
Overviewing The Politics Inside Philippine Volleyball

“The best way to build confidence in court is by playing.” according to a Thai Secretary-General of Thailand Volleyball Association, Mr. Jaksuwan Tocharoen, “It’s best to go up against strong guys if you want to get stronger.”- Haikyuu!! Volleyball (A Japanese manga series). Another proof on the list is the journey of Brazil WVT, from just being a part of Olympic line up in the past, they managed to be the #1 team in world ranking for years! The year 2000 up to 2014 were the “golden years” of Brazil because they entered the semi-finals on those years without being eliminated even once! In short, exposure is the key! It’s the opposite of what happened in the Philippines during these years. The reason? Politics.

The last time our country participated and won a medal was on 2005 SEA Games which was held here in Manila. Afterwards, nothing. The role of former president of now dissolved PVF, (Philippine Volleyball Federation) Gener Dungo was questioned. The Philippine Sportswriters Association demanded Dungo to appear, but he declined. Then later, Vangie De Jesus, a suspended secretary attempted to create a team that will compete internationally. Which made the birth of Amihan (women’s) and Bagwis (men’s) team. But not long ago, both teams were dissolved.

“The greatest team we never had.” – this is the sentiment of volleyball supporters. The author of this essay, who is a volleyball fanatic, shed tears. Resulted from what happened was the disappointment of volleyball community here in the Philippines. FIVB was learned about the situation and condemned the PVF for nullification of authority. These events led to the creation of LVPI (Larong Volleyball sa Pilipinas, Inc.) by POC (Philippine Olympic Committee). With the help of LVPI, and “Tats” Suraza, a PSL (Philippine SuperLiga) president from 2013 until 2018, Philippines was able to compete in SEA Games, both men and women after 4-year inactivity. Due to long absence, a huge gap of skills of Filipino players were evident, if compared to neighbors like Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam. Sadly, politics is politics. It is inevitable.

2017 was the year when the Philippine volleyball marked a promising future. Our country continues to send their representatives at international competitions – thanks to LVPI, POC and FIVB. As of July 8, 2019, both women’s (u23 team) and men’s (senior team) participated in Sealect Tuna Volleyball Championship in Thailand. The men’s team are set to battle against Saraburi Thai-Denmark for bronze medal tomorrow at 11 a.m. Laban Pilipinas!