



# POC Online

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## POC thanks Team Philippines

AS its way of honoring the gallant men and women who comprised Team Philippines in the recent 25th Southeast Asian Games, the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) held a thanksgiving party at the Wack Wack Golf & Country Club for the entire Philippine delegation.

POC president Jose `Peping' Cojuangco led the dinner affair that began with the celebration of the Holy Mass.

He said the thanksgiving party was not only to fete all gold medal winners in the biennial meet, but to celebrate the way the whole Philippine contingent conducted itself in Laos, notwithstanding all the distractions that came along its way.

“This is our way of showing to them our appreciation for the job well done,” said the former congressman from Tarlac. “It’s not all about the medals we’ve won, but at the way they performed there.”

Despite two different entities funding their trip, the Filipino athletes fought as one during the competition from December 9-18 and garnered a total of 38 gold medals for a fifth place finish.

The performance improved the previous sixth place finish of the country in the 2007 edition of the SEA Games in Nakhonratchasima, Thailand.

“Once na dumating tayo sa Laos, naging isa na lang `yung team natin,” stressed RP Chef De Mission Mario Tanchanco.

Athletes, POC officials, team managers and National Sports Association (NSA) heads attended the gathering.



Youth Olympic Games

## RP tennis star, basketball players get outright berths in YOG

THE country was given outright berths in the sports of tennis and men's basketball in this year's First Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in Singapore.

Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) Deputy Secretary-General Mark Joseph identified the tennis player as grand slam junior champion Francis Casey Alcantara.

Joseph disclosed that Alcantara's victory in the Australian Open last year clinched him a slot in the inaugural staging of the meet for athletes 14 to 18 years old.

The 17-year old netter from Cagayan de Oro City bagged the boys' doubles title in the Aussie Open by teaming up with Hsieh Cheng-peng of Chinese-Taipei.

"Alcantara's victory in the Australian Open and his subsequent high top 30 rating internationally earned him the outright seat in the Youth Olympics," said Joseph.

The POC official also mentioned the outright spot given to the national basketball team despite the fact that it has yet to be formed.

"As for basketball, it was the FIBA (International Basketball Federation), the world's governing body in the sport, that gave the Philippines outright seeding, probably because of the country's contribution to the growth of basketball worldwide," added Joseph.

Five Filipino swimmers, two archers and three shooters already qualified for the Youth Olympic Games.

All of them, however, have to maintain their present rankings till June, by which time the final list to be given invitations should have been submitted.

Another netter in Jason Patrombon also has a shot at earning an outright berth to the meet, but needs to compete first in several qualifying tournaments to make it.

The POC executive, also President of the Philippine Aquatics Sports Association (PASA), said that a total of 580 slots are available in athletics, 480 in swimming, 70 in archery, 32 in equestrian and 80 in shooting.

Joseph stressed that the Youth Olympic Games follows the traditional 26-sport calendar, although chances are that several non-Olympic events that could help in the promotion of Olympic values and education to children might be added.