



SBP bids for Olympic qualifier

The Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP) wants the 2011 FIBA-Asia Men's Championship, the qualifying tournament for the 2012 London Olympics, to be staged in Manila.

SBP executive director Noli Eala bared that a formal written bid has already been submitted to FIBA Asia officials.

"We have a good chance of winning our bid," Eala told sportswriters during the 25th FIBA Asia World Championship qualifier in Tianjin, China.

The Philippines' offer was boosted after several other countries' bids were quashed for one reason or another.

According to the former PBA commissioner, FIBA-Asia is expected to announce its decision by the end of the year.

Right now, Lebanon and Jordan hugged the inside track of the bidding war with the Philippines, with Iran on the outside. The volatile political situation in Iran could, however, turn against it when a decision is made by FIBA Asia officials.

China will be hosting the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou and has not expressed interest to host the 2011 FIBA Asia Championship. Neither is Japan or South Korea throwing its hat into the ring.

"So the only other bidders that they are considering are Lebanon and Jordan, which they are not very comfortable with because of the political situation. So with that, it seems to me that Manila has the inside track," he added.

Eala said FIBA-Asia officials from Korea, Japan, as well as from four other Middle Eastern countries, have already pledged support to the SBP's bid.

The last time Manila hosted the FIBA-Asia Men's Championship was in 1973. The Philippines won the gold in that tournament, which was then called the Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC).

RP to host Asian Men's Seniors Volleyball Championship

THIS time the men take center stage.

The Philippine Volleyball Federation (PVF) is bringing to the country the 15th Asian Men's Seniors Volleyball Championship on Sept. 26 in two separate venues – the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Led by defending champion Australia, 20 countries are seeing action in the 10-day meet marking the first time a major men's international volleyball event will be held in the Philippines.

At the same time, the event coincides with the hosting of the 18th Asian Volleyball Confederation General Assembly where 63 member countries are expected to attend.

PVF officials led by Secretary-General Otie Camangian and Deputy Secretary-General Gener Dungo are both enthusiastic on the staging of the Asian meet, which they hope will give men's volleyball in the country a big shot-in-the-arm.

"Women's volleyball has often been the local focus of the sport," said Camangian, obviously referring to the popular V-League. "We in the PVF intend to balance things by staging the Asian men's seniors championship because that is also part of our mandate," Camangian said.

"We want to show Filipinos that there is a men's side to the sport which is why we are bringing the tournament here."

Hosting both events would entail a cost of around P18 to P20 million, according to Dungo.

Powerhouse China, Chinese-Taipei, Japan and Korea are among the teams expected to crowd out Australia for the title.

The Philippines is bracketed in Group A together with Chinese-Taipei, Kazakhstan, Myanmar and Pakistan.

Group B is composed of Thailand, Japan, India, Indonesia and Afghanistan, while making up Group C are China, Iran, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Rounding up the lineup are Australia, Korea, Lebanon, Maldives and Qatar in Group D.

The top two finishers from each elimination group advance to the knockout quarterfinals, while the rest of the teams will be relegated to the classification round for their final rankings.

Coached by Sifronio Acaylar, the RP men's team is considered relatively raw, although it has been in training since January.

"They are young but tall, with an average height of 6'2". This is their first time to see action in an international tournament so we have modest hopes for them," Camangian admitted.

"But if we finish among the top 10 that will be good enough for us."

Track and Field

RP tracksters go for gold in SEA Games

FIVE golds and more.

The RP track and field team vowed to equal or even surpass its haul of five gold medals during the last Southeast Asian Games in Nakhonratchasima, Thailand as it gears up for the coming edition of the biennial meet this December in Laos.

Coach Joseph Sy is confident the Filipino tracksters are once again going to deliver the way they have been doing in the past. All five gold medal winners in the 2007 Thailand Games will be suiting up anew for the national team.

“They were the best in the SEA Games in their respective events two years ago, and they still will be come this year’s edition of the meet,” Sy boldly said.

By `they’ he meant Olympians Henry Dagmil and Maristella Torres, Arniel Ferreira, Rene Herrera and Julius Nierras.

Dagmil and Torres are again going to compete in their pet event – long jump, Ferreira is again entered in the men’s hammer throw, Nieras in the men’s 400 meter dash, and Herrera in the 3,000 meter steeplechase.

Other than the five, other favorites of winning golds are middle distance runner Julius Sermona, javelin thrower Rosie Villarito, Midel Dique (800 meter run), and hurdler Grace Milgar.

“Yung projection namin na five gold medals is achievable. Kasi bukod sa ating mga medal potentials, may mga up-and-coming pa tayong athletes who are capable of pulling some surprises,” Coach Sy said.

Sy added the RP tracksters are just right on track as far as their training for the SEA Games is concerned.

“We expect them to be on top of their performance this December in Laos,” said the RP track coach.

Sy disclosed the RP coaching staff is looking forward to sending the Filipino track stars in two more international competitions before the SEA Games - the Asian Indoor Games in Vietnam in October, and the Asian championship in Guangzhou in November.

Triathlon

Filipino triathletes win medals at Singapore meet

FILIPINO triathletes Neil Catiil and Kim Mangrobang made the country proud by winning a pair of medals in the 2009 Singapore OSIM International Triathlon recently.

Of the two, Catiil was the more impressive after bagging the gold in the men's elite division by stunning Craig Johns at the Singapore East Coast Park.

The 23-year old Catiil clocked a slow 26.53 in the 1.5 m swim leg, but made up for it by a strong showing in the 40-k bike leg and the 10-k run.

In all, Catiil clocked 1:03.39 in claiming his first international win.

His time of 2 hours, 8 minutes and 43 seconds in the 10-k race also happened to be the best time submitted in the run category.

Mangrobang meanwhile, settled for the bronze medal in the women's under-23 class. She finished with a time of 2:34:01. Australian Ashleigh Gentle, the runner up in the 2007 World Junior Championships, won the gold (2:10:35) while teammate Jaimi Chisolm bagged the silver (2:13:25).

A native of Cagayan de Oro, Catiil found himself trailing Johns as the New Zealander came out holding a three-minute lead after the swim leg. The world class triathlete failed to sustain his fast pace and faltered in the next two legs. Johns eventually finished runner-up with a time of 2:13:25.

Chong Chi Seak of Macau took the bronze medal (2:23:17).

Prior to this, Catiil saw action in the Asian Beach Games in Bali Indonesia (18th place) and the Subic Bay International Triathlon Championships (5th place, top among local participants, where he accounted for the best time split in the bike leg that earned him a bonus prize of \$1,000.

"We are proud of Neil and Kim's showing because it was the fruit of our high performance training camp. We will continue giving them international exposure with our end goal of a better showing in the 2010 Asian Games," said Triathlon Association of the Philippines President (TRAP) Tom Carrasco Jr.

Meanwhile, Mangrobang is going to attend the International Triathlon Union (ITU) World Junior/U23 training camp in Gold Coast, Australia, where she will be one of only five Asian triathletes selected.

The camp will run from August 28 to September 8.

Table Tennis**Southeast Asian Table Tennis Championship to be held in RP in 2012**

TABLE tennis in the country gets a much needed boost as the country stages the 8th Southeast Asian Table Tennis Championship (SEATTA) in 2012.

In a letter signed by SEATTA Secretary-General Chan Foong Keong, the association conveyed its approval of the Philippines' hosting of the event.

The staging of the tournament, according to Table Tennis Association of the Philippines (TATAP) grassroots and junior program head Alvin Carranza, will help a lot in the development of table tennis in the country.

"I'm very grateful that we're given the privilege to host SEATTA in the Olympic year," said Carranza of the meet that will be held in the same year as the London Olympics.

"The event is also a great boost to TATAP's grassroots program," added Carranza, a former national player. "So we're hoping that our national junior team would be fully competitive by that time."

TATAP has been active the past eight months as it held two national junior events in Luzon and Visayas in an effort to enhance the national junior pool for boys and girls 17-years old and below.

More are expected to be included in the pool as TATAP will be holding the Kadayawan Festival table tennis event on August 29-30.

The tournament, to be held at the NCCC Mall at McArthur Highway in Davao, is in line with the celebration of the Kadayawan Sports Festival.

"This is the best way to improve our grassroots programs for table tennis," said Carranza.