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Asian Martial Arts Games

RP ready for Asian Martial Arts Games

FILIPINO athletes plunge into action again as they bid in the inaugural staging of the Asian Martial Arts Games set next month in Bangkok, Thailand.

A 30-man contingent representing seven sports, plus 12 team officials and coaches as well as four members from the referees' and judges' roster make up the composition of the RP delegation to the meet set August 1-9.

The country is fielding entries in the sports of judo, karatedo, taekwondo, pencak silat, wushu, muay thai and kickboxing, while opting to skip the events of kurash (Uzbekistan-style wrestling) and jujitsu.

A total of 46 countries and around 900 athletes are expected to participate in the tournament which is expected to be dominated by Asian powers China, South Korea and Japan.

Dave Carter, president of the Philippine Amateur Judo Association (PAJA) and Chief of Mission of the RP contingent, however, vows that the Filipinos are going to give the opposition a good fight.

An unstable political situation and the swine flu scare that gripped Bangkok forced organizers of the event (the Bangkok Asian Martial Arts Games Organizing Committee or BAMAGOC and the National Olympic Committee of Thailand) to move it from its original schedule of April 25 - May 3 to August 1 - 9.

Owing to the continuous fear brought about by the swine flu, Carter has asked that members of the delegation be given flu shots prior to their departure.

Carter met recently with Commissioner Eric Loretizo of the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) to facilitate the pre-departure preparations of the RP delegation. The country's campaign in this event comes at the heels of its participation in the 1st Asian Youth Games held in Singapore earlier this month.

Tennis

MAMIIT: In search of another SEA Games gold

DANAI Udomchoke better be ready.

Top Philippine netter Cecil Mamiit has committed himself to play for the RP contingent in the 25th Southeast Asian Games in Laos where he is the two-time defending singles champion.

Mamiit confirmed his third straight stint with the national team shortly after powering the RP Davis Cup squad to a 3-2 win over Pakistan in their Asia-Oceania Group II tie at the Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) courts.

It was RP Davis Cup team coordinator Randy Villanueva who broke out the piece of good news.

“I think he will play,” said Villanueva. “They already committed to play for us.”

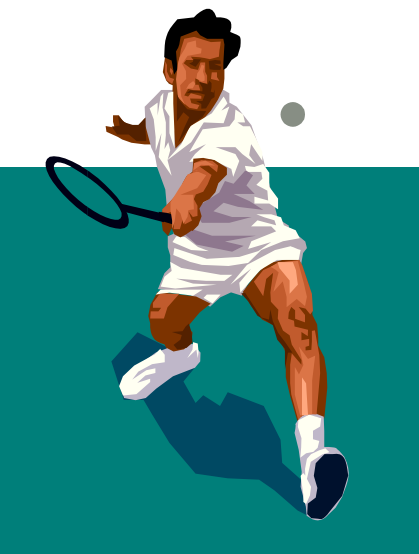
“They” meant Mamiit will be joined by new doubles partner Treat Conrad Huey, with whom he joined hands in dealing the Pakistan duo of Aqueel Khan and Jibrun Muhammadi a 6-2, 6-4, 6-0 beating in the doubles event that clinched the tie for the country, 3-0, halfway into the best-of-five series.

A product of the University of Virginia, the 23-year old Huey has taken over the place left by the now retired doubles specialist Eric Taino.

It will be Huey’s first stint with the RP squad in the SEA Games.

In contrast, Mamiit, 33, is looking forward to winning the singles gold medal for the third consecutive edition of the meet.

He first bagged the singles gold in 2005 when he ‘jigged’ his way to the top by beating Udomchoke in the championship game played before a jampacked crowd at the Rizal Memorial tennis court.



Two years later, Mamiit proved his victory over the Thai net sensation wasn't a fluke by silencing the partisan crowd in Bangkok with a repeat win over Udomchoke in the battle for the singles' title.

Mamiit's gold was the only one copped by the RP tennis team.

Shortly after the Davis Cup, Mamiit will be seeing action in satellite circuits in the U.S. and will not be returning here until September when the RP Davis Cup unit plays New Zealand in a best-of-five series for a promotional tie in Group 1.

Another netter suiting up for the country again in the SEA Games is Rizza Zalameda.

"She's coming back to play for us," Villanueva also bared.

In tandem with Mamiit, Zalameda also won a gold medal in the mixed doubles during the 2005 Manila edition of the multi-sports event.

Bodybuilding

Pinoy bodybuilders **flex muscles** for two major meets

FOUR top winners in the Mr. and Ms. Philippines search make up Team Philippines that will represent the country in two major international bodybuilding meets in the final half of 2009.

Upstart Dindo Amper and Mario A. Paquito Jr. are set to compete in the 43rd Asian Men's Bodybuilding Championships in Tehran, Iran slated August 2-8.

Amper from the Holiday Gym and Spa-Davao City, is the reigning Philippine bantamweight champion while Paquito Jr., representing Real Fitness Gym –Benguet, is king in the flyweight division.

Together, they'll also see action in the Multi-Asian Bodybuilding & Fitness Championships in Pattaya, Thailand.

Amper and Paquito Jr. are going to be joined in the October 14-19 tournament by John Homer Valmonte (Mighty Marks gym – Manila) and Rodora Trinchera (Slimmers World – Arnaiz Makati).

Valmonte is currently the country's junior champion while Trinchera had been adjudged Miss Fitness.

All four were the big winners during the National Bodybuilding and Fitness Championships held at the Onstage in Greenbelt I, Makati last April.

Their selection to the RP team was made possible by the Philippine Federation of Bodybuilders Inc (PFBBI) under President Luciano Lim.

For both tournaments, the four Filipino bodybuilders underwent a rigorous three-month diet-nutrition-supplementation regimen, physical strength workout and mental toughness training.