group of death will of course draw the biggest attention,” cited former Philippine Olympic Committee President and now Asian Football official Cristy Ramos, who agreed that football is perhaps the most important gold medal of the 11-nation sports meet.

Prior to the technical meeting at 1 p.m Philippine team officials confirmed that goalie Neil Ethridge, who was not listed in the original 30-man list submitted to organizers, will not be part of the team although there was a last minute contemplation on his inclusion.

Only during the technical meeting will the final 20-man line up be submitted and for the Philippines, the 20th man could be Manuel Ott, who will be the last team member to fly in at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, less than 24 hours before the first match.

Filipino players, who have caught the fancy of Indonesian football fans, will have only one practice session here as most of the team members arrived only late Tuesday evening.

While the SEA Games that will officially open on November 11 in the City of Palembang, about an hour plane ride from Jakarta, has raised national excitement, officials warned Jakarta residents to brace for a “messier” November due to the heavy rainfall in recent days.

The largest circulating English paper, Jakarta Post, projected that seven of the 19 SEA Games venues might be affected by the heavy downpour that has caused flooding in some areas just outside of the city of Jakarta.