



CARAGOLD Sports

News Updates



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CARAGA ARNISADORS STRIKE GOLD IN SYNCHRONIZE DOUBLE WEAPON CATEGORY

By PONCIANO G. ALNGOG, EGY I. JUMADLA

With precise strikes and fluid, synchronized movements, the Caraga Arnis Secondary Girls team clinched the gold medal in the Synchronized Double Weapon category during the 2025 Palarong Pambansa held at the F.E. Marcos Mini Cultural and Sports Center.

Arnisadors Celia Mer C. Najaro, Ysai Winslet T. Lorejo, and Charlyn M. Diaz impressed the panel of judges with their highly coordinated one-minute and eight-second performance. The team showcased excellence in synchronization and coordination, proper execution of strikes and blocks, creative and varied movements, high degree of difficulty, and strong martial attitude and expression.

The judges awarded them remarkable scores of 9.7, 9.8, 9.7, 9.6, and 9.8, securing their place at the top of the podium once again with a combined score that edged out other competitors.

Behind them were strong performances from Region 12 and

Western Visayas, who both finished with a tied score of 29.1, sharing the silver medal spot in the event.

This victory marks a back-to-back gold finish for the Caraga trio, who also dominated the same event during the 2024 Palarong Pambansa in Cebu City.

The winning arnisadors hail from Jacinto P. Elpa National High School, under the Tandag City Division. The team is coached by Shella Mae C. Najaro, with trainers Kennex C. Donasco and Lotchie G. Bautista guiding their rigorous preparation and performance.

PALARONG 2025



EDITORIAL

There was a sacred stillness in the holding area of the Vintar Municipal Hall in Ilocos Norte that afternoon—not the silence of nerves, but the calm of hearts turned heavenward.

As the Caragold rhythmic gymnasts gathered in prayer, heads bowed and eyes closed, they reminded us of something often forgotten in the rush of competition: we are nothing without God.

Just moments before the drumbeats were heard, these young athletes displayed a strength no scoreboard could ever measure. It was the strength of surrender—a quiet offering of all they had, to the One who gave it first.

We do not know exactly what they prayed for. Perhaps it was not for victory, but for worthiness. Not for perfection, but for peace of mind. Not just for themselves, but for each other.

What we do know is this: they did not pray alone—they prayed as one. In a world that often measures success through medals and applause, these gymnasts chose grace instead. They understood that every movement, every breath, was borrowed—a gift returned in worship.

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When sports become a prayer

The games' spiritual side

How humbling it is to realize that the greatest battles are not always fought in arenas, but within, where fear and faith collide. And how beautiful it is to see athletes who know that without God, even the most flawless routine is hollow.

They showed us that competition is not a clash of egos, but a celebration of blessings. That real victory is not in the result, but in the spirit with which the game is played. Even losing can be sacred, when we give our best with trust and humility.

At Vintar, before the routines began, there was prayer. Before the judges lifted their pens, the gymnasts lifted their hearts.



In that space, sport became prayer. Movement became devotion.

To the Caragold gymnasts who paused to pray before they performed—thank you. You reminded us that greatness begins in humility. That excellence starts, not with applause, but with reverence.

And in doing so, you have won something no medal can match.

You have touched eternity.





CARAGA wins hard-fought Sepak Takraw match, defeats CAR 2-1

By CATHERINE BUGARIN, PONCIANO GALINGOG

Roentgen D. Villasin, Jr.

In a fierce and closely contested battle, CARAGA edged out the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) in a thrilling three-set match, 15-7, 16-17, 15-7, during Game 2 of the Secondary Girls Sepak Takraw event.

CARAGA opened the game with a commanding performance in the first set. After taking an early 3-1 lead, the team extended the gap to 8-1 behind the effective plays of Bullo and Piner, with Montero orchestrating the offense as setter. CAR briefly scored from a service error, but CARAGA remained in full control. A substitution brought Solmia in for Bullo, helping the team maintain momentum to secure the set, 15-7.

The second set was a different story, as CAR took the first point from another CARAGA service error. The two teams battled point for point, with scores tied at 3-3, 6-6, and 9-9. Bullo returned to the court as CARAGA led 14-13, but a series of unforced service errors allowed CAR to steal the set, 17-16.

In the deciding third set, CAR struck first, but CARAGA quickly bounced back and took control at

5-2. Playing with renewed energy, the team extended its lead to 7-2 before CAR called a timeout. CARAGA continued its aggressive play, reaching 12-5 and eventually closing out the match with a 15-7 win.

The Caraga team was guided to victory under the expert coaching of Roentgen D. Villasin, Jr., with chaperone Catherine B. Verdeflor providing strong support throughout the match.

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A blaze of glory: Palarong Pambansa 2025 opens with spectacle and spirit at historic Marcos Stadium

By HERMIETTE FERRER LEROG
Education Program Supervisor, SDO Surigao City

The roar of the crowd, a vibrant tapestry of regional colors, and the electrifying energy of thousands of athletes filled the air as the Palarong Pambansa 2025 officially commenced at the Ferdinand E. Marcos Memorial Stadium in Laoag, Ilocos Norte on May 24, 2025.

Against the backdrop of the glowing Ilocano sunset, a grand display of athleticism and camaraderie unfolded, promising a week of intense competition and unforgettable memories. More than just a sporting event, this year's games serve as a celebration of Filipino youth, unity, and regional pride in the historic heart of Ilocos.

The grandeur of the Marcos Stadium provided a fitting stage for the opening of the national games. Its towering structure—symbolizing Ilocano

resilience and ambition—echoed with the cheers of spectators from all corners of the country. As the athletes marched and performances began, the venue's historical significance lent a sense of depth and purpose to the festivities, blending past and present in a meaningful tribute to national identity and achievement.

The opening ceremony went beyond the traditional parade and field demonstrations, delivering a powerful narrative of Filipino heritage and spirit. Through rhythmic beats, vivid costumes, and graceful choreography, performers brought to life stories such as Biag Ni Lam-ang and the Basi Revolt. The fusion of ancient folklore with modern interpretations of music and dance created a spectacle that honored tradition while

embracing contemporary Filipino culture—setting an inspiring tone for the week ahead.

As the final fireworks burst across the Ilocos sky, the ceremony concluded with a breathtaking display of light and emotion. It was a moment when the dreams of young athletes and the pride of a nation converged in a vibrant celebration of excellence. The opening of Palarong Pambansa 2025 was more than just a beginning—it was a bold affirmation of hope, strength, and the bright future carried by the Filipino youth. With spirits high and hearts united, the nation now looks ahead to a thrilling week of competition. Let the games begin!

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Caragold titans triumph in table tennis

By RONALD ALLAN A. ARCAVERA, PhD
Secondary School Principal, SDO Surigao City

Laoag, Ilocos Norte, May 24, 2025 - This is not the end, but a beginning to snatching the gold. This marked the record of first win in the table tennis both elementary and secondary categories.

Shereen M. Amoguis from Surigao West Central Elementary School of Surigao City led in the elementary level while Khian Chaz C. Intellegando (Tandag City), Jian A. Nuñez (Butuan City), Vince Mari B. Oliva (Surigao City) and Gian Gerard R. Cinco (Surigao City) dominated the secondary level.

Clashing with Western Visayas athlete, Caragold with Amoguis led the score- 3-2 in the game frightening the opponent with her strong grip and counter sharing its first win for Caraga in the elimination round.

In the same game yet other tier, secondary table tennis grippers namely Intellegando, Nuñez, Oliva, and Cinco showed 3-2 score smashing the Central Luzon hotshots.

Both team felt the intimidation from their banes that weakened their strategies in the game, but aced with their continous back spins, grip, and smash.

Despite the tension, both pushed the ball back during the rally and displayed strong defense. They further showcased impressive body coordination and mental alertness aweing spectators by sweeping the sets' victory.

Almie Rhoa O. Rodela, teacher-coach from elementary, envisioned for sporting excellence through training and prayers.

Sheila R. Digol also coached the secondary table tennis boys and thanked the people who supported the team throughout the game.

Both teams are set to return to defend their rank standing so far and continue training to improve more of their speed in another table match.

"I am thankful to what she had showed and we always continue training to support Caragold's vision of winning."

By Almie Rhoa O. Rodela,
Teacher-coach-Table Tennis Elementary



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Jamito bags bronze in Shot Put at the 2025 Palarong Pambansa

By PRELYN P. SANDIMAS-BARSAGA
Education Program Supervisor, SDO Cabadbaran City

Laoag, Ilocos Norte, May 26, 2025 - Caraga Region celebrates a proud victory as Joarame E. Jamito, a para-athlete, from Cabadbaran City National High School, clinched the bronze medal in the Shot Put - Para Athletics ID Boys Junior event at the 2025 Palarong Pambansa, held at the Ferdinand E. Marcos Memorial Stadium in Laoag City.

Trained under the guidance of his committed coach, Sharon Rose P. Puyo, Master Teacher I, he proved to be one of the top contenders among para-athletes from across the country with an impressive throw of 9.57 meters.

The Shot Put - ID Boys Junior event is one of the many competitions that celebrate the skills and determination of differently-abled student-athletes in the Palarong Pambansa Para Games.

The Para Games highlight the exceptional talents of student-athletes with disabilities, and Joarame's achievement stands as a testament to the power of resilience, dedication, and hard work, anything is possible.

His success not only brings personal pride but also uplifts the Schools Division of Cabadbaran City, and the entire Caraga Region.

Coach Puyo expressed immense pride in her athlete's performance, stating that Joarame's discipline in training and dedication to excellence were key factors in achieving this success.

"He made this far because of his determination to win. He patiently trained everyday even if wala ko for four months still gapaning kamot gihapon siya ug train. Snacks lang jud akoa share sa iyaha within that months nga wala ko."

- Sharon Rose P. Puyo
Teacher-coach-Para Games



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Caraga holds Bronze in Chess Blitz event at Palarong Pambansa 2025

By DORES P. CLARO
Education Program Supervisor, SDO Cabadbaran City



Guiding them toward success were Coach Rachel O. Givero and Trainer Rockey P. Pagkalawigan, whose expertise and dedication were contributory in honing the boys' competitive edge.

This bronze medal win is an evidence to the growing excellence of Caraga's youth in intellectual sports, further strengthening the region's presence on the national arena.

Congratulations, Team Caraga! Your victory is a checkmate for excellence!

Caraga Region continued to make waves in the national sports arena as young chess prodigies Mart Lean S. Muanag of Trento West CES SPED Center and Gabriel O. Givero of San Francisco Pilot CES with SPED proudly secured the Bronze Medal in the Blitz Event – Team Category (Elementary Boys) during the Palarong Pambansa 2025 on May 26, 2025 held in Ilocos Norte.

With sharp minds and steady focus, the duo demonstrated strategy and teamwork under intense pressure, outplaying numerous teams from other regions. Their impressive feat brought pride not only to Caraga but also to the Agusan del Sur (ADS) Division.



Gabriel Givero scores Bronze for Caraga in PB 2025 Chess Blitz

By DORES P. CLARO
Education Program Supervisor, SDO Cabadbaran City



Representing the Caraga Region, Givero faced a highly competitive field of young chess talents from across the country. Through sharp tactics and steady determination, he emerged as one of the top contenders in the blitz event—a fast-paced, high-pressure version of chess that tests both speed and mental agility.

Behind his success is the strong support of Coach Rachel O. Givero and Trainer Rockey P. Pagkalawigan, whose guidance and training played a key role in Gabriel's preparation and victory.

This remarkable win gives honor to Caraga and showcases the region's growing excellence in mind sports, particularly in chess. Gabriel's bronze finish is not just a personal triumph, but also a proud moment for the entire Agusan del Sur Division.

Bravo, Gabriel! Your brilliance is an inspiration to all young Caraganon athletes.

With focus, finesse, and a keen sense of strategy, Gabriel O. Givero of Trento West Central Elementary SPED Center, Agusan del Sur Division, proudly clinched the Bronze Medal in the Blitz Event – Individual Category (Elementary Boys) during the prestigious Palarong Pambansa 2025, hosted in Ilocos Norte.





By RONALD ALLAN A. ARCAYERA, PhD
Secondary School Principal, SDO Surigao City

Marcus Timothy Sio began his quest for being a lawn tennis champion during the division and regional athletic competitions dispatching opponents in Caraga Region.

Sio's strong lob and smash made him at tip-top, along with prayers and motivation around the venue with his coach, friends, and other delegation officials.

The game doubled its intensity as the athlete of Region 4B scored - increasing the possibility of winning, but Sio blazed all his efforts to secure a spot in the elimination round.

The 12-year-old athlete said that he was happy with the win and challenged with the kind of game he had played with the best in the nation.

"I can't wait to play another match on venue just like how I played intensely during the division and regional games", said Sio.

Sio showed no sign of nerves securing 8 points over Region 4B.

The game was Sio's first achievement in the national game and his aim for a rapid upward rank means a lot for him with a great chance of qualifying to the semi-finals.

Coming to Ilocos as a junior is great experience for Sio and it prepares him mentally and physically.

With next match to come, he is serious and motivated for training guided by his coach, Graciela A. Acuña II.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sio is inclined towards lawn tennis that he never misses a match. He even practices at backyard with a broom when no racket is around!



HOME AND HEART IN EVERY MEAL

Built by Passion, Sustained by Love—A Look into SDO Dinagat Islands' Role in Palarong Pambansa 2025

By Richard E. Davide, PDO I-Dinagat Islands Division

The blistering heat of Palarong Pambansa 2025 comes with a dry wind that carries both the thrill of competition and the ache of distance from home. Yet amidst it all stands a modest structure, a shelter of care and kinship.

It is not a stadium, nor a stage of glory. ***It is a kitchen.***

Tucked within the CARAGA Region's billeting site is the kitchen station build and beautified by the Division of Dinagat Islands. It is a simple yet soulful space where pots simmer, hearts gather, and the love of a province is served, plate after plate.

Weeks before the games began, when fields were still bare and whistles had yet to blow, a team from Dinagat Islands was already hard at work, not to play, but to prepare. They traveled far not to chase medals, but to build something far more

enduring: a kitchen that would sustain champions.

Led with quiet resolve and deep devotion by Schools Division Superintendent Florence E. Almaden and Assistant Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Bryan L. Arreo, the team of SDO personnel turned a patch of land into a haven, outfitted with native materials, familiar comforts, and the unmistakable warmth of home.

Woven bamboo walls echo the textures of the region,

while colorful ornaments offer visual relief from the sunbaked surroundings of Ilocos. Everything here speaks of intention. Of love brought from home. Of service that asks for no spotlight.

This is no ordinary kitchen. It is the heartbeat of CARAGA's delegation.

Each meal prepared is a message of care from those who couldn't be there to cheer from the stands. A warm bowl of soup might mean courage before a

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match. A serving of native viands might be the only thing anchoring an athlete to memories of their family's dinner table.

From early morning to late evening, the kitchen crew move in rhythm, chopping, cooking, cleaning, laughing, and sometimes wiping away a sweat or a tear. Their work is quiet but never unnoticed. It's in the energized steps of a sprinter, in the focused calm of an archer, in the proud smile of a first-time Palaro athlete who tastes home in every spoonful.

Here in Laoag, far from the gentle coasts and high mountains of Caraga, the athletes are reminded daily that they are not alone.

In between competitions, they gather here not only to eat, but to rest, to reconnect, to feel grounded. This kitchen becomes a sanctuary, both for the body and the spirit.

Stories are shared over steamy cups of rice. Encouragement is passed around as freely as the water pitchers. Laughter mixes with the clinking of utensils. And when the day ends, whether in victory or defeat, the meals remain a constant comfort.

The medals will shine and fade. The games will come and go. But for many in CARAGA's young delegation, the memory of this kitchen—of its warmth, its people, its love—will endure.

Because this Kitchen Station is all about presence. About service. About showing up for one another even when miles away from home.

And in the bigger picture of the Palarong Pambansa, where athletic excellence often takes center stage, this quietly reminds us that true excellence also lives in

the background, in the care behind the curtain, in the hands that cook, clean, and serve with love.

In every pot stirred, in every plate filled, in every quiet moment shared beneath the shade of makeshift roofs and bamboo walls, the soul of Dinagat Islands and the entire Caraga Region is there, nourishing not just champions, but the very spirit of the games.

And that, too, is a victory.





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A Shelter in the Spotlight

Caraga's Learner Rights and Protection Desk at Palarong Pambansa 2025

By Richard E. Davide, PDO I – Dinagat Islands Division

Amid the thunder of cheers and the whirlwind of athletic glory at Palarong Pambansa 2025 in Laoag City, one silent corner speaks louder than the stadiums—a humble booth radiating compassion, pulsing with advocacy, and anchored in care, quietly stealing the hearts of passersby.

Away from the spotlight of the playing fields, the LRP Desk stands as a silent sentinel ensuring the safety, security, and overall well-being of every athlete. One of its most vital functions is to monitor the athletes' movements in and out of the billeting quarters through a systematic process. Essential forms such as pass slips, withdrawal forms, and waivers are readily provided, tailored to the specific needs of the delegates.

This meticulous system is made possible through strong coordination with the Camp Management Team, led by Sir Ledio Baylosis of Butuan City Division, and the Transportation Committee under

the leadership of Sir Joel Rosales. Their collaboration has created an environment of order and safety within the athletes' temporary homes.

Spearheaded by Dr. Adrilene Mae J. Castaños, Project Development Officer IV and Regional LRP Focal Person, the LRP Desk

was thoughtfully set up as part of DepEd Caraga's strategic support mechanisms during the Palaro. More than offering information, the desk offers presence: a place where athletes can find guidance, report concerns, or simply feel assured that learner protection is a top priority.

"At the heart of every victory or challenge a learner is facing is their right to be safe, heard, and supported," says Dr.

Castaños. "This booth exists to remind everyone—officials, educators, and learners

alike—that protection is non-negotiable, and that the well-being of our youth is essential to any kind of success."

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Yet the concern of the LRP Desk extends beyond physical safety. Recognizing the mental toll of competition, a Health and Wellness and Reading Room has been thoughtfully curated to provide athletes with a sanctuary for rest and reflection. Managed by Registered Guidance Counselor Generuth Bagaforo of Butuan City Division and Guidance Designate Hazel Badayos of Taligaman National High School, the space offers comfort and care. With access to Netflix, a variety of books, educational toys, and a welcoming atmosphere, it becomes a haven of calm and encouragement amid the intensity of the games.

Legal concerns are also anticipated and addressed with foresight. Lawyer-consultants Atty. Jessa Mangadlao-Miolata of DepEd Caraga Regional Office, Atty. Klaire Ciarra G. Sangco-Galavia of Surigao del Norte Division, and Atty. Ronald C. Lara of Agusan del Norte Division are on standby to provide legal assistance when needed, ensuring that athletes and officials are informed and protected. A QR code is also made available to facilitate online reporting, empowering learners to raise concerns with ease and confidentiality.

In an event defined by physical prowess and the

In an event defined by physical prowess and the pursuit of excellence, the LRP Desk reminds everyone that true success lies not only in triumph but in thoughtful service, safety, and support, quietly but powerfully championing the athletes every step of the way.

The initiative, strongly supported by the leadership of DepEd Caraga Regional Director Maria Ines C. Asuncion and Assistant Regional Director Pedro T. Escobarte, Jr., reflects the region's commitment to holistic development. It aligns with national efforts to uphold child rights and embed protection mechanisms into all learner-centered activities.

As the games continue and moments of triumph unfold across courts and fields, the LRP Booth quietly fulfills its purpose: standing guard, offering support, and ensuring that amid the thunder of cheers, no learner's voice goes unheard.

In Caraga Region, safeguarding the child is not an afterthought. It is a mission carried out with intention, grace, and the firm belief that a protected learner is an empowered learner.

And that's a victory worth celebrating every day.



Built with Purpose, Powered with Passion

By DORES P. CLARO & PRELYN P. SANDIMAS-BARSAGA
Education Program Supervisors, SDO Cabadbaran City

In the fast-paced preparations for Palarong Pambansa 2025, amidst the excitement of athletes gearing up and officials fine-tuning logistics, something quietly exceptional unfolded in the billeting quarters of Dingras National High School—a gesture not loud, but lasting. It wasn't a grand parade or a monumental banner. It was a pantry—a space so thoughtfully built, so beautifully arranged, that it earned the heartfelt praise of Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Imelda N. Sabornido, who called it, "The best pantry ever."

But this pantry isn't just a physical space. It reflects intention, compassion, and the values DepEd Cabadbaran City holds close: excellence, service, and unity.

This pantry tells a story. A story of planning and passion, humility and honor, of a team that chose to give their best behind the scenes so others could shine in the spotlight. It is a humble space that now holds a great legacy. A legacy of service with soul, and of the Cabadbaran brand of excellence that does not seek applause but certainly deserves it.

The pantry is divided into two parts, each with its distinct role, but both serving one common goal: to care for those who care for the game.

The Wet Pantry, vibrant and alive, houses perishable items like fresh fruits, crisp vegetables, meats, and even frozen goods. Equipped with shelves, drawers, and baskets, it offers ease of access while maintaining a higher humidity level, ensuring that everything stays as fresh as the energy of the young athletes it's meant to nourish. It's not just organized—it's intentional, a true embodiment of functional elegance.

Beside it stands the Dry Pantry, a sanctuary of calm and order. Here lie non-perishable essentials—rice, grains, canned goods, pasta, snacks—all stored in a cool, dry environment, neatly arranged on shelves and labeled containers. Its cleanliness and accessibility make meal preparation not only efficient but enjoyable.

Together, the wet and dry pantries form a duo that keeps the kitchen tidy, the flow smooth, and the hearts of the kitchen staff light, knowing they are well-equipped to serve the champions of tomorrow.

Behind this beautifully executed pantry is not a company or a contractor, but a team of passionate individuals whose commitment turned a simple storage area into a work of love and pride. Their names deserve to be written in gold, namely, Marie Fe Eping Cabonce-Catap Dultra, Jeffrey Alfeche, Dion KidLat, Anecita Dagohoy, Xi Am-Am Kho, Dennis Feliselda, Byron Remillite and Gerald Ravelo Jugarap.

They weren't just builders or organizers. They were visionaries, craftsmen, caretakers, and most of all, givers. Their attention to detail, their drive to go beyond expectations, and their heart for service shine in every shelf, every corner, every clean label. What they've created is more than storage. It is a symbol of what it means to serve with dignity and pride.

Mabuhay, Team Cabadbaran! You've served more than food. You've served greatness.



Caraga climbs to fourth in Palaro standings

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

Laoag City, Ilocos Norte: Day 3 of the 2025 Palarong Pambansa ended tonight with whistles and applause coming not just from the new Marcos Stadium but from courts, pools, and fields spread across Laoag, Batac, and half a dozen nearby towns. Ilocos Norte converted schools, civic centers, and open grounds into 24 sports venues, ensuring that every event could start on time.

By early evening, the Department of Education reported that 101 of the week's 444 gold medals had already been decided, which means 22.75 percent of the titles are now in the books. The National Capital Region still tops the table with 27 golds, CALABARZON follows with 17, Northern Mindanao holds third with 12, and Caraga has jumped to fourth with eight gold, three silver, and nine bronze medals for a running haul of 20.

Caraga's gold rush began in the throwing pit and on the Arnis mats. Bobby C. Babano Jr. of Bagong Silang National High School hurled the javelin to win the secondary boys' crown. In the elementary girls' Arnis events, Ampayon Central Elementary School stars Airielle Ashley C. Lape, Angela M. Mejias, and Queen Fairy Rose O. Rante dazzled judges three times, sweeping the synchronized single weapon and double weapon contests. At the same time, Rante then ruled the individual double weapon, and Lape claimed the individual Espada y Daga. The same trio also captured team gold in synchronized Espada y Daga. Not to be outdone, Jacinto P. Elpa National High School's Charlyn M. Diaz, Ysai Winsleth T. Lorejo, and Celia Mer C. Najaro copied the feat in the secondary girls' division, topping both the synchronized double weapon and Espada y Daga finals.

Silver shimmered for distance runner Mary Mae D. Magbanua, who surged from fourth to second in the secondary girls' 3,000-meter run. Shantee Miep P. Guillarte spun her discus throw for elementary girls' silver, and the youthful Arnis trio of Chris Alexious C. Ardimer, Chinn Jo A. Auxtero, and Marco R. Sacurom placed second in synchronized Espada y Daga.

Bronze medals piled up, too. Romeo III G. Rico brought home bronze in the elementary boys' javelin; chess ace Gabriel O. Givero scored twice, taking blitz individual bronze and sharing team bronze with Mart Lean S. Muanag; Raymund Roy Carmona leaped 5.46 meters

for long jump bronze; Arnis fighters Aznar E. Babor, Rayven Maratas, and Aaron Oliver Sacurom finished third in synchronized double weapon, with Sacurom adding another bronze in the individual single weapon. Ardimer, Auxtero, and Sacurom also earned bronze in the elementary boys' synchronized double weapon, while swimmers Cosme III Calejesan and Breanna Aaliyah V. Erno splashed to bronze in the 200-meter freestyle for boys and girls.

With three full competition days still ahead, Caraga's Fighting XIII believes the medal tally will only rise. Day 4 action begins at sunrise, and fans back in Agusan, Surigao, and Dinagat will be glued to every throw, splash, and sprint.

Rank	Region	Gold (101)	Silver (101)	Bronze (105)
1	 NCR-National Capital Region	27	16	8
2	 Region IVA-CALABARZON	17	23	8
3	 Region X-Northern Mindanao	12	10	13
4	 Region XIII-Caraga	8	3	9
5	 Region VI-Western Visayas	7	15	9
6	 Region VII-Central Visayas	4	6	10
7	 CAR-Cordillera Administrative Region	4	5	1
8	 Region III-Central Luzon	4	2	5
9	 Region V-Bicol Region	4	1	9
10	 Region XI-Davao Region	3	5	4
11	 Region XII-SOCSKSARGEN	3	3	10
12	 Region VIII-Eastern Visayas	3	3	7
13	 Region I-Ilocos Region	2	4	4

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Mayor Plaza offers humba feast to Caraga officials at the camp

By ROBERT PEPE JR., SDO Agusan del Norte

DINGRAS, ILOCOS NORTE — A flavorful and heartfelt gesture warmed the spirits of the Caraga Region delegation during the Palarong Pambansa 2025, as Hon. Mayor Roscoe Democrito Plaza of Nasipit, Agusan del Norte personally prepared and served his signature "Humba ala Cebu" to Caraga officials on May 25, 2025, at Dingras National High School, the official billeting site of the delegation.

The event became more than a meal—a moment of unity, hospitality, and hometown pride. The inviting aroma of garlic, soy sauce, and slowly simmering pork drew curious smiles and delighted reactions from those nearby. Guests described the dish as appealing: "You could taste it with your eyes."

Mayor Plaza, known for his warm and approachable personality, donned his apron and brought a recipe and genuine camaraderie to the table. While stirring the pot and plating the tender, richly flavored dish, he also personally engaged with the delegation—sharing laughter, encouraging words, and cheerful stories.

Despite the demands of leadership, Mayor Plaza embraced the simple yet meaningful act of cooking to express his support for the athletes, coaches, and officials representing Caraga. His presence and effort were met with heartfelt appreciation from the delegation, who viewed the gesture as a reminder of the region's collective strength and solidarity.

The humble humba feast highlighted the deeper values at the core of the Palarong Pambansa—community, care, and connection. It was a reminder that behind every competition is a team supported by leaders who serve not just with policy but with heart.

As the Caraga delegation continues to compete with passion, they carry the warmth of that meal and the spirit of service embodied by one of their own.

HUMBA ALA CEBU



Caraga boxers secure two quarterfinal spots on Palarong Pambansa 2025 Day 2

By HONEY GRACE BUYAN
Teacher III, SDO Agusan del Norte



Jevan Galanto of Caraga lands a solid punch on his Region 3 opponent

Batac, Ilocos Norte—Caraga Region's boxing team remains determined and focused as the Palarong Pambansa 2025 progresses at the Imelda Cultural Center in Batac. Out of the five who have already competed, two advanced to the quarterfinals, while others showed commendable effort.

Jevan Galanto (Flyweight 48–51 kg) delivered an emphatic victory for Caraga, defeating his Region 3 (Central Luzon) opponent by a first-round corner stoppage. Galanto's aggressive start overwhelmed the Central Luzon boxer, prompting the opponent's coach to halt the contest in the opening round when his fighter could no longer continue. With the dominant win, Galanto secured his spot in the tournament's quarterfinals.

Fredelynson Cuarteron (Bantamweight 52–54 kg) joined Galanto in advancing after earning a hard-fought split decision over the Region 8 (Eastern Visayas) contender. Cuarteron impressed the judges with effective punches and ring control in a closely contested bout.

Earlier in the session, Caraga's Ruchen Celetona (Light Flyweight 46–48 kg) and Cedric Una (Flyweight 48–50 kg) bowed out of the competition, each losing unanimously to their respective opponents. Celetona, fighting out of the blue corner, was outpointed by the boxer representing the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) over three rounds. Meanwhile, Una faced the Region 10 (Northern Mindanao) boxer and – despite a spirited performance – came up short on the judges' scorecards.

Una's exit was notable, as he is a previous Palarong Pambansa bronze medalist from last year's games in Cebu. The experienced young fighter showed flashes of the skill that earned him a podium finish in the past, keeping the bout competitive throughout. Coaches and supporters remain optimistic about his future, expressing confidence that this setback will only motivate him to return stronger.

Before those victories, Caraga's campaign began on May 25 with its first bout in the School Boys division. Michael P. Tapales Jr., in his first-ever Palarong Pambansa appearance – went head-to-head against a more seasoned opponent from Region V (Bicol Region). Though he fell short via unanimous decision, Tapales' performance was marked by discipline and true sportsmanship.

Caraga's campaign is far from over. On May 27, five more boxers are scheduled to enter the ring for their elimination bouts, bringing the region's total boxing delegation to 10 athletes.

The team carries momentum and motivation into Day 3, with two already through to the quarterfinals. Coaches are optimistic that more Caraga boxers will join Galanto and Cuarteron in advancing as the region aims to build on its strong start and secure podium finishes.



Caraga's Daryl Madrid advances to gymnastics finals at Palarong Pambansa 2025

By HONEY GRACE BUYAN
Teacher III, SDO Agusan del Norte



May 26, 2025 — Caraga Region's Men's Artistic Gymnastics (MAG) team has reason to celebrate as Daryl Paul S. Madrid of Agusan del Norte successfully secured a spot in the final round of the elementary division during the elimination round held in Ilocos National High School Gymnasium at the Palarong Pambansa 2025.

A familiar name in the gymnastics arena, Madrid is not new to national success—he was the silver medalist in Floor Exercise at the Palarong Pambansa 2024 in Cebu. This year, he proved his consistency and technical skill again by earning 3rd place rankings in both the Floor Exercise and Vault Apparatus categories during the elimination stage.

Madrid's performance has earned him a coveted place in the finals scheduled for May 28, where he will compete against top young gymnasts from across the country to bring home a medal for Caraga once again.

Behind his success is the steadfast guidance of his coach, Rhonie Ruiz, and trustworthy trainers Joel A. Clarito and Paul John Sagumalian, who have been instrumental in shaping Madrid's strength, discipline, and form.



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Sepak Supremacy: Caraga crushes MIMAROPA in 2025 Palaro

By PONCIANO G. ALNGOG, CATHERINE B. VERDEFLORES

<https://tinyurl.com/2816xdvk>

With swift footwork, powerful spikes, and unrelenting determination, the Caraga elementary sepak takraw team clinched a sensational victory over MIMAROPA in their opening match at the 2025 Palarong Pambansa held here in Batac, Ilocos Norte.

Composed of promising athletes Calvin Ram Delon, Cedric Lopez, and Jonas Paquit, the Caraga trio turned the court into a showcase of athletic grace and explosive energy. Under the guidance of their dedicated coach Joshua Becerro, the team stunned

the crowd as they swept the match in two straight sets.

The first set was a display of pure dominance. From flawless serves (tekong) to lightning-fast blocks and spikes (smashes or “libas” in local parlance), Caraga controlled the tempo and cruised to a commanding 15-6 finish.

However, the second set tested their resolve. With MIMAROPA tightening their defense and matching Caraga point for point, the atmosphere in the court turned electric. Rallies grew longer, and each roll spike and foot save (sep) drew cheers from the audience. But in the end, it was Caraga’s precision and composure that broke the tie, edging out

MIMAROPA with a nail-biting 15-12 win.

“We stayed focused and believed in each other,” shared Jonas Paquit, following the game. “We practiced hard for this, and we’re proud to represent Caraga.”

Coach Becerro, visibly proud, credited the team’s chemistry and discipline. “These boys have heart. They’ve trained not just physically but mentally—and today, they showed what Caraga athletes are made of.”

This early win cements Caraga’s reputation as a strong contender in the elementary sepak takraw category and fuels high hopes for a podium finish in this year’s national games.

Straight-Set Loss: Caraga bows to Bicol in boys' volleyball

By PONCIANO G. ALNGOG



Dingras, Ilocos Norte – After opening strong with a win over BARMM, the Caraga Region boys' secondary volleyball team stumbled in their second match, falling in straight sets to the Bicol Region in a gripping preliminary round battle held in Dingras, Ilocos Norte.

In a match filled with intense rallies and crowd-pumping moments, Bicol Region asserted dominance early on and maintained their momentum to claim a 2-0 sweep against Caraga.

The scores kept neck and neck during the early portions of each set, but Bicol's cohesive plays, strategic blocking, and smart serves

gradually wore down Caraga's defenses.

Key players Escobal and Bolabola struggled to break through Bicol's tight defense and consistent attacks. Although Caraga displayed flashes of solid teamwork and communication, they failed to sustain the energy needed to close the gap, especially during crucial points.

Coaches and supporters acknowledged that while the match didn't go in their favor, the Caraganon athletes showed grit and promise that could still turn the tide in their upcoming matches. The team remains hopeful and is determined to bounce back

stronger in the succeeding rounds of the tournament.

"We fell short this time, but the boys played with heart," said Coach Rodel. "We'll use this as fuel to work harder and come back stronger in the next games."

Volleyball continues to be one of the most anticipated events in Palarong Pambansa 2025, drawing large crowds in Dingras as regional pride and athletic excellence are showcased across every spike, serve, and set.

Caraga will regroup and focus on sharpening their plays as they prepare for their next opponent in the battle for national glory.



By PONCIANO G. ALNGOG

In every game, there are winners, and there are warriors who rise again. Your passion, strength, and resilience continue to inspire not just your teammates, but our entire community. Whether under the sun during drills or under the lights of competition, you've carried Caraga with pride and honor.

To those who stumbled or fell in the match—this is not your end; it is your turning point. From the adrenaline of last week's volleyball battle to the grit of our early morning runners, we saw not defeat, but determination. We saw courage. We saw heart.

sore muscle, every tear shed in silence—they are proof of your bravery. Remember: "Champions keep playing until they get it right." – Billie Jean King

Losses do not define you. How you rise after them does.

We stand with you. We believe in you. And we know—you're coming back stronger. Keep pushing forward, keep lifting each other, and keep the momentum. Never stop chasing the greatness within you.

The best is yet to come.

Onward, team! Together, we rise.

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Caraga dominates Region 3 in Palaro elementary lawn tennis

By RANDY P. LAMANILAO

The Caraga Region has marked an impressive start at the Palarong Pambansa 2025, with Marcus Timothy Sio of the Surigao City Division clinching a significant win in the Elementary Boys' Lawn Tennis event.

In a competitive match against Region 3, Caraga emerged victorious with a final score of 8-5. Sio's commendable performance under the guidance of Coach Graciela A. Acuña II contributed to Caraga's early success in the national games.

This initial triumph not only adds points to Caraga's overall standing but also provides a significant boost of confidence for the young athlete and his team as the rigorous competitions continue. Marcus Timothy Sio's dedication and hard work leading up to the Palarong Pambansa have clearly paid off, setting a promising tone for his individual journey and the region's aspirations.

The win underscores the developing talent within Caraga's sports programs and highlights the effectiveness of the training provided. As the Palarong Pambansa progresses, all eyes will be on promising athletes like Sio, who are poised to bring further recognition to their divisions and regions.

The news was confirmed by Tessie C. Dolores, Surigao City Division Sports Officer, highlighting the promising talent emerging from the region. This win sets a positive tone for Caraga's campaign in the ongoing multi-sport event.



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Caraga cagers gain valuable experience against defending champs in Palaro 3x3 opener



By RANDY P. LAMANILAO

The Caraga Region's Secondary Boys' 3x3 Basketball team, hailing from Bunyasan National High School in Surigao del Norte, kicked off their Palarong Pambansa 2025 campaign last night, May 25, by directly challenging the reigning champions, Southern Tagalog CALABARZON Athletic Association (STCAA).

In a fast-paced 10-minute game held at the SM City Laoag Parking Lot, Caraga battled fiercely against the seasoned STCAA squad, ultimately concluding with a 6-9 score in favor of the defending titlists.

This opening match provided Caraga with immediate high-level competition, testing their mettle against the best.

Despite the initial setback, Coach Jinky Humamoy expressed a resilient outlook, stating, "If being the best means fighting the best, so be it!" This sentiment underscores the team's determination to learn and grow from every challenge.

The coaching staff and players had meticulously prepared for the intensity of the Palarong Pambansa, and this first game, though not a win, serves as an invaluable benchmark.

It highlights areas for immediate adjustment and reinforces their resolve as they navigate the tough elimination round against nationally recognized contenders.

The Caraga cagers still have two pivotal elimination games on their schedule, offering ample opportunity to demonstrate their full potential. They are gearing up to face the Bicol Region and another strong contender, SOCCSKSARGEN, who are the current Batang Pinoy National League Champions. These upcoming matches will be crucial as Caraga strives to advance in the tournament.

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Caraga Region shuts out CARAA in Palarong Pambansa secondary girls' softball

By RANDY P. LAMANILAO

The Caraga Regional Athletic Association (CRAA) made a resounding statement on the field during the Palarong Pambansa 2025 Secondary Girls' Softball competition, securing a decisive 5-0 victory over the Cordillera Administrative Region Athletic Association (CARAA) in their opening game. This impressive shutout win sets a powerful tone for Caraga's campaign in the national multi-sport event.

This opening triumph is more than just a win; it's a significant morale booster for the Caraga contingent. Kicking off the Palarong Pambansa with such a dominant performance immediately establishes their presence as a formidable force in the softball tournament and instills confidence as they navigate the rigorous schedule ahead.

While CARAA fought hard throughout the game, they were ultimately unable to break through Caraga's solid pitching and fielding.

The competitive spirit displayed by both teams underscores the high level of talent converging at the Palarong Pambansa, making every victory a hard-earned achievement.

With this strong start, Caraga is now focused on maintaining their momentum as they advance through the elimination rounds. The team's determination to perform at their best, combined with their evident skill, positions them well for a deep run in the Palarong Pambansa 2025 Secondary Girls' Softball competition.



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