

Our very own Zamboanga Valientes, which has now gained not only recognition but prestige and popularity in Manila and in the entire country, will be coming home to Zamboanga City to play against the Manila Stars, in the much-anticipated provincial game of the Maharlika Pilipinas Basketball League (MPBL) which will be held on October 27 at the City Coliseum in Tetuan.

“As early as now the Family Sardines Zamboanga Valientes is already the talk of the town in Zamboanga City and in Zamboanga Peninsula. Definitely, Zamboagueño fans shall be treated to this very exciting game since Zamboanga Valientes players will play hard to ensure a win in their hometown game,” noted sportsman and basketball player Rolando “Junnie” Navarro told Zamboanga Times in a mobile phone interview from Manila.

Navarro said the Zamboanga Valientes already enjoys popularity and huge following even in the National Capital Region after the team’s convincing victory against Laguna, Marikina, Pasig and Navotas teams from Luzon.

“Our Zamboagueño players are practicing hard in the hard court in preparation for our next game against San Juan in September 5 which surely is a tough game. But we are confident that we will emerge victorious,” Navarro said.

According to Valientes Team manager Alvin Munio, the team is very much excited for the October 27 showdown against Manila Stars since the Zamboagueño players also want to display their skills and prowess in the hard court to the local fans of Zamboanga City, Zamboanga Peninsula and the island provinces of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

The team’s standing is 4 wins and 3 losses, after it lost its 7th game to Rizal by mere four points.

“We are quite confident that we can certainly bounce back. With team work and constant hard practice, we will win one game at a time to be able to reach the finals,” Munio stressed.

The Zamboanga Valientes is founded by Rolando Navarro Sr. The late Lando Navarro was also the man behind the 1st and only championship bagged by Zamboanga City in National Softball Competition. He is credited for also supporting amateur and professional boxing in Zamboanga City ever since.

He also started the Zamboanga basketball team in Liga Pilipinas, the first time Zamboanga City was able to join in a prestigious national semi pro league.

Now the son, Rolando “Junnie” Navarro continues the legacy left by his father, and the Valientes team is making waves in the Philippines.

It is supported by the number 1 sardines, the Family Sardines of Anita Kaw.

Local basketball fans are expected to troop to the City Coliseum come October 27, not only to watch the game but also to personally see the Zamboagueño players like Jonathan Paneño.

Parreno, who played briefly for Kia Picanto, and Von Lanete, brother of PBA players Chico and Garvo, head the homegrown talents that also include Grevani Rublico, Orlan Andes, Marvin Fomiza, Scotty Campos, Jomari Lacastesantos, and Peter de Ocampo.

They will most likely be another Mark Barroca, RR Garcia, Mike and Chester Tolomia, all of whom are Zamboagueños, who have earned prestige in national basketball.—Jemue E. Mojica