

Team RP completes SEABA mission

by NELSON BELTRAN
Philstar.com

MEDAN, INDONESIA—Securing the SEABA crown with another rout of the host team last June 9, the Powerade Team Pilipinas is now looking for the “real test” in the Jones Cup next month before taking the “real thing” in the Fiba Asia championship in Tianjin, China in August.

“In doing this (SEABA), we learned a lot in running the system. Now, we’ll go to the Jones Cup where we want to equip ourselves with the zone defense and improve our outside shooting,” said coach Yeng Guiao moments after the Nationals capped their successful Medan mission with a 98-68 repeat rout of the Indonesians.

“We had our share of nervous moments not just in the championship game but the whole tournament. We had to make a major adjustment because we are so used to the PBA system which is deliberate basketball. In international competition, you play players like these guys (in the SEABA) who just go and go,” Guiao said.

This was most apparent in the title match where the Nationals faced some challenge early on before getting into the groove and eventually pulling away from the overmatched but fierce-fighting host team.

All 10 Filipino players scored at least seven points each in a well-balanced and torrid offense which the Indonesians just couldn’t match.

“Once they controlled the tempo and built a huge lead, we couldn’t do anything to stop them,” said Indonesia coach Raoul Miguel Hadinoto.

A member of the Indone-



SEABA Champs: Powerade RP team manager JB Baylon hoists the SEABA championship trophy upon the team’s arrival at the NAlA. Philstar.com Photo by Rudy Santos

sian coaching staff in the 2007 Tokushima Fiba Asia Olympic qualifier, Hadinoto noticed the RP squad employing a different system now.

“The system is different from before. They’re pressing and running more. I think they can perform better this time using the system done by other teams in the Fiba Asia,” said Hadinoto.

For the record, the Nationals won twice by an average margin of 34.5 points over the Indonesians who will be the other Southeast Asian team competing in the Asian joust in Tianjin, China in August.

In the rematch, Indonesia managed to make it close in the first 17 minutes with a determined stand while egged on by the flag-waving and cheering home crowd at the Angkasapura Lanud Basketball Hall.

The hosts were down by only three at 32-35 before the Filipinos finally hit their stride and stepped on the gas, zooming to a 31-point lead, 74-43, towards the end of the third period.

The combination of Jarred Dillinger, Cyrus Baguio, Gabe Norwood, Mick Pennisi and Asi

Taulava worked for that break-away before Ranidel de Ocampo, James Yap, Willie Miller, Arwind Santos and Mick Pennisi took over to give the Nationals their biggest spread at 91-54.

As the Nationals relaxed a bit, the Indonesians took advantage, coming through with a run that again sent the home crowd to a frenzy.

The highly appreciative crowd even cheered Dillinger as the versatile Fil-Am crowd banged in a two-handed jam off an alley-oop by Norwood to close out the scoring.

As in their first three games, the Nationals struggled in three-point shooting, converting only four of 19 attempts.

“Our three-point shooting was way below our expectations. We have good shooters but for one reason or another, we’re not shooting well from the three-point area,” said Guiao.

“We have to work on that and start practicing the zone when we go back to Manila,” Guiao added. “We played match-up defense all the time here. But when it comes to Jones Cup and Fiba Asia, we have to play some zone.” ■

Boxing body eyes more talent from schools

by JUNE NAVARRO
Inquirer.net

PANABO CITY—The Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) has started to cast the net on the country’s educational system.

Abap president Ricky Vargas said NCAA South and Prisaa officials recently agreed to include boxing in their calendar to promote the sport among school-based athletes and discover more talents for the national team.

Vargas said the commitment of both organizations to incorporate boxing in the itinerary beginning next year could open the door for the UAAP and the NCAA, the top two collegiate leagues, to follow suit.

“We are now invading the educational system,” Vargas told the *Inquirer* after the just-concluded Smart Abap Mindanao Amateur Boxing Tournament here, participated by approximately 200 young boxers from the entire region tried their luck.

The tournament served as the qualifying for the Abap national finals tentatively scheduled at the end of the year.

According to Abap executive director Ed Picson, a total of 32 boxers from different weight categories advanced to the finals where slots to the Abap national training pool are at stake.

Pinweight Mark Anthony Barriga, who hails from this city and a mainstay of the Davao Del

Norte boxing stable, emerged as the best boxer of the tournament.

Vargas said Abap has had exploratory talks with NCAA officials and initial discussions with the UAAP could materialize soon with insinuations of putting boxing in the calendar as a demonstration sport.

“We’ve already talked to them (NCAA officials). No commitment but there’s a possibility that boxing might be included as a demonstration sport,” added Vargas.

The next Abap regional qualifying leg is scheduled in Northern-Central Luzon in August while the National Capital Region will host another qualifier for Metro Manila boxers in September, according to NCR deputy executive director Gilbert Artificio.

“We really need more competition. It’s the best way to identify talents,” said Vargas.

Besides the Mindanao leg, Abap had organized the Visayas qualifying held in Ormoc City, Leyte two months ago where 20 boxers made it to the national finals. Gold medalists on every leg automatically advance to the national championships.

NCAA South has San Beda College-Alabang, Olivarez College and Don Bosco Technical College as members along with eight other schools in Southern Luzon, including La Salle-Lipa, Letran-Calamba and San Sebastian-Cavite City. ■

Lipa returns as UAAP commissioner

THE University Athletic Association of the Philippines last June 10 officially appointed Joe Lipa as its commissioner when its Season 72 unwraps on July 11 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Lipa formally assumed the position yesterday during the UAAP board meeting at the FEU campus in Morayta, Manila, replacing last year’s commissioner Chito Narvasa.

At the same time, Ricky Palou, Ateneo’s representative to the league board, said the UAAP

will tap referees from the Philippine Basketball Association, Philippine Basketball League and BRASCO, a new referees group, for the coming season.

It will mark the first time that pro refs will officiate in the UAAP.

The recent appointment marked the return of Lipa as UAAP commissioner since assuming the job four seasons ago. He was also the commissioner of the NCAA last year. (*Philstar.com*)

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