

## CCSE Dynasty: A Three-Ringed Journey

**Basketball, in many levels, has been a sport of dynasties. Talk about the college level and San Beda - Letran, Ateneo - Lasalle comes to mind. In the pro leagues, there are San Miguel, Ginebra, Purefoods, Alaska, and so on. In the NBA, Celtics - Lakers, and Bulls.**

Teams that dominate the game measure their greatness, not by a ring, but by rings.

The same is true with the College of Computer Studies and Engineering - the reigning champion of Lorma's own basketball domain, and have been so for some time now.

### CCSE's Notorious Riding-In-Tandem

Spurred by Cris John Pimentel's leadership and Lorenz Corpuz's offensive prowess, the men-in-maroon etched their era with three titles in the same number of years, and lo and behold, without even a scratch on their win-loss record.

The teams invincibility was a result of hard work and a mix of exceptional talent - without a question, potential is overflowing on a department with more than 800 students.

In recent memory, only a team or two have really been proven to be formidable opponents, at least, as they often times blow-out opponents with 40 to 80 point differentials.

CMA Blacksmiths had the closest shot of an upset, having just lost by 2 points, no thanks to Pimentel's crucial jumper in the dying seconds. It would've been chaotic, but it never was. Close enough, but not enough.

### End of an Era?

Questions now arise after the departures of both Pimentel and Corpuz, a Jordan-Pippen poorman's version.

Will there be a continuing greatness, with their heart and soul hanging the jerseys?

Is this the start of an end?

Will a new champ thrive above all nine teams?

Through-out their three-year feat, CCSE pretty much relied on Pimentel's guidance, after the departure of Ablao - the former main-man, and Bucasas - the former floor-general, as he often reiterates after wins that he credits his teammates for following where he leads them by talk and by walk. For the lefty Corpuz, Ablao commended him for consistently being an offensive nightmare day-in and day-out, proving that he really is a scoring specimen.

To add more salt to their wounds, their steady coach, Kristian Bermudez, have also decided to

ready his oars, and start fishing.

### **An Open Window for Hopefuls**

What have been a dreaded phenomenon by CCSE turns out to be an awaited daylight to 8 aspiring and fast rising challengers. The road to redemption for some, a taste of greatness for others: whatever the story behind the thirst, the door for triumph has never been this wide-open.

As the most formidable threat to the crown, CMA is the more logical favorite for this feat. With key players and role players virtually remaining intact, last year's failure will now be but a motivation, a drive to strive, and fuel for their spirits. If there's a team who will with a cheap on their shoulders, it will be the Blacksmiths.

Meanwhile, College of Nursing should be more eager by now, being reduced as mere 3rd placers last year. They are up to regain basketball respect. Significant reinforcements have come, but that is yet to be proven. Will these young bloods live up with the pressure?

CPRT, RadTech, and SDI are yet to pose a notable threat by now, but the element of surprise is always, well, a surprising thing. Unknown enemies tend to take their foes off-handed.

For MLS, Pharma, and the College of Arts and Sciences, everything is up to be proven. Every game will serve as proving ground. Perseverance will be tested. Character will be showcased. But then again, basketball is a brutal sport with no place for the soft-hearted.

### **Still the Team-to-Beat**

While an abundant cloud of questions continue to linger, one thing remains as fact: CCSE is still the team to be chased. They still wear that target behind their backs that others are aiming for.

Key losses cannot be denied, but 3 years of championship culture have been planted. It'll be seen whether it has grown its roots. If so, will they hold-up when storms come?

Just like the classic reminder, "Bilog and Bola", they say. Everything is but assumptions based on the natural sports analyst inside most of Filipinos. But the inevitable fact is, we will again be witnesses to the beautiful game that marked our culture, as if it's a perpetual sport. As we say, Ball is life.