



PSDians debut under PSO banner at Palarong Pambansa
By Aaron Nepomuceno and Ethan Nepomuceno

For the first time, PSDian student-athletes represented Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO) in the Palarong Pambansa. PSDians Syd Ferreras, Marce Padrejuan, Shawn Maya, Naizer Hassan, John Vistal, and Manuel Lising played basketball alongside fellow overseas teammates.

The team faced opponents from Central Luzon, Western Visayas, CALABARZON, and Zamboanga in the group stage, but were unable to win any matches, and didn't make it to the next stage.

The PSO squad consisted of students from various overseas Philippine schools worldwide, with six PSDians playing basketball under their coach Michael D. Comia. The six players who formed the latter half of the basketball team, namely, Yuksel Alanguilan, Raighne David, Aaron Llanes, Marcus Lavin, Brent Macatangay and Godwin Pineda, came from Philippine International School Qatar (PISQ) with their coach Mike Edison B. Pioquinto.

Here is what two PSDians had to say about their experience.

Regarding the basketball players of other regions, incoming Grade 9 PSD student Marce Padrejuan said, "We didn't really experience any difficulty in joining the competition, but the players were more experienced, which makes them challenging to go against. I expected to play against and experience the skills of well-rounded and talented players from different parts of the Philippines."

Meanwhile, on the topic of team chemistry, Padrejuan said, “Even if we come from different schools, it all worked out well because of our different roles in helping the team. We’re also able to develop our chemistry thanks to our coaches.”

Sharing a similar attitude, incoming Grade 11 PSD student Naizer Hassan remarked, “It was great because we already had chemistry, because they are also friends outside of school and we’re already familiar with each other.”

Overall, despite coming from all corners of the globe and having limited time to train, the PSO squad was able to adapt and act as a team in the competition.

“The experience was overwhelming since we knew from the beginning that the expectations were high, but we are proud since we’re the first batch who represented PSO in the Palarong Pambansa.” Hassan said, aiming for stronger performances in future Palarong Pambansa editions.

Although the PSO did not win medals in basketball, they did attain a bronze medal in taekwondo, attained by Aeious Cruz of PISQ. In the overall tally, the NCR won first place in the Palarong Pambansa, with 98 gold medals, while CALABARZON edged out Western Visayas, having 57 gold medals over the latter’s 56.

The Palarong Pambansa is an annual national sports competition for student-athletes in the Philippines who compete in various sports disciplines. This year marks the 64th edition of the competition, held in Cebu City from July 9 to 16.

Naizer Hassan lines up for a free throw against Zamboanga.



PSO goes on the offense against Central Luzon.

John Vistal and Naizer Hassan prepare to defend.



PSO athletes proudly display their banner alongside their coaches as they gear up for Palarong Pambansa.