

Padayon Edukasyon **CARAGA**

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Celebrating Caraga's Triumph



not for sale

The year 2025 will forever be etched in the history of Caraga as its golden year of unparalleled triumphs and remarkable achievements. From the bustling halls of the National Schools Press Conference (NSPC) and the National Festival of Talents (NFOT) in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, to the electrifying arenas of the Palarong Pambansa in Laoag, Ilocos Norte, Caraga has risen as a beacon of excellence, proving its mettle as a powerhouse in both academics and sports.

This year, Caraga did not just participate; it dominated, emerging as the overall champion at the NSPC, collecting wins at the NFOT, and hauling an unprecedented 21 gold medals at the Palaro, securing the 8th spot in the overall ranking, the highest performance ever recorded by the region.

At the 2025 National Schools Press Conference, Caraga's young journalists showcased exceptional talent, creativity, and dedication. Their compelling stories, sharp analyses, and outstanding journalistic skills testified to the region's commitment to nurturing critical thinking and communication skills among its youth. Not to be outdone, the NFOT competitors dominated the Story Interpretation in Braille Reading and the Likhawitan, among other notable achievements. These victories are not merely a win in a competition; they reflect the region's vibrant educational environment.

Meanwhile, the Palaro witnessed Caraga's athletes shatter records and expectations. Collectively known as Caragold, these competitors demonstrated extraordinary discipline, resilience, and teamwork. This historic medal haul underscores the effectiveness of Caraga's partnerships in sports development programs, with the unwavering support from coaches, educators, and local government units. Indeed, the region has produced well-rounded individuals who excel both in the classroom and the playing field.

Caraga's dual triumphs in 2025 symbolize more than just trophies and titles; they represent the region's collective spirit, hard work, and aspiration for greatness. These achievements inspire the youth of Caraga to dream bigger and work harder, knowing that with personal dedication and community support, they can succeed at the highest level. Caraga proves that excellence is attainable when passion meets opportunity.

Indeed, 2025 is Caraga's golden year, a year where champions were made, and where the region's name was proudly etched in the annals of Philippine history. The future looks bright for Caraga, a true champion on all fronts.

CARAGA, CHAMPION ON ALL FRONTS



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RD's Compass

By Maria Ines C. Asuncion, CESO III
Regional Director

Caraga Rising:

Chasing Perfection to Catch Excellence

Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase it, we will catch excellence.

This piece of wisdom from Vince Lombardi has become a guiding light in the success of our exceptional Caragold athletes, campus journalists and performing artists, who have achieved record-breaking feats during the Palarong Pambansa, the National Schools Press Conference, and the National Festival of Talents last May 2025. Their triumphs made us all proud. They have shown resilience, discipline, and unwavering spirit of a true Caraganon.

Sure, our campaign was far from perfect, but just as archers aim for the sky to hit the bullseye, we aimed high, and landed in an unfamiliar territory of unprecedented achievement, a historic feat we can't forget. They have shown us excellence as a way of life and brought pride and honor to our region. We must always remember that our victory is rooted in hard work, sacrifice, and our collective dreams.

We have established our own identity in the national scene. Our success has answered the question of who we are as Caraganons: resilient, creative, and destined for greatness.

As we look forward to the upcoming Palarong Pambansa, NSPC, NSTF, and NFOT in 2026, my hope is that every Caraganon continue to embrace the values of sportsmanship, integrity, and creativity.

Let every challenge be an opportunity to grow, and let every victory inspire others to dream bigger. Together, let us sustain this momentum and build a legacy of champions; not only in the field of sports, arts, and journalism but in life itself.

Caraga shines because of you. Always aim high, break barriers, and pursue your passion with perseverance. Keep chasing perfection and catch excellence in the process.

SUCCESS IS INTENTIONAL

In Caraga, excellence is never an accident.

Our championship in the 2025 National Schools Press Conference and our historic 8th-place finish in the Palarong Pambansa and notable championships at the National Festival of Talents are powerful affirmations of what disciplined preparation, unity, and purpose can achieve. But beyond the medals and rankings, the true measure of success is how we convert these victories into meaningful living; by carrying the same commitment and integrity into our daily choices, our studies, our work, and our service to others.

These achievements remind us that greatness is built over time; through countless rehearsals, rewrites,

trainings, and moments of sacrifice. Every learner, coach, adviser, and leader contributed to this legacy. Let us preserve this momentum by continuing to invest in our gifts, support one another, and believe that Caraga can, and will, keep rising.

As we move forward, may we allow these triumphs to shape our character as much as they shape our record. When we let excellence guide our decisions while humility ground our actions, we create a life that is not only successful but significant. Let us live our victories with purpose, gratitude, and the courage to pursue even greater heights.



ARD's Point

By Pedro T. Escobarte Jr., CESO IV
Assistant Regional Director

Caraga's Drive to 2026

Got It

By Pedro A. Tecson
Editor in Chief

OPINION

Agusan del Sur and the Department of Education (DepEd) stand at a decisive moment in history. What started as a focused Executive Committee Meeting on October 20, 2025, and the subsequent Coordination Meeting on December 16 for the 2026 Palarong Pambansa have evolved into a broader regional movement toward success, encompassing not only sports but also campus journalism, performing arts, and science and technology competitions.

Central Office Guidance

The momentum heightened as the 2026 Palarong Pambansa Coordination Meeting officially opened in Bayugan City on December 16, 2025. A high-level delegation from the DepEd Central Office, led by Undersecretary for Operations Malcolm Garma and Undersecretary Peter Irving Ervin Corvera, along with the Palarong Pambansa Secretariat headed by Director Marivic Tolito, arrived to provide technical assistance and align operational plans with national standards. Bayugan City Mayor Kirk Asis, local government officials, and DepEd Bayugan City Schools Division Superintendent Maria Teresa M. Real, along with the other Schools Division Superintendents across the region, welcomed the esteemed officials.

Site Visits

The officials conducted extensive site visits to key venues, including the Salvacion Evacuation Center and the Datu Lipus Makapandong D.O. Plaza Sports Complex, followed by a meeting with operational committees chaired by Governor Cane and co-chaired by DepEd Caraga Regional Director Maria Ines C. Asuncion, CESO III, to align plans, clarify standards, and ensure readiness across all functional area.

Systematic Progress Across Operational Clusters

The region's trajectory toward 2026 is no longer merely aspirational; it is demonstrably within reach. Progress is moving systematically across three core operational clusters: Technical and Facilities; Security, Traffic, and Health; and Event Management. Venue rehabilitation is on schedule; billeting improvements are underway; security protocols have been refined in coordination with national agencies; transportation plans are bolstered with additional vehicles; and food sustainability is supported through local suppliers and DepEd's "Garden to Table" initiative.

Beyond logistics, these efforts are shaping a coherent hosting identity, positioning Agusan del Sur and Caraga as a national sporting hub and welcoming community.



Building a Hosting Identity for Caraga

What is emerging is not simply event logistics but a coherent hosting identity; one that positions Agusan del Sur and Caraga region as both a sporting hub and a community ready to welcome delegates from across the nation.

Beyond the Palaro: Preparing for the NSPC, NFOT, NSTF

Yet, the story of preparation in Caraga does not end with the Palaro. Running parallel to these efforts is an equally determined and strategic preparation for the 2026 National Schools Press Conference, the National Festival of Talents, and the National Science and



Technology Fair, which are among the prestigious competitions for learners across the country.

Defending a National Crown

This year, the stakes are particularly high. Caraga enters 2026 as the defending overall national champion of the NSPC, a title secured in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, in May 2025. Maintaining that championship is not merely a goal; it is a point of regional pride and a responsibility that Director Asuncion and the entire Caraga leadership have fully embraced, in cooperation with the 12 Schools Division Offices and LGUs.

A Disciplined and Multi-Dimensional Journalism Strategy

Under the leadership of CLMD Chief Bernabe L. Linog and Regional Journalism Coordinator Dr. Gladys S. Asis, the region has launched a disciplined, multi-dimensional strategy to retain its championship. This includes structured mentoring,

intensive writing drills, “Train-the-trainers” programs for coaches on multimedia competencies, enhancement writeshops covering news writing, broadcasting, and photojournalism, layout, collaborative mentorship involving artists, stage performers, and enthusiasts of science and technology.

A Unified Method for Winning

In this sense, Caraga’s pursuit of excellence is not divided between sports, journalism, science and technology, and performing arts; rather, it is unified by a shared culture of preparation, talent development, and strategic leadership.

One Culture, Two Arenas

The 2026 national competitions represent different arenas, one physical, one intellectual, but the region’s method is the same: start early, mobilize the right people, build the systems, and trust the process.

Commitment, Discipline, and Pride

The same commitment that strengthens sports venues also strengthens newsroom training and artistic performing. The same discipline that governs security planning also rules mentoring, keeping the same pride that fuels the motivation to defend the region’s national crowns.

Confidence Earned, Readiness Secured

As the events approach, the message is clear: success will not be accidental. It will be intentional. It will be the product of leadership that saw ahead, of teams that acted early, and of a region determined to rise to the challenge, whether on the field, in the newsroom, or across both.

The groundwork has been laid. The confidence is earned. Caraga enters 2026 not only prepared, but positioned to win again.

NSPC OVERALL CHAMPIONS:

By Gladys S. Asis, PhD
Regional Journalism Coordinator

Appause had long faded into memory, but the echo of that final announcement still lingers in the hearts of those who lived it!

The Vigan Convention Center trembled under the weight of a thousand waiting hearts. Fluorescent lights flickered like stars about to burst, and in every corner, breath held steady—as if the entire hall was kneeling in silence. Then came the voice. Sharp, deliberate, unforgettable. “Overall Champion: Caraga.”

In that sacred instant, time shattered. The roar that followed wasn’t just victory—it was release. Fists flew. Tears fell. School Paper Advisers collapsed into each other’s arms. Learners screamed, laughed, and sobbed—and somewhere amid the dizzying joy, my whisper cut through the chaos: “Thank You, Lord. Indeed, when the time is right, You, our God, shall make it happen.” (Isaiah 60:22). Not written. Not prepared. Spoken. At the very moment destiny arrived—on May 23, my birthday—the exact day hearts needed the reminder that miracles have impeccable timing.

It had finally happened.

A region long carved in humility now stood at the summit. After years of scraping, reaching, and aching for a title that always slipped just beyond grasp, Caraga had clasped it—held it close like a long-lost loved one finally returned. This was no ordinary victory. This was a generational triumph. The first Overall Championship in NSPC history for Caraga. And behind this historic roar was a quiet war of perseverance.

Because Caraga did not win by chance. It was forged.

Caraga’s triumph was never scripted—it was sculpted. From fragments. From borrowed time. From classrooms lit by the soft, golden flicker of lights beside keyboards. In those quiet places, the region built its dream. And it anchored itself in four truths: Competence, Collaboration, Cooperation, and Cliniquing. But beneath those pillars pulsed something deeper: consistency and commitment—the bloodline of every step forward.

Competence wasn’t taught. It was lived. It wasn’t about brilliance. It was about becoming. Caraga didn’t wait for perfect conditions. It trained with what it had—borrowed laptops, echoing classrooms, patched internet. It equipped advisers and coaches with every tool it could afford, even when “all we had” felt like nothing. But with that “nothing,” it gave its everything.



HOW CARAGOLD CONQUERED THE ELUSIVE DREAM

Collaboration became the bridge between scarcity and possibility. With limited funding, the region stretched. Stakeholders didn't just donate—they stood in faith. Private partners didn't just offer—they built foundations. Caraga knocked not in desperation, but in unity—because behind every request was not a plea, but a promise: that together, scarcity could be transformed into strength, and vision into victory.

Cooperation turned individuals into a movement. Teachers stayed late—not by obligation, but by love. Parents prayed through sleepless nights. Division Coordinators crafted miracles out of tight schedules and tighter budgets. The Regional Office didn't just approve plans—it rewrote norms. The Regional Director unlocked funds and trust, giving the delegation not just permission, but power. And when voices faltered, Caraga stood stronger—not as separate entity, but as one beating heart.

Cliniquing was the crucible. It stung. It healed. It rebuilt. Criticism was not rejection—it was redemption. Learners were refined like gold in fire. Mentors became mirrors. Articles turned from ordinary lines into lifelines. The most profound edits weren't grammatical—they were emotional. Because to write well is to feel deeply. To rewrite is to believe again. There were storms—emotional, logistical, spiritual. Faith wavered. Morale cracked. But the region clung to something greater than certainty. It clung to the whisper: The time will come. And it did.

When Caraga's name echoed across the hall, it wasn't just sound. It was justice. It was love. It was history choosing a region that never stopped showing up, even when the odds didn't. The NSPC trophy became a symbol not of dominance, but of devotion. Not of arrival, but of ascent.

This win belongs to every SDO who gave more than expected. To every EPS who stayed invisible but essential. To the Region who wove the impossible into itinerary. To billeting school, Bantay Central ES who welcomed delegates like family. To critics who cut deeply so learners could soar. To coaches who whispered "You're enough" when silence spoke louder. To every stakeholder who believed in our endeavors. And most of all, to the learners—who wrote not for gold, but for glory.

Caraga didn't just conquer NSPC.

It walked through fire and came out glowing. It stood at the edge of defeat and leapt. It clasped an elusive dream—with both hands, tear-stained cheeks, and thunder in its soul.

This is Caragold. Not just a moment. A memory that will never fade. A legacy written in ink, fire, and faith.



NATIONAL PRESS CONFERENCE
OVER-ALL
3RD PLACE BEST DEBATE
1ST PLACE TOP PERFORMER
1ST PLACE TOP PERFORMING REGION

PALARONG PAMAHALANG

1ST PLACE BEST BASKETBALL
1ST PLACE DIGITAL ARTS
2ND PLACE MOST ECO-FRIENDLY
3RD PLACE MOST ORGANIZED

NATIONAL FESTIVAL
1ST PLACE STORY INTERPRETATION
USING UNIFIED
1ST PLACE



OVERALL CHAMPION

CONFERENCE (NSPC)

CHAMPION

DECORATED KALESA

NG REGION (SECONDARY)

(INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY SECONDARY)

MBANSA 2025

ILLETING AWARD

NGAGEMENT AWARD

FRIENDLY DELEGATION

GANIZED DELEGATION

FIVAL OF TALENTS

ETATION IN BRAILLE READING

ENGLISH BRAILLE

LIKHAWITAN

LAYOUT: JICKIE TIU



Let's Learn

By Bernabe L. Linog

CLMD Chief

Rethinking Competitions:

Building Skills Before Chasing Medals

OPINION

I have always regarded the National Schools Press Conference (NSPC), National Festival of Talents (NFOT), and National Science and Technology Fair (NSTF) as among the most learning-filled competitions for learners across the country. These gatherings are not merely contests; they are learning spaces where students develop skills, discover their strengths, and build confidence.

However, behind every learner who reaches these stages are teacher-coaches who guide, support, and often sacrifice time and energy to make the experience meaningful. As students' progress from the school level to the national stage, I have observed that the challenges have always been on keeping the right balance between learning and competing.

In my experience as an educational leader, I've witnessed how both students and teacher-coaches often begin with clear learning goals: writing better, experimenting deeper, performing with heart. But as the levels go higher, the pressure to win medals intensifies. Teacher-coaches want their students to shine, yet they are also burdened by rising expectations that are sometimes unrealistic. When the drive to win becomes overwhelming, stress sets in for both students and coaches. The learning process becomes compressed, and curiosity is gradually replaced by rigid rehearsals and hurried outputs.

Because of this, I believe it is crucial to strengthen the classroom teaching-learning process so that the competencies needed for these competitions develop gradually and organically throughout the school year. When journalistic writing, research investigation, creative performance activities, and inquiry-based projects are integrated into regular lessons, learners will build confidence without the anxiety of last-minute preparations.

I also see great value in providing more low-stakes practice opportunities, such as classroom mini-fairs, writing sessions, or small talent showcases where students can explore their abilities in meaningful and enjoyable ways.

I further believe that encouraging collaborative learning can help ease individual pressure, allowing students to support one another rather than compete prematurely. For teacher-coaches, sustained professional development and shared coaching strategies can help distribute responsibilities and keep guidance firmly learner-centered. Ultimately, when preparation is grounded in authentic learning experiences rather than medal-driven pressure, students are able to enjoy the process, deepen their skills, and carry with them a clearer and more fulfilling understanding of what these national competitions are truly meant to inspire.



Caraga's victory at the 2025 National Schools Press Conference in Vigan Ilocos Sur, was more than a headline. It was history.

For years, the region stood quietly among seventeen others—never the loudest, never the most equipped. Caraga entered the competition with its delegation carried by determination rather than privilege. It endured scarcity, stretched logistics, and knocked on doors not with pride but with purpose. And yet, Caraga kept coming back. Every year. Stronger. Better.

Write It Right

By Dr. Gladys S. Asis

Regional Journalism Coordinator

CARAGOLD

OPINION

This is what makes the triumph unforgettable. Caraga did not rise on privilege. The region rose on perseverance. It did not conquer through abundance. It conquered through collaboration. Different stakeholders said yes—not to sponsorship, but to vision. Private partners gave—not because they had spare, but because they believed.

School paper advisers and journalism coaches became the backbone of editorial boards, pouring themselves into coaching sessions that no one applauded but everyone needed.

When the announcement came—“Overall Champion: Caraga”—the roar that followed was not born of ego. It was emancipation. It was the release of years marked by “almost,” by “not yet,” by “try again.” It was the cry of a region that had whispered maybe this time through countless seasons of struggle, and finally heard its name called. That moment was more than a victory; it was vindication.

It's rise is more than a medal count. It is a generational triumph. It tells every struggling region that scarcity is not a sentence, that humility can stand at the summit, and that collaboration can transform impossibility into inevitability.

Behind the ascent was leadership anchored in belief. The Regional Director did more than approve budgets—she steered the climb with conviction. Top management from the regional and division levels stitched together schedules with quiet precision. School heads opened their campuses like homes.

Every key figure responded with conviction, turning individual acts of faith into collective strength. What emerged was not merely a delegation—it was a movement, a living testament that unity and belief can transform into triumph.

This victory was not won beneath the glare of the spotlight. It was forged in the unheralded corners of the regional office that became venues for cliniquing, in classrooms that turned into crucibles of discipline, in cramped rehearsal halls where voices found their strength, and in sleepless nights that tested resolve. It was etched in the ink stains of learners rewriting drafts until dawn, in the trembling voices of broadcasters rehearsing in echoing rooms, in layouts perfected under dim light, and in the whispered prayers of mentors who refused to surrender. Caraga's triumph was no spectacle—it was a testament to unseen labor, to the relentless pursuit of excellence carried out far from applause. And in that moment, Caraga did not merely win—it transformed.

The region crossed from contender to champion, from striving to defining. Caraga became more than a name on the scoreboard; it became a symbol of resilience, collaboration, and destiny fulfilled. It stood as proof that championships are never accidents—they are the culmination of consistency, courage, and collective will. Caraga's rise is a reminder that resilience is stronger than scarcity, and its legacy is not carved in wealth, but in will.

This is Caraga's story. This is Caraga's soul.

This is Caragold.



Support and Serve

By Edmund D. Mendoza, PhD

ESSD Chief



Key to Caraga's National Drive

As DepEd Caraga accelerates its preparations for the 2026 Palarong Pambansa, it is important to underscore a fundamental truth: national success is sustained not only by talent and training, but by strong, coordinated, and learner-centered support systems.

The Education Support Services Division (ESSD) stands fully committed to Caraga's drive for the Palarong Pambansa, alongside other equally significant national engagements such as the National Schools Press Conference, National Festival of Talents, and National Science and Technology Fair. While these platforms differ in discipline and form, they demand the same level of institutional readiness, protection, and care for our learners.

As learners advance to higher levels of competition, expectations intensify; and so do physical, mental, and emotional demands. In response, ESSD is intensifying efforts to promote health and well-being, not only for athletes and national competitors, but for all learners across the region. Programs focusing on physical fitness, proper nutrition, overall wellness, mental health and well-being, disaster preparedness, and safe learning environments are being reinforced because performance must never come at the cost of well-being. Excellence that is achieved unsustainably is not excellence at all.

ESSD also recognizes that preparing learners for the national stage cannot be done in isolation. Strengthening partnerships with public and private stakeholders remains a strategic priority. Local Government units, National Government Agencies, Higher Education Institutions, Private Lending Institutions, private companies, Government Financial Institutions, and civil society organizations play a vital role in providing resources, expertise, and shared responsibility.

When sectors work together toward a common goal, support becomes broader, deeper, and more impactful.

Ultimately, ESSD's commitment goes beyond competitions, rankings, or medals. It is about building systems that nurture skills early, protect learners consistently, and allow excellence to emerge naturally over time. As Caraga looks toward 2026 and beyond, ESSD remains focused on what truly matters: healthy learners, strong partnerships, and support systems that enable our learners to stand confidently, and sustainably, on the national stage.



Caraga's Historic GOLD RUSH

A beautiful story no one expected to be told

By Honey Grace Buyan

There are moments in history when the sleeper team rises to claim their place in the sun.

For the Caraga Region, the 2025 Palarong Pambansa was just that moment. Caraga's athletes have done something extraordinary with 21 gold medals, more than double their previous record.

They've proven that dreams don't just belong to those who have consistently won; they also belong to those who dare to push forward, even when the road ahead seems impossible.

But Caraga's achievement wasn't solely measured by gold. With numerous silver and bronze medals, the region showed its depth, showcasing talent across all levels of competition. While 21 golds sparkled in the spotlight, the silver and bronze medals glistened just as brightly, symbolizing Caraga's athletes' grit and decisiveness. These victories were born from physical strength and a determined will to rise above every challenge.

Caraga's 21 gold medals were not the only story told at this year's games. There was something deeper at play. Caraga, once a region always found beneath the top 10, has now planted itself firmly in the elite ranks. They no longer linger in the shadows but instead stand tall, their name now etched proudly among the top 10.

It's as though they've climbed from the foot of the mountain to the summit, where the air is rare and the view unforgettable.

Behind these 21 gold medals are not just athletes but families who believed when no one else did, coaches who pushed beyond their limits, local leaders who supported relentlessly, and communities who cheered with unyielding pride. The road to victory was not easy, but the people of Caraga stood beside each athlete, sharing their hopes and struggles. This victory is theirs, too.

For the youth of Caraga, it's a reminder that no dream is too distant, no goal too great, and no challenge is insurmountable when you put your heart into it. Caraga's triumph in the 2025 Palarong Pambansa stands as proof that hope can rise from quiet corners and strength is often forged in struggle. It reflects countless sacrifices, unspoken dreams, and the collective love of a community that never gave up. In this victory, Caraga has shown that greatness can emerge from anywhere and that the most beautiful stories are often the ones no one expected to be told.



ONE POINT FROM GOLD

How Rachel Ann Sarmiento turned heartbreak into heroism

By Randy P. Lamanilao
Surigao del Norte Division

Surigao del Norte's own Rachel Ann Sarmiento proved that the color of a medal doesn't always define victory. The 12-year-old from Claver Central Elementary School battled to a bronze medal in the Taekwondo Kyurogi, Category 3, at Palarong Pambansa 2025. But it wasn't the bronze that brought tears to her eyes—it was the feeling of being one step away from the gold, a moment so close yet so far.

Rachel Ann's journey to the medal stand was far from easy, and the emotional turning point came in the final match. "I really cried," she admitted, the moment's weight evident in her voice. "It was just a one-point gap. What a waste." The difference between first place and third may seem small to the outside world, but for Rachel Ann, that one point represented the fine line between victory and defeat. Yet, despite the sting of coming so close, she quickly accepted her result. "But I accepted the defeat," she said, showing a maturity beyond her years.

Her tears weren't born from an inability to accept defeat, but from realizing that she was so close to achieving her dream. "It wasn't about the loss, it was about the fight," Rachel Ann reflected, "Knowing I was just one point away made it harder, but also more meaningful. I gave everything I had, which I can be proud of."

The final match was no easy feat. Her opponent was relentless, employing a strategy that forced Rachel Ann to dig deep into her skill set. "Her techniques, her flicker, hit my head. She frequently walked during the fight. She kept attacking," Rachel Ann recalled, describing the challenging battle.

Despite the aggressive tactics from her opponent, Rachel Ann was resolute, knowing that her strong points—her powerful cut kicks—were her key to victory. "I knew I had to rely on my strength, my cut kicks," she said with quiet confidence.

The 2025 Palarong Pambansa may have awarded her the bronze, but the real victory was her ability to overcome adversity, display resilience, and learn from every moment on the mat. "Thanks to my parents for their support, to everyone who always wished me good luck, my coach, trainers, and friends," Rachel Ann expressed with heartfelt gratitude.



In every sporting event, where the spotlight shines on the victorious athlete and the podium echoes with applause, one timeless truth quietly stands tall: behind every athlete's triumph is a mentor's silent grind.

It is often said that it takes two to tango, an adage rooted in relationships built on trust, collaboration, and shared commitment. This holds especially true in the world of sports, where success is never achieved alone.

In prestigious competitions like the Palarong Pambansa, coaches are the silent architects of victory, working tirelessly behind the scenes and equally deserving of recognition.

While athletes stand proudly on the podium and carry the honor of their regions, their triumphs are the result of countless hours of sacrifice, discipline, and guidance, both from themselves and from those who trained and believed in them.

Despite the challenges, they remain steadfast and are motivated not by personal gain but by a deep belief in their athletes' potential. For them, each win is deeply meaningful, the result of mutual sacrifices, challenges overcome, and success earned through dedication.

BEHIND THE SCENES:

Coaches and Mentors of the Palaro

By Kenn Joseph Louie J. Cabrera
Tandag City Division

From early morning conditioning to late-night strategy reviews, coaches take on responsibilities that go far beyond physical preparation. They serve as motivators, disciplinarians, counselors, and often as second parents to young athletes facing the pressure of national competition.

Moreover, many of these coaches come from humble beginnings. Some are new to the department, often juggling multiple roles with limited resources. Others are seasoned mentors whose unwavering dedication to nurturing student-athletes has stood the test of time.

Although joining the Palaro and winning an award is a great achievement, the truth remains that more investment in equipment, facilities, and professional development should be directed toward coaches and grassroots sports programs.

Empowering mentors with the tools and support they need not only uplifts individual athletes but strengthens the foundation of sports development in the country.

After all, champions are not only born from talent but also from the hands of those who patiently and passionately mold them.

As the country cheers for every new record, breathtaking goals, and historic wins, let us also applaud the mentors behind the moments.

For every athlete standing tall in the spotlight, there is a coach standing just behind, quietly lifting them up. In the grand celebration of sports, let's not forget those who train in the shadows but shape champions for the spotlight.





Let every
challenge
be an opportunity to
grow and let every victory
inspire others
to
dream bigger

Maria Ines C. Asuncion, CESO III

