

# 155 gain slots to vie in LAOS Sea Games

## Target: 85 gold medals

**M**ANILA—When the Philippine Olympic Committee said it would send “a lean and mean” delegation to the Laos Southeast Asian Games, it meant what it said.

As of April 2, “only” a total of 155 athletes has been approved to see action in the biennial event in December, based on the POC criteria that pre-qualifies the medalists from the previous SEA Games in Thailand.

“We are still waiting for the regional events where (some) athletes will participate and hopefully get justification for their inclusion,” said chief of mission Mario Tanchangco of sepak takraw.

A total of 229 Filipino athletes won at least a bronze medal in the 2007 SEA Games. Many of them, however, have either retired or were sidelined because their sports were not included in the Laos edition.

There are only 25 sports events in the Laos calendar due to the dearth of playing venues in the country and its lack of technical know-how to hold certain competitions.

Tanchangco didn't give a hint about the final size of the RP delegation but said the list will be far shorter than the 620-strong contingent the country sent to Thailand.

“That's why POC president Jose “Peping” Cojuangco told us to (continue our work) because we are targeting at least 85 gold medals,” said Tanchangco.

The Philippines won 42 gold, 91 silver and 96 bronze medals in the 2007 edition which featured 43 sports. *(Inquirer.net)*

# Young RP cagers flying to the US to watch NBA games

**M**ANILA—Six flamboyant teenagers bested 36 other participants in the Junior NBA Philippines to earn free trips to watch live NBA games in New York and New Jersey this April.

The lucky six, aged 13 to 14 years old, who will also get a chance to pit skills against their counterparts in the United States are Mark Jayven Tallo, Arc Gabriel Araw-araw, Aldrin Fegidero, Michael Jay Javelosa, Adrian Marvin Roland Muller and Carlo Escalambre.

Mark Jayven, son of former PBA player Mark Anthony, was named Most Valuable Player, while Escalambre took the sportsmanship award.

Former Orlando Magic assistant coach and current Junior NBA USA coach Frank Lopez spearheaded the basketball clinic.

Former PBA players Benjie Paras, Ronnie Magsanoc, Elmer Cabahug, Jolly Escobar, and Jerry Cordiñera also shared valuable insights.

The four-month basketball training consisted of drills, lectures and actual games to aid the aspiring basketball players inch closer to their dreams of becoming great ball players just like their NBA idols.

Free nutrition seminars were also attended by coaches, parents and the players themselves to help them understand the other needs of the country's future superstars. *(Inquirer.net)*

# Hatton trainer: Pacman in dreamland before 3

by ROY LUARCA  
*Inquirer.net*

MANILA—Floyd Mayweather Sr., a master of verbal tussles, has raised the ante yet again.

Already proven wrong twice before—he predicted that both David Diaz and Oscar De La Hoya would knock out Manny Pacquiao—the trainer of Ricky Hatton said the Filipino superstar will not last the first quarter of his 12-round showdown with the British “Hitman.”

Days after rival trainer Freddie Roach predicted that Pacquiao will stop Hatton in three rounds, Mayweather countered by saying the “Hitman” can do it faster.

“Hatton is going to stop Pacquiao before three,” Mayweather told FightHype.com. “We're going to put hands on him, man; trust me.”

Mayweather said Pacquiao will not be able to withstand Hatton's power, especially his

body shots, when they collide on May 2 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

“He has been stopped to the body twice,” Mayweather said of the General Santos City lefty who lost by knockout to compatriot Rustico Torrecampo (who has since retired due to injury) and Thai Medgoen Singurat (also inactive now) in his early years as a flyweight.

Mayweather warned that Hatton may hurt Pacquiao to make

certain that the judges will not have second thoughts about the victor if the fight goes the distance.

As to Pacquiao's perceived edge in speed, Mayweather told BoxingScene that Hatton's “timing” will offset it.

“Do you know what speed is?” the trainer said. “It's timing. Can Pacquiao time Hatton when he gets ready to land the big boat. Can Pacquiao time that? Hell, no.” ■

## SEAYBS

# Singapore ends Illam reign

by MARC ANTHONY REYES  
*Inquirer.net*

**M**ANILA—Singapore prevailed in two cliffhangers to complete a three-division baseball sweep while host International Little League Association of Manila settled for the two softball crowns at the close of the 2009 Southeast Asian Youth Baseball and Softball Tournament.

Already assured of one title as early as the semifinals, Illam could pick up just one more as Singapore won three of its four championship duels with Manila squads for the day to clinch the overall crown at the Ateneo grounds in Quezon City.

“Singapore has shown strength this year,” said Illam's Rolly Disini, the tournament director. “But in the girls [softball division we are still the best.”

Underscoring its strength as a contender in the coming World Series, Manila 1 finally asserted itself with an 18-4 rout of Singapore in the Girls' Major finals.

The all-Manila showdown for the Girls' Senior crown went to Team 2 which rallied for a 5-2 deficit to turn back Team 1, 9-7.

Manila 2 earlier grabbed a 4-2 lead but Singapore came back with two runs to pave the way for the tight finish.

The Filipinos uncorked a mighty rally in the seventh inning of the Boys' Senior championship with Chip Esguerra smashing a one-out three-run home run to cut Singapore's lead to 9-8.

But Joel Lomotan struck out

and Paolo Mallari flied out to hand Singapore the decisive third championship that eventually ended RP's four-year overall reign in the event.

Indeed, the Illam's entries in the major and senior girls snared the titles in the morning games which softened the blow for the hosts who fielded six teams in all five division finals. ■



MEMBERS of the Manila I softball team celebrate after winning the championship against Singapore, 18-4, in the Girls' Major division. The victory cushioned the hosts' defeat to Singapore in other fronts. Romy Homillada

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