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Tribal Games Launched

by Shai Tamayo

Clark Freeport, Pampanga. The balmy morning of August 21st brought together some 41 eager participants from different Aeta tribes, clad in their tribal g-strings (bahag) in the Clark Picnic Area, venue of the first episode of the M.A.D. Tribal Games (TG).

Although TG project chief Col. Jeff Tamayo, POC board member and Philippine Soft Tennis Association (PSTA) president, had designed the courses and rules together with PSTA Coach Jovy Mamawal, he allowed room for the process to evolve with the participants. "... After all, this is new to them. They.... must enjoy the events with enough ease to inspire their whole-hearted participation. Apart from giving them significance, this participatory process boosts their confidence," Tamayo said.

From the four events: Tribal Archery (Standing, Squatting, Sitting positions), Sibat or Spear Throwing, Obstacle Course with Running and Archery, and 3K Relay Barefoot Race, emerged around 23 proud winners. They will compete in the finals on November 6, together with the champions of the Mangyan and Dumagat games which will be held in September 25 and October 23, respectively.

The event gave excitement and pride not only to the "katutubos," but also to the marshals and umpires (students from San Beda, University of Perpetual Help, members of Philippine teams of soft tennis, tennis, and archery), the organizers, guests and spectators.

After the competition young tribesmen performed ethnic dances mimicking forest animals. "With great joy we thank the people who have made this event possible. They have given us hope and importance. Now we aspire to become better and active participants of a society that has long neglected and left us on the fringes," said Antu Sumilang of BATA (Bamban Aeta Tribal Assoc.), in Pilipino.

"Now our children will learn how to use bows and arrows and other weapons, instead of just selling them to tourists as souvenirs..." added Bert Sevilla of Mabalacat Aeta Tribal Association. In his closing address, Tamayo said: "What we have gone through today we cannot take away.... From you we can learn a lot—how to take care of our environment, to live simply, and more... this is just the beginning. Be proud of your tribal blood. It is part of our Filipino culture and heritage..."

This project epitomizes the principles that fuel the Olympic flame—promotion and preservation of culture beyond borders through sports and education. It is Tamayo's aspiration to expand the games. His stated aspiration: "This year, regional. Next year, national. Before next year ends, ASEAN..."

The successful staging of the games was brought about by the combined efforts of Rodrigo Fuentes, executive director of the Asean Centre for Biodiversity; Guy Hilbero, Mabalacat's Tourism Department chief, founder of Mabalacat Aeta Tribal Association and Head of Mabalacat Aeta Tribal Affairs; POC President Jose Cojuangco, Jr.; Coach Jovy Mamawal; the athletes, students, and volunteer workers.

Scenes from the Tribal Games



Relay race



Archery



Archery



Spear

Bodybuilder MARCAIDA is Ms. Asia Bronze

Isabela Province's pride is the Philippines' joy as bodybuilder Rowena A. Marcaida captured the bronze in the 52kg. category for the Ms. Asia title at the recently concluded 2009 Asian Bodybuilding & Fitness Championships in Pattaya, Thailand on stage of the Alangkarn Theater. The gold medal was won by Thailand's Jaranya Duangkam and the silver by Vietnam's Nguyen Thi My Linh (www.thaibody.com).

Marcaida was accompanied by Team Philippines' Benguet flyweight Mario A. Paquito Jr., Davao bantamweight Dindo U. Amper and Laguna fitness and FAME champion Rodora F. Trinchera. The team's participation was sponsored by the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC), the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), and PAGCOR Sports. Team Philippines will be featured in the September-October 2009 Issue of the Ironpinoy Magazine (www.ironpinoy.com) available at all Booksale branches nationwide and selected gyms.

The annual Asian event was organized by the Asian Bodybuilding & Fitness Federation (ABBF) and sanctioned by its international federation, the World Bodybuilding & Physique Sports Federation (WBPF). Next year's event will be hosted by Singapore in September 2010 (www.abbf.asia).

Pictures from the 2009 Asian Bodybuilding and Fitness Championships



Team Philippines flyweight Mario A. Paquito Jr., fitness champion Rodora F. Trinchera, ABBF President Osama Al-Shafar, Ms. Asia bronze medalist Rowena A. Marcaida, and bantam weight Dindo U. Amper pose for posterity.

MARCAIDA is Ms. ASIA's Bronze

Filipina bodybuilding champion Rowena A. Marcaida earns her bronze medal in the 52 kg. category for the Ms. Asia title at the recently concluded 2009 Asian Bodybuilding & Fitness Championships in Pattaya, Thailand. Awarding honors were made by Sir Douglas Latchford, a Thai resident of British descent, and is one of the highest ranking officials in the Asian Bodybuilding & Fitness Federation (ABBF).



Team Philippines-Bodybuilding & Fitness Sports, accompanied by PFBB VP Engracio L. Tiu, right, carries the Pagcor Sports banner during the Asian event.



Filipina bodybuilder Rowena A. Marcaida, left, poses with Thai bodybuilder Jaranya Duangkam.

Filipina bodybuilder Rowena A. Marcaida, aspires and warms up for the Ms. Asia title.



Photos courtesy of thaibody.com

RP lawn bowl team shines in Asia Pacific meet

IN its own humble way, the Philippine lawn bowl team brought honor to the country anew following its inspiring showing in the recent Asia Pacific Lawn Bowl Championships in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Veteran Rosita Bradborn stood at the helm of the Filipinos' campaign in the August 6-16 meet that saw the women's team finish third place overall, and the men's team take fifth.

Bradborn, bronze medalist in the 2007 Southeast Asian Games in Thailand, outdid herself this time, bagging the gold medal in the women's single. She also spearheaded the team in the ladies division to a bronze medal finish in partnership with Ronalyn Greenlee, Sonia Bruce and Maila Witheridge.

Witheridge provided the other gold medal for the ladies after topping the indoor division or the Merdeka category.

Ronald Lising, the gold medal winner in the 2005 Manila SEA Games, settled for the silver in the men's division which he led with Leo Carreon, Angelo Morales and Christopher Dagpin.

For the uninitiated, lawn bowls is a precision sport where the goal is to roll slightly radially asymmetrical balls (called bowls) closer to a smaller white ball (the 'jack' or 'kitty'), than one's opponent is able to do.

Head of delegation John Knight described the showing of the 20-man RP squad as a 'remarkable feat.' He noted how the Filipinos were able to hold their own against some of the world's best lawn bowl teams such as Canada, New Zealand, Japan, Australia, England and the United States.

Robin Giale, head coach, stressed that proper training and preparation were the keys to the team's success.

Upon its arrival, the entire team was feted to a victory party at the Angeles City Sports Club led by Philippine Lawn Bowl Association (PLBA) president Rey Pineda.

Asian Indoor Games

FILIPINO athletes try to sustain the gains earned during the 1st Asian Martial Arts Games as they see action in the 3rd Asian Indoor Games in Vietnam next month.

RP Chef de Mission Julian Camacho estimated that a total of 162 athletes and 76 officials will comprise the country's delegation competing in 18 events in the October 28-November 8 meet.

The figures, however, may still be reduced pending the submission of the final lineup by the respective National Sports Associations (NSAs) involved.

Events to be disputed in the biennial event are athletics, swimming, sepak takraw, boxing, wushu, futsal, bowling, dancesport, pencak silat, aerobics, gymnastics, chess, kickboxing, juditsu, billiards, shuttle cock, petanque and 3-on-3 basketball.

The tournament comes just a month after the Philippines bagged two gold medals in the inaugural staging of the Asian Martial Arts Games in Bangkok, courtesy of Mary Jane Estimar in wushu and Jeffrey Figueroa in taekwondo.

With boxing, billiards and wushu all making their debut in this year's Asiad Indoor, Camacho is confident the Filipino athletes will be able to surpass the two gold medals the Philippines bagged in the first two hosting of the meets.

"Definitely, the chance for us to bring home more gold medals is there with the inclusion of the three sports in Vietnam," said Camacho, who just returned from Vietnam to attend the Chef de Mission meeting among the 29 participating countries.

Muay Thai bets Billy Alumno and Ruben Sumido accounted for the two golds the country won in the previous Asian Indoor Games.

Alumno was the lone bright spot for the Philippines during the first ever holding of the tournament in 2005 in Bangkok, winning the gold in the cruiserweight of wai-kru.

Two years later in Macau, it was Sumido's turn to shine, taking the gold in the light-welterweight class.

RP women's basketball team optimistic about Asia championship

WHERE the men failed, the ladies hopefully, will succeed.

Daunting the task may be, but the RP women's basketball team is looking forward to a decent showing in the 23rd FIBA Asia Championship for Women in Chennai, India from Sept. 17-24.

6-foot stunner Cassie Tioseco of Ateneo de Manila and Adamson's Aewon Arayi will banner the ladies squad now coached by Heidi Ong.

Originally scheduled to be played in Taipei (June 21-28), the tournament serves as the qualifier to the 2010 FIBA World Championship for Women set in the Czech Republic from September 23-October 3, 2010.

The women's campaign comes a month after the Powerade-Team Pilipinas finished a fighting eighth in the 25th FIBA-Asia men's basketball championship in Tianjin, China.

Although the nationals, coached by Yeng Guiao and backed by the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA), made it to the quarterfinals, they failed to secure one of three berths at stake in the FIBA-World Championship for Men in Istanbul, Turkey.

The FIBA-Asia Championship for Women features 12 teams, divided into two levels.

Level 1 has defending champion Korea, nine-time winner China, Chinese-Taipei, India, Japan and Southeast Asian power Thailand.

On the other hand, Level 2 will be composed of Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan.

The top four teams in Level 1 will advance to the semifinals, with the top three finishers earning outright berths to the 2010 FIBA World Championship for Women.

Meanwhile, the top two teams from Level 2 will play against the bottom two teams of Level I in a bid for relegation in Level 1 of the tournament's next edition.

Korea, China, Japan and Chinese Taipei made up the semifinals of the event in 2007 held in Incheon, South Korea.

For the Philippines, this marks the return of the women's team in FIBA-Asia after skipping the meet two years ago.

The team copped the bronze medal in the 2007 SEA Games in Nakhonratchasima, Thailand.

GAP to Promote Gymnastics

BUILD and it will come.

In what could be its own 'Field of Dreams', the reinvigorated Gymnastics Association of the Philippines (GAP) is tinkering with the idea of constructing at least one training center in each region of the country.

Of course, this is on top of the federation's plan of a major renovation of the main gymnastics center inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Only through the establishment of arenas and playing venues can gymnastics be propagated and promoted on a nation-wide basis, according to newly-elected GAP president John Arenas.

"We cannot really promote the sport among our youth in far-flung provinces if we cannot even provide them with venues where they can practice the sport," said the top GAP official.

"It's easy to find talents in the provinces, but geographically, it's hard to bring those talents here to Manila where there are facilities. We have to give them places to go to hone up and develop their skills to become members of the national training pool."

It won't be easy for sure.

"We will be starting out from scratch," Arenas admitted.

"But the Filipinos have natural agility, which is one of the requirements to become a topnotch gymnast. All they need is a continuous program that will ensure the development of their skills. And we want to provide them that."

GAP vice-president Cynthia Carrion, a former official of the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), has begun initial talks with the country's top collegiate leagues – the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) – in an effort to place gymnastics into their respective annual sports calendars.