

The logo for CARAGOLD Sports Newslates. The word "CARAGOLD" is in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. Below it, "Sports" is in a very large, bold, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom, "Newslates" is in a smaller, bold, black, sans-serif font. The entire logo is set against a white background. Two small, circular inset photos of people are visible at the bottom left and bottom right of the logo area.

New updates

The Official Organization DepEd Caraga Delegation Voluntary November 09/25

LEONILO
TECSON II

VENUS

SHANE CARILLO

TRICIA

Caraga Cadet Wrestlers Clinch Three Golds, One Bronze in Palaro 2025

By Femie Ann M. Mariscal

Laoag City, Ilocos Norte — Cadet wrestlers from Surigao del Sur and Surigao City powered the Caraga Region to a strong finish in the 2025 Palarong Pambansa Wrestling Finals (Cadet Category), held on May 28 at Camp Capt. Valentin Juan, Police Provincial Office. The team brought home an impressive haul of three gold medals and one bronze.

In the Cadet Girls 44kg division, Shane Karyl Carillo delivered a commanding performance against her opponent from the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), finishing the bout with a dominant 8-0 score and securing a win by fall to earn a gold medal.

Leonilo Tecson II kept the momentum going in the Cadet Boys 54kg division, edging out a 6-5 victory in a tightly contested match against the National Capital Region (NCR) to claim another gold. Tricia Murilla of Surigao City also made a strong impression in the Cadet Girls 52kg category, overpowering her opponent from Region 4-A

with a decisive 11-0 score—securing yet another gold medal for Caraga's growing tally.

Meanwhile, Venus Pellejera grappled against opponent from NCR in the Cadet Girls 48kg division, winning 6-0 by points. While she missed a spot in the finals, Pellejera secured a well-earned bronze medal—still a significant contribution to the region's growing medal haul.

The Region's wrestling delegation draws strength from the combined efforts of its dedicated coaching staff. Surigao del Sur Division Team Kamayo wrestlers are under the guidance of Glann T. Castillon (Boys) and Wingel S.

Mondigo (Girls), with Emelyn M. Estrosos as chaperone, and Jeanmae G. Lobo as head trainer. They are supported by assistant trainers Aldwin Clyd R. Lobo, Raynold B. Guerra, Mhel C. Narit, Jeg B. Espuerta, and Elvince P. Franco. While Surigao City Division is also trained by Trainer: Roel Pacional, assisted by Edel P. Diaz.

While the cadet matches have wrapped up, Caraga's wrestling delegation is still in the game—with Junior Category athletes ready to take the mat, the region is poised to continue its winning momentum in the days ahead.

EDITORIAL

FREE RIDE

How one man sparked a movement in Dingras

In a world often driven by personal gain, one man in Dingras, Ilocos Norte quietly reminded us of the power of selflessness.

Arthur Raymundo, a local tricycle driver, saw something extraordinary. He noticed the young athletes of the Caraga Region walking under the sun, lugging bags of laundry to a shop a fair distance away from their billeting station at Dingras National High School.

Moved by the sight, he made a simple but powerful decision: to offer them free rides. Not for recognition, but out of compassion. "Some of them come from poor families. This is my way of helping," Arthur said simply.

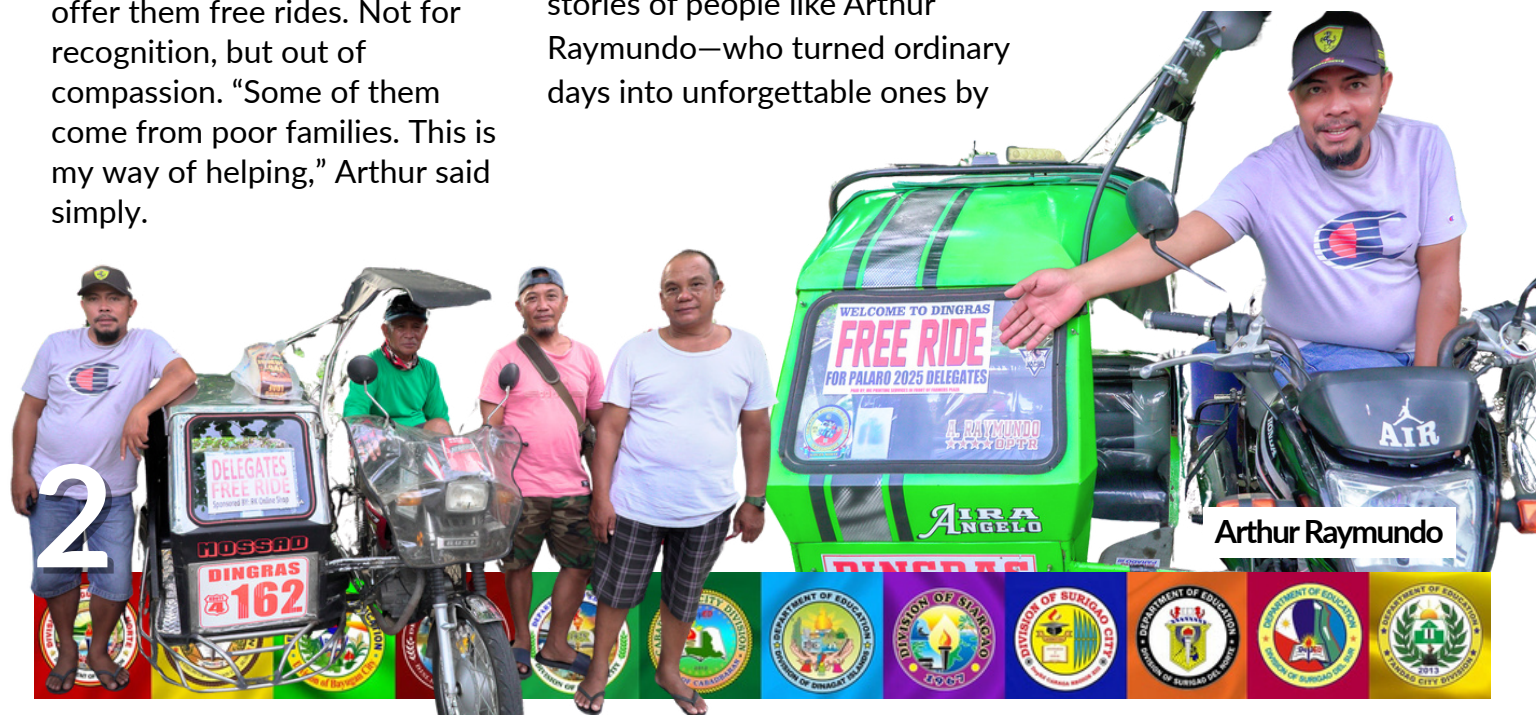
He knew his act meant giving up a day's income. Still, he chose to serve. "Helping them makes me feel good," he added.

What's more inspiring is that his act caught on. Other drivers followed suit, offering free rides to the athletes without being asked. Arthur didn't just lighten a burden; he sparked a movement.

In that small corner of Ilocos, Raymundo's story will linger. Long after the medals are awarded and the matches are over, what will remain are the stories of people like Arthur Raymundo—who turned ordinary days into unforgettable ones by

choosing to give without expecting anything in return. Indeed, his tricycle carries more than passengers, for it carries a magnanimous heart that truly cares.

Caraga is deeply honored to have been served by someone like Arthur Raymundo — a man whose quiet generosity has become a symbol of the very spirit that makes the Palarong Pambansa more than just a competition: a celebration of community, compassion, and shared humanity.



Arthur Raymundo

SCPS shines at Palarong Pambansa 2025: Erno, Calejesan dive medals

By DONALD T. ARQUIZA
Principal III, Surigao City Pilot School

Surigao City, Caraga Region – The waves of triumph surged high for Surigao City Pilot School as two of its young swimming prodigies made a splash on the national stage at Palarong Pambansa 2025, bringing home gold and silver medals for the Surigao City Division.

Breanna Aaliyah V. Erno led the charge, and captured the gold medal in the Swimming Elementary Girls 400m freestyle event. Erno's exceptional performance in the pool was a culmination of relentless training and unyielding determination, reflecting the school's mantra: "Synergizing Children's Potential and Success."

Behind Erno's golden feat stood a dedicated team led by coach Genesis Dol G. Sinahon, along with assistant coach Manilyn M. Magaso and trainers Ronel Tandayag, Jeffrey C. Oquilan, and Deon Mark Juson, whose guidance and commitment molded the champion.

Adding to the school's glory was Cosme III I. Calejesan, who secured a silver medal in the Swimming Elementary Boys 400m Freestyle (Event #47). Calejesan's impressive showing demonstrated not just skill, but the heart of a true athlete, representing the spirit of Surigao City with pride.



Calejesan was trained under the expertise of coach Princes Arianne O. Lucero, with the support from the same powerhouse trainer team—Tandayag, Oquilan, and Juson—proving that teamwork and consistency are vital in building excellence.

These victories are not just medals—they are milestones of a greater journey, fueled by the collective efforts of student-athletes, coaches, trainers, families, and the entire Surigao City community.

Surigao City Pilot School continues to raise the bar and exemplify its mission—one stroke, one race, and one victory at a time.

3





Batang Surigaonon Rise: A Palaro Journey to Remember

By FELIX N. BAGNOL, PhD
Education Program Supervisor

Statistics don't lie. This year's Palarong Pambansa in Laoag City is something I—and the entire SDO Surigao City family—will always hold close to heart.

As of this writing, our delegation has already surpassed last year's performance. From a humble tally of one gold and one bronze, we now celebrate a stronger finish with one gold, two silver, and two bronze medals. It's a leap we are proud of—and a reflection of how far we've come.

Our first gold came from a familiar name. Trisha of Taft National High School once again claimed the top spot in girls' wrestling, earning her second consecutive gold.

4 Her back-to-back victory solidifies her growing reputation as

a powerhouse in the sport. This is especially meaningful for us, as girls' wrestling is a new event for our division, made possible through the initiative of our visionary SDS Marilou B. Dedumo.

Trisha was not alone in bringing honor to Surigao City. Our medal haul was boosted by our athletes in taekwondo and swimming, who stepped up and delivered with pride. These wins reaffirm the strength of the Mighty Titans, proving that we belong on the national stage.

Each medal tells a deeper story—of early mornings, missed weekends, and relentless training. And now, these stories are etched into our division's history, placing Surigao City on the national map of youth sports.

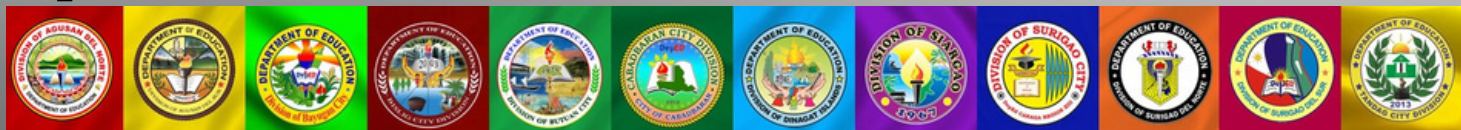
I am filled with gratitude for our dedicated coaches who have stood as mentors and second parents, and to the parents who trusted the process—who allowed their children to grow in the hands of their coaches, despite the long months of training away from home.

To our young athletes: you have raised the banner of Batang Surigaonon with courage and pride. Your victories are ours.

May your tribe increase.



Tricia Nicole Murilla, a proud student from Surigao City, is a gold medalist in wrestling! At the Palarong Pambansa 2024, she dominated the Secondary Girls 52 kg Cadet division—winning 5 matches, including a flawless 10-0 victory over Region 5!



Back-to-Back Gold: Caraga's Arnisadoras emerge Victorious at the Palarong Pambansa 2025

By ELLA MAE SILAO NAVARRA

Laoag , Ilocos Norte- With unwavering focus, fierce determination, and the rhythmic swish of double sticks slicing through the air, Queen Fairy Rose O. Rante of Ampayon Central Elementary School-Butuan City carved her name as the first gold medalist in Caraga Region with the Individual Likhang Anyo – Double Weapon category under the Elementary Girls Division.

Representing the Butuan City Division, Queen Fairy Rose captivated the judges and the crowd with a masterful display of Likhang Anyo—a creative form routine that combines power, control, and artistry. Every strike (palo), block (salag), and flowing

transition (anyo) in her performance echoed the discipline and spirit of a true arnisadora. Her seamless movements and command over the doble baston (double sticks) reflected months of relentless training and a heart fueled by passion and pride.

Behind this victory stood a team of dedicated mentors—her coach, Eldridge Troy D. Go, who guided her every step; chaperon Eleaine E. Arota, who ensured her readiness beyond the mat; and trainers Mr. Brian E. Ellodar and Mr. Christian Josemarie R. Irag, who molded her skills with precision and perseverance.

"First-time gold for individual ni Queenne. Nakita namo iyaha potential sa training na mulaban jud ni siya sa Anyo individual event. Siya ang last performer—ika-17—ug ako siya gi-motivate ug gi-encourage. Deserve gid sa bata ang gold!" Coach Go shared with pride, highlighting the emotional and strategic support that fueled Queen Fairy's victory

Adding to the glory of Caraga Region's Arnis delegation, Airielle Ashley C. Lape, also from Ampayon Central Elementary School, dominated the Individual Likhang

Anyo – Espada y Daga category, delivering a compelling performance with her espada (sword) and daga (dagger). Her precise movements and bold expression of anyo demonstrated not just technical skill but deep understanding of the dual-weapon form.

"Another gold for Airielle Ashley—we are very happy. This is for Caraga Region!" Coach Go declared with emotion, acknowledging the significance of these back-to-back victories not only for their school but for the region.

The double gold haul by Queen Fairy Rose and Airielle Ashley is a shining reflection of Caraga Region's commitment to nurturing young athletes and honoring the cultural legacy of Arnis.



Queen Fairy Rose O. Rante



Airielle Ashley C. Lape,

5





Babano reaches 58.47m to grab Javelin Gold

By GILMORE MANATAD GENON

With a single, powerful throw, a Grade 11 student from Bagong Silang National High School, Butuan City made history — securing the gold medal in javelin throw at the Pambansang Palaro 2025, held in Ilocos Norte. For Bobby, the victory was more than a win; it was the triumph of perseverance over poverty, discipline over doubt.

While his competitors trained with full support and polished equipment, Bobby trained with grit. “I’m not rich like other kids,” he says, “so I had to work twice as hard.” Back home at Bagong Silang National High School, Bobby’s journey was shaped early on by Coach JC G. Sapa and Assistant Coach Redel A. Mangin, whose consistent guidance and encouragement laid his athletic foundation. “They saw something in me even before I did,” Bobby reflects. “They taught me how to believe in my own throw.”

When Bobby was selected for Palarong Pambansa, his training intensified under the specialized mentorship of his coaches and the rest of the regional coaching team. Through countless drills and long hours on the field, Bobby learned not just the science of javelin — but the soul of it.

Academically, the challenge was just as fierce. Late-night reviews followed early morning practice sessions. But his teachers never left him behind.

“They gave me space to train, but never let me forget the importance of my studies,” he shares.

That golden throw in Ilocos Norte wasn’t just a number on the scoreboard, it was a moment years in the making. It symbolized every early morning jog, every blistered hand, every lesson reviewed on tired eyes. Bobby’s story is now part of Bagong Silang’s legacy, source of pride not only for his school, but for every student who’s ever been told to aim lower.

6 Because in Bobby’s case, he aimed high—and threw even higher.

And as the javelin landed on gold, so did his message: dreams don’t ask how much you have.



Uchida triumphs in Taekwondo Kyorugi

Caraga's Pride dominates Secondary Boys Lightweight Division in Palarong Pambansa 2025

By CHARLOTTE NICOLE ACERO



Kyurogi (or Kyorugi) is the fighting sport version of Taekwondo, emphasizing agility, timing, and strategic application of techniques in a live match

"Kyorugi" (겨루기) means "sparring" or "fighting" in Korean.

Laoag City, Ilocos Norte- Jai Kenjin C. Uchida of Father Saturnino Urios University (FSUU), representing Caraga Region, delivered a commanding performance to clinch the gold medal in the Secondary Boys Lightweight Division of Taekwondo Kyorugi at the 65th Palarong Pambansa held at the Mariano Marcos State University Gymnasium.

Utilizing powerful dollyo chagi (roundhouse kicks) and sharp counterattacks, Uchida controlled the pace of the bout, ultimately securing victory through a clear point advantage. His win marks a major milestone for Caraga, further elevating the region's status in the national taekwondo scene.

The young athlete credits his success to the unwavering support of his coach, Rigor V. Avenido, and trainer, Madonna B. Avenido, who have spent the past year sharpening his sparring strategy and mental toughness. Their guidance was key in helping him maintain focus and discipline throughout the tournament.

This victory is not just for me, but for my coaches, teammates, and the entire Caraga region," Uchida said.

“No ifs, no buts—never underestimate your opponent. Train hard and study harder.”



Caraga's taekwondo delegation made a strong impression at this year's Palaro, "No ifs, no buts—never underestimate your opponent. Train hard and study harder."

Uchida's triumph reflects the growing strength of grassroots sports in the provinces—proving that with the right mindset, training, and support, athletes from any region can rise to national arena.

7



HEART

in the highlands

How One Woman Made Dingras Feel Like Home

In the charming town of Dingras, Ilocos Norte, where golden fields stretch under a generous sun and the breeze carries the scent of tradition—we met someone whose warmth and generosity turned our 2025 Palarong Pambansa into a heartfelt experience. Her name is Johna Septimo, a native of Leyte who has called Ilocos Norte her home for the past nine years after getting married to someone from Ilocos.

Though she hails from the Visayas, Johna has fully embraced the Ilocano way of life—not only adapting to the culture but becoming an integral part of the community. Her story is a beautiful blend of resilience, kindness, and a deep commitment to making others feel welcome especially for transients like us. What makes Johna truly unforgettable is her natural gift of hospitality. When we arrived in Dingras

on May 14, with no cooks yet assigned to our delegation, she didn't hesitate—he immediately offered to prepare our meals out of the goodness of her heart. From that moment on, she treated us like family.

Johna Septimo



Her warmth wasn't just in her smile, but in her actions—always thoughtful, always sincere. She went above and beyond to make our stay easy and comfortable, offering her home, her small carenderia as a haven and her heart as a guide.

Johna delighted us with authentic Ilocano dishes, lovingly prepared and served with the care only someone deeply connected to the local culture could offer. Every meal she sold was not just food—it was a gesture of community, heritage, and personal generosity.

But her hospitality extended far beyond the kitchen. Understanding our needs, she readily lent us her printer and other personal items, removing small stresses and replacing them with ease and comfort. Her willingness to help, no matter how simple the task, spoke volumes about her character—thoughtful, dependable, and deeply kind.

After nearly a decade in Ilocos Norte, Johna Sanchez has become more than just a resident—she is a bridge between cultures, a quiet force of goodness, and a friend to those lucky enough to know her. Her story reminds us that true hospitality knows no boundaries, and that home is not just where you're from, but also where your heart chooses to stay and serve. She makes sure that we are all safe and active while staying in our billeting quarter by checking on us from time to time. In Johna, we found a generous soul who made Dingras feel like home—and in her deeds, we found the true spirit of Filipino warmth.

By ALEJANDRO P. MACADATAR, PhD



FROM SURIGAO TO UAAP GLORY Andrei Bolabola Now a Bulldog



By PONCIANO G. ALNGOG

A young dreamer from Mindanao is set to make waves in Manila.

Eighteen-year-old Andrei Bolabola, a standout setter from Caraga Region, Jacinto P. Elpa National High School, has officially committed to the National University (NU) Bulldogs, one of the most dominant teams in UAAP men's volleyball history. The Bulldogs, fresh off a five-peat triumph, are now eyeing a historic sixth straight title—and Bolabola is their latest weapon in pursuit of that goal.

A product of years of hard work and national exposure, Bolabola has been a consistent force in the sport. He earned multiple Best Setter awards in regional meets and national competitions, including the 2024-25 Palarong Pambansa, where his leadership and precision play captured attention from scouts and fans alike.

"This has been my dream since I started playing volleyball," Bolabola said. "NU is where the best setters are made. It's an honor to be part of this program."

Known for his calm yet commanding presence on the court, the 6-foot playmaker expressed confidence about taking the leap from high school to collegiate volleyball. "Definitely, yes," he said. "With my skills and determination, I know I can help NU continue its championship tradition."

For Bolabola, this new chapter also means working under the mentorship of esteemed coaches Dante Alinsunurin and Jesse Lopez—both known for shaping national team athletes and upholding NU's championship culture.

"To enhance not just my game, but also my discipline and mindset as an athlete—that's what I'm looking forward to," he shared.

Back home in Tandag City, pride runs high. Coach Rodel Ramos, who mentored Bolabola at Jacinto P. Elpa National High School, reflected on his player's milestone with emotion. "As a coach, seeing one of your athletes reach this level is beyond rewarding," he said. "Andrei's commitment and growth over the years make us all proud. The UAAP recognizing him is a validation of the talent we have in the provinces."

Indeed, Bolabola's journey is not just personal—it's symbolic of the untapped potential in Mindanao and other far-flung areas where sports dreams often begin with little more than passion and perseverance.

"Turning dreams into reality," Bolabola smiled. "Thank you to everyone who believed in me—my family, my coaches, my teammates, and my entire community in Tandag. This is for all of you."

As NU gears up for another season of intense competition, Bolabola's arrival brings not only skill, but a heart full of purpose. And as the lights of the UAAP shine brighter, the young setter from Surigao del Sur is more than ready to rise.



9





Caraga Arnisadoras clinches 3 Golds in Likhang Anyo Synchronized Performance

By Daisy C. Balasabas

Marcos Cultural & Sports Center, San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte – The crowd erupted in applause as the Caraga Arnis Team – Elementary Girls delivered an electrifying performance in the Likhang Anyo Team Synchronized Single, Double Weapon and Espada Y Daga Category as they clinched the 3 gold medals during the Palarong Pambansa 2025.

Composed of three elite arnisadoras- Airielle Ashley C. Lape, Queen Fairy Rose O. Rante, Angela M. Mejias from Ampayon Central Elem. School, Division of Butuan City – the team delivered a flawless routine that captivated and impressed both judges and the crowd. Their synchronized performance using the single and double baton displayed a masterful

combination of speed, power, and artistry, earning them almost perfect score score of 29.6 in single weapon category, a score of 29.5 in double weapon category and a score of 29.5 in Espada Y Daga Category.

**Training...
training...
training...**

**walang katapusang
training
with a heart."**

In the Single Weapon Category, Caraga clinched the gold, followed by Region X with silver, and Region VI with bronze.

In the Double Weapon Category, Caraga again took gold, while Region VI earned silver and Region V claimed bronze.

In Espada Y Daga Category Gold- Caraga, Silver- Region 6 Bronze- Region 12.

The said arnisadoras were overwhelmed by the results of their match because they did not expect to win more golds compared in 2024 Palarong Pambansa.

"Training... training... training... walang katapusang training with a heart." shared Coach Eldridge Troy D. Go, proud of his team's discipline and unity. "Wala gyud koy lain masulti sa blessings nga gihatag sa Ginoo kundi Daghan kaayong salamat! Labi na sa mga tao nga nag suporta sa amo team from the start pa sa training before division meet until sa training sa palaro. Grabe gyod nako nga kalipay nawala tanan pressures ug stress nga maka award ug more than sa inaasahan.. Dili nako maisa-isa ang mga tao nga naghatag ug support sa amo team kay daghan kayo sila financial and moral support," he added. With them is Mrs. Eleaine E. Arota, chaperon, and trainers Brian E. Ellodar, Christian Josemarie R. Irag and Apol Cello.

Arnis continues to be one of the most anticipated sports in Palarong Pambansa 2025, celebrating not only competition but the preservation of the Philippines' national martial art. The Caraga region is expected to return home with pride as heroes, carrying the spirit of Arnis and the honor of the region.

1



beyond the net

By PONCIANO G. ALINGOG

KARLA ESCOBAL

brings Surigao spirit to UST

Another pride of Mindanao is poised to make waves in Manila's premier collegiate volleyball arena.

Karla Escobal, the 18-year-old powerhouse spiker from Jacinto P. Elpa National High School (JPENHS) in Tandag City, Surigao del Sur, has officially joined the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Growling Tigers, one of the most storied programs in UAAP volleyball history. With a legacy of heart, hustle, and hard-earned accolades, Escobal's journey from the southern courts to España is nothing short of extraordinary.

"Growing up, UST was just a dream. Now I'm part of that dream," Escobal shared. "It's overwhelming, but I'm ready."

For Escobal, this commitment is not just a career move—it's a lifelong milestone. From local barangay tournaments to national championships, he has always

carried with him the determination to rise. His name has become synonymous with excellence in high school volleyball, having clinched numerous "Best Spiker" and "Most Valuable Player" awards.

But behind the medals and the headlines is a story of resilience, community, and belief.

"I wouldn't be here without the foundation built by my coaches, especially Coach Rodel Ramos," Escobal humbly admitted.

"He pushed us to believe we could stand with the best—even if we came from a small city in the sub-Saharan Mindanao."

Coach Ramos, the man behind JPENHS's volleyball renaissance, beams with pride.

"Karla is a born competitor," he said. "He has the heart, the skill,

and the hunger to succeed. I have no doubt he'll make a name for himself in the UAAP."

Escobal now enters UST's elite volleyball program—a crucible for champions—with wide eyes and a warrior's spirit.

"I want to represent where I come from and inspire younger players that they, too, can make it," he said. "This is not just my journey—it's for Tandag, for Surigao, and for everyone who believed in me."



Caraga bags four bronze medals in Palarong Pambansa 2025 boxing event

by HONEY GRACE BUYAN
Teacher III, SDO Agusan del Norte

Batac City, Ilocos Norte — Four young boxers from the Caraga Region clinched bronze medals in the boxing event of the Palarong Pambansa 2025, held on May 29 at the Imelda Cultural Center in Batac City. Despite valiant efforts in the semi-final round, the Caraga athletes were unable to advance to the championship bouts but secured third-place finishes in their respective weight divisions.

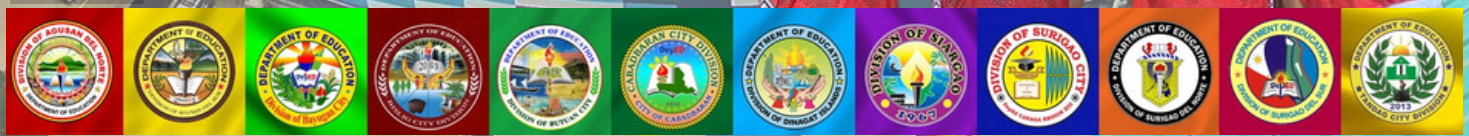
Competing against top talents from other regions, Caraga's representatives showcased determination and skill. In the Minimum Weight (46-48kg) category, Lorenz Kit Pallares fought against a strong contender from Region 11. Jevan Galanto represented the region in the Fly Weight (48-51kg) division, taking on Region 5's boxer.

In the Pin Weight (44-46kg) class, Mike Clifford Lacumbis Tesoro squared off with Region 8, while Fredelynson Cuarteron battled a Region 6 fighter in the Bantam Weight (52-54kg) division. All four boxers gave commendable performances but fell short on the judges' scorecards.

Guiding the Caraga boxing team were head coaches Butch Dideles and Riel Reuben O. Sogillo, whose leadership and tactical direction played a significant role in the team's preparation. Trainers Michael Tesoro and Jerson Mancio also contributed to the athletes' conditioning and corner support throughout the tournament. Their combined expertise helped mold the young fighters into competitive representatives on the national stage.



Left to Right: Coach Riel, Trainers Michael and Mancio, and Coach Butch



CARAGA TOPPLES SOCCSKSARGEN IN THREE-SETS: 15-9, 10-15, 15-5

By PONCIANO G. ALNGOG, CATHERINE B. VERDEFLOR

Fueled by agility, sharp coordination, and fierce competitive spirit, Caraga toppled SOCCSKSARGEN in an electrifying Sepak Takraw semi-final, taking the match in three sets —15-9, 10-15, 15-5—to punch their ticket to the finals.

The match began with Caraga asserting dominance early in the first set. After landing the opening point, they quickly built a 2-0 lead. Despite a brief SOCCSKSARGEN comeback that tied the game at 3-all, Caraga's tight defense and tactical plays gave them the edge. A timeout from SOCCSKSARGEN at 8-4 failed to stall Caraga's momentum, as Montero's quick set and Piner's powerful spike helped keep the lead. Bullo closed the set with a crucial kill, sealing the win for Caraga at 15-9.

SOCCSKSARGEN bounced back in the second set, showing improved defense and capitalizing on Caraga's unforced errors. From a 2-all deadlock, Socks steadily built a lead, eventually pulling ahead 13-9. Caraga fought hard to stay in the set,

but SOCCSKSARGEN's consistency prevailed, closing it out 15-10 to force a deciding third set.

In the final set, Caraga returned to form. They opened with a 5-1 lead, prompting SOCCSKSARGEN to call for substitutions. Caraga's aggressive serves and tight defensive formation shut down SOCCSKSARGEN's attempts at a comeback. With a commanding

13-5 advantage, Caraga finished strong, taking the set 15-5 and the match in dominating fashion.

With this win, Caraga advances to the championship match, riding high on momentum and determination. Fans and supporters now eagerly await their final showdown, where Caraga looks to bring home the title for the region.



Butuanon Arnis Team Recognized During Palarong Pambansa 2025 Awarding Ceremony

By ANGELIE C. ALVIZO

The awarding ceremony of the Arnis competition at the Palarong Pambansa 2025 was a proud and triumphant moment for the delegation of Butuan City, as their athletes were recognized for their outstanding performance that earned them multiple medals in the national tournament.

Representing the Division of Butuan City, the Butuanon Arnis Team took the stage with pride and honor after a successful campaign

across various categories. Their exceptional display of skill, discipline, and determination was a reflection of their rigorous training and the solid support from their coaches and schools.

The Butuanon Arnis Team delivered an impressive medal haul during the Palarong Pambansa 2025. In the Arnis - Elementary Girls category, the team secured a remarkable five gold medals. The Secondary Girls division contributed one bronze medal. Meanwhile, the Elementary Boys team added to the tally with one silver and one bronze medal. The Secondary Boys team also showed strong efforts, earning two bronze medals. Overall, the team's collective performance

highlighted their dedication and skill in the national competition.

The Elementary Girls Arnis Team stood out as the biggest contributors to Butuan's glory, securing five gold medals and making a resounding impact at the national level. Meanwhile, the rest of the team, particularly from the secondary level, showcased resilience and strong performances in their respective categories, further contributing to the delegation's overall success.

The awarding ceremony served as a celebration of hard work, perseverance, and unity among the

entire Butuan delegation — from the athletes, coaches, and trainers to the unwavering support of the local government, parents, and educational institutions.

The outstanding achievements of the Butuanon Arnis Team brought immense pride to both the city of Butuan and the entire Caraga Region. Their success in the national competition reflected not only their hard work and dedication but also the true essence of the Palaro—an event that celebrates the talent, skill, and determination of the Filipino youth.



Photo taken from City Education Development Department of Butuan City



LUMALABAN KASAMA ANG DIYOS

by HONEY GRACE BUYAN
Teacher III, SDO Agusan del Norte

Habang ang mundo'y abala sa paghahanda ng laban, siya'y tahimik na nakaupo sa isang sulok—nakapikit, walang imik, nananalangin. Walang palakpakan, tanging siya at ang Diyos ang nag-uusap.

Sa gitna ng ingay ng paligid, nahanap niya ang katahimikan sa kanyang pananampalataya. Sa sandaling iyon, hindi siya isang mandirigma—isa siyang anak na humihiling ng lakas, tapang, at gabay.

Sa Palarong Pambansa 2025, ipinamalas niya na ang tunay na lakas ng isang atleta ay nagmumula sa pananalig—sa panahong walang ibang nanonood kundi ang Diyos.



1



SA LIKOD NG ISANG KOMENTO, NABUO ANG KWENTO NG PAGKAKAIBIGAN

by FRENIE G. BOTOY
Senior Education Program Specialist- SDO Agusan del Norte

Halika, samahan mo ako sa kwentong hindi ko inaasahang mangyayari sa akin.

Alam mo ba yung pakiramdam na may nasaktan kang ibang tao kahit hindi ikaw ang may gawa?

Ganito ang naramdaman ko nang dahil sa komento ng isang babae mula sa aming rehiyon, Caraga, tungkol sa Ferdinand E. Marcos Stadium sa Ilocos Norte. Sinabi kasi niya na mas maganda pa raw ang sports complex ng Agusan del Sur. Dahil dito, marami ang nagulat, nag react at naggalit na mga Ilocano. Gusto kong sabihin na hindi kami ganoon, na hindi namin ugali ang manakit ng damdamin, pero paano?

Kaya nag-post ako sa Facebook para magpaumanhin sa lahat ng Ilocano. Hindi ko akalain na napakaraming tao pala ang babasa, magre-react, at magshe-share ng aking mensahe. Maraming Ilocano ang nagpadala ng mensahe sa akin.

Yung iba ay humingi ng tawad sa naging reaksiyon nila, habang yung iba ay nagpasalamat dahil daw sa aking pagiging mapagpakumbaba.

Isang gabi, habang nasa Batac City kami, nahirapan kaming sumakay pauwi papuntang Laoag kasi gabi na ng matapos ang boxing bout na kinicover namin.

Bigla akong nakatanggap ng tawag mula sa isang Ilocano na nagpakilalang si "Jake." Gusto raw niyang magbigay ng Bagnet at Longganisa bilang pasalubong at tanda ng pakikipagkaibigan. Nang malaman niyang stranded kami, agad siyang nag-alok na sunduin kami kahit hindi pa kami magkakilala.

Pagkaraan ng ilang sandali, nakita kong paparating ang isang asul na pick-up. Si Sir Jake nga iyon! Sumakay kami sa sasakyan niya. Ramdam ko ang kabutihan niya kahit ngayon ko lang siya nakilala. Nagkukwentuhan kami habang nagbabyahe sa daan.

Pagdating sa Laoag, inabutan niya ako ng sikat na Longganisa at masarap na Bagnet. Nagpasalamat ako sa kanya mula sa puso ko.

Kinabukasan, may isa pang nag-message sa akin. Pangalan niya ay "Tres Otso Disisyete Disiotso." Nabasa rin niya ang post ko. Gusto rin niyang makipagkita para magbigay ng lokal na pagkain mula sa Ilocos tanda na walang masamang tinapay na namumuo sa mga Ilocano sa taga Caraga.

Nagkita kami sa Batac kasi nagkataong nag officiate din siya ng laro doon. Nakipagkamay siya sa akin at may ngiti habang inabot nya sa akin ang isang bag ng pagkain. Isang local delicacy ng Batac. Parang matagal na kaming magkakilala.

Dahil sa karanasang ito, natutunan ko na mas malakas talaga ang kabaitan kaysa sa galit o sama ng loob. Hindi ko ito malilimutan. Ngayon, lalo kong ipinagmamalaki na taga-Caraga ako, at higit pa rito, mas malaki ang respeto at paghanga ko sa mga Ilocano na nagturo sa akin ng tunay na diwa ng pagiging Pilipino.

Salamat sa mga Ilocano na bumuo ng mga bagong kwento at karanasan sa aking buhay. Agyamanak unay!





Hidilyn Diaz-Naranjo visits Caraga delegation's billeting quarter

by ROBERT PEPE JR. & HONEY GRACE BUYAN

May 29, 2025 — Olympic gold medalist Hidilyn Diaz-Naranjo paid an inspiring visit to the billeting quarters of the Caraga Region Delegation at Dingras National High School, Ilocos Norte, bringing renewed motivation and national pride to the young athletes of Palarong Pambansa 2025.

The visit was facilitated by Palarong Pambansa Secretariat Head Marivic Tolitol, along with members of the national secretariat. They were graciously received by DepEd Caraga Regional Director Maria Ines C. Asuncion, CESO IV, who led the tour of the athletes' living spaces.

Director Asuncion proudly presented the delegation's clean, organized, and welcoming accommodations—reflective of the region's preparation and commitment beyond athletic performance. Diaz-Naranjo, an icon of discipline and perseverance, expressed admiration for the athletes' orderly environment and strong team spirit.

Young delegates eagerly welcomed the national sports hero, many visibly emotional at the opportunity to meet her. Some took the chance to offer greetings and take photos, while others stood in awe of the champion in their midst.

In a heartfelt message, Diaz-Naranjo encouraged the athletes to remain committed not only to training but to supporting one another and embracing the values of discipline, respect, and unity.

Her visit, although brief, left a lasting impact on the athletes and coaches, uplifting morale and igniting a more profound sense of purpose within the Caraga delegation. It was more than a ceremonial stop—it was a moment of connection and affirmation.

With Diaz-Naranjo's words still echoing, Caraga's athletes move forward in the competition with more incredible determination and pride, eager to embody the same champion spirit that defines the nation's first Olympic gold medalist.



Caraga youth cue artists represent region in 9-ball billiards at Palarong Pambansa

by ROBERT PEPE JR., SDO Agusan del Norte

Young athletes representing the Caraga Region in billiards brought pride and determination to the Batac Student Center in Ilocos Norte during the Palarong Pambansa 2025, which took place on May 29. Competing in the 9-Ball categories for both boys and girls, these athletes demonstrated not only skill in cue sports but also grace under pressure and exemplary sportsmanship.

In the boys' division, Caraga was represented by Zachary Haya, a Grade 9 student from Agusan National High School under the Butuan City Division. Richenard B. Plaza of Libertad National High School coached him. Skarlet Luert Tisucan, a Grade 11 student from Bayugan National Comprehensive High School, also competed under the mentorship of Coach Plaza. Representing the girls' category were Rosa Mae P. Cordero, Grade 11, from Lapaz National High School in the Agusan del Sur Division, and Clyde Aubrey C. Tasong, Grade 11, from Sapao National High School in the Siargao Division. Coach John Louie Dizon of Socorro National High School trained both.

Although none of the athletes advanced to the final rounds, their performance was marked by composure, determination, and a visible sense of regional pride. More important than the scorelines was their presence on the national stage—proof of the growing talent and commitment of Caraga's youth. These athletes carried with them the region's core values of H.E.A.R.T.: Honesty, Enthusiasm, Accountability, Respect, and Transparency, embodying them in every match they played.

The billiards event drew participants from across the country, allowing Caraga's young cue artists not only to test their skills but also to engage with peers from other regions and broaden their athletic experience. While medals eluded them this time, the delegation remained optimistic and grounded. For these athletes, the true victory lay in the journey—representing their region with dignity, gaining national exposure, and growing in both skill and character.



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FERDINAND E. MARCOS MEMORIAL STADIUM

THE PHILIPPINES' AWARD-WINNING STADIUM

by FRENGIE G. BOTOY
Senior Education Program Specialist- SDO Agusan del Norte

The current stadium stands on the site of the former Mariano Marcos Stadium, which had a seating capacity of 2,000. After significant damage from Typhoon Mangkhut (Ompong) in 2018, the old structure was demolished to make way for the new stadium.

Designed by WTA Architecture and Design Studio, the stadium features a façade inspired by the traditional Ilocano textile pattern known as binakol, reflecting the region's rich cultural heritage.

The stadium's innovative design earned it the title of ArchDaily's 2025 Building of the Year in the sports architecture category.

Beyond sports, the stadium serves as a social space, featuring an open southern end called Stadium Park, which boasts a sloping lawn that connects to Laoag's Rizal Park.

The stadium served as the venue for the opening ceremony of the 65th Palarong Pambansa on May 24, 2025, welcoming approximately 15,000 delegates from across the Philippines.

DID YOU KNOW?





Guinness Record Holder

Elias Tabac fueling dreams in Caraga

By MARK GABOR

On May 29, 2025, world-class athlete Elias Tabac visited Caraga's athletes at the Dingras National High School Billeting Quarter, delivering a message of resilience, passion, and perseverance.

Born and raised in a poor household in Calaitan, Bayugan City, Elias grew up facing numerous challenges that could have easily derailed his aspirations. However, it was these very obstacles that instilled in him an unyielding spirit and an unwavering resolve to succeed.

20 Elias Tabac is a force to be reckoned with.

In 2021, he set the record for the Highest Altitude Obstacle Course Race at 5,714 meters on Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania.

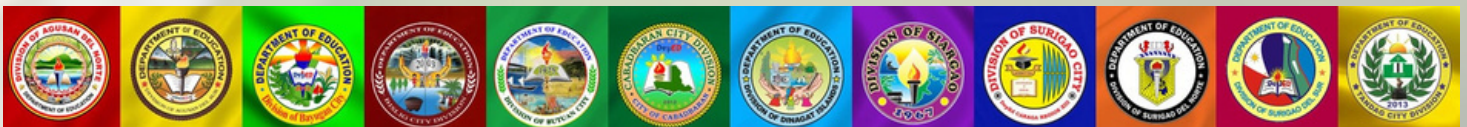
He followed this up in 2022 with seven Guinness World Records, including participation in the Highest Altitude Skyrunning Marathon at 5,895 meters on Mount Kilimanjaro.

In 2023, he won the gold medal in the 32nd SEA Games men's obstacle course in Cambodia.

Today, Elias stands as a shining example of triumph over adversity.

Elias is also a two-time champion in the Spartan Philippines National Series and has represented the Philippines in various international competitions.

On May 29, 2025, Elias Tabac visited the Caraga's athletes at Dingras National High School Billeting Quarter, sharing his inspiring story and motivating the young athletes to strive for excellence. His visit served as a significant morale boost for the athletes, who were visibly thrilled to meet Elias and learn from his experiences.





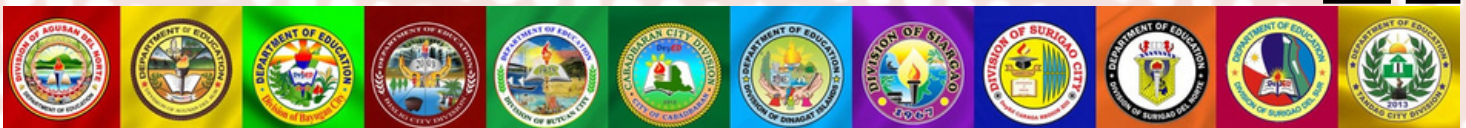
Caraga continues to shine in the Palarong Pambansa 2025 as its Sepak takraw team delivered an impressive performance in the Regu Event, clinching two straight victories and asserting dominance on the court.

Maintaining their momentum, Caraga battled Western Visayas in Game 2, once again securing a 2-0 sweep. The back-to-back wins showcased the team's preparedness and discipline as they continue to make their mark in the national tournament despite facing champion teams from other regions.

"All our opponents are the best in their regions," said the coaching trio—Coach Nestor Dimacuha of Tandag City Division, Coach Neiljohn Orilla of Agusan del Sur Division, and Coach Arnel Escabal of Surigao del Norte Division. "But we focus on discipline, courage, and smart play—not just heart, but strategy."

They emphasized the importance of mental toughness: "We trained just as hard. A positive mind brings positive results."

With composure and teamwork, Caraga proved that grit and unity lead to victory.



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