

## Kyusi@80 in U-24 Finals

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KYUSi@80 bucked a sluggish start and frustrated a determined Batang Maynila, 109-104, in their winner-take-all semifinal duel on Tuesday in the Metro League 24-Under Men's Basketball Tournament at the Vista Real Classica Gym in Quezon City. The Mayor Joy Belmonte-backed Quezon City squad advanced to the best-of-three title series against play offs top seed Taguig. The Finals begin on Thursday at the Hagonoy Gym.

The Generals, who topped the classification round with a 7-1 record, were first to advance to the Finals after they beat fourth-ranked Makabagong San Juan, 84-75, on Friday at the San Andres Gym. Kyusi@80 unleashed a 23-4 run in the second period with combo guard Nathaniel Lopez carrying the scoring load with his 19 first half-points enroute to a tournament-best 32 points. Lopez bounced back from a let down in Kyusi@80's 107-109 double overtime loss in their first semifinal meeting last Tuesday where he fouled out early in the regulation by connecting six of his seven three-point attempts. Lopez also recorded four steals and two blocks. CeresNegros celebrate their victory.

National team player OJ Porteria sparked with a goal and an assist to help lift CeresNegros past Shan United of Myanmar, 3-2, on Wednesday night to advance to the second round of the Asian Football Confederation Champions League preliminary round at the Rizal Memorial Stadium. Porteria set up Bienve Marañon for Ceres's second goal, before scoring the marginal strike in the 79th minute as the Bus men forged a duel with Port FC of Thailand in the next round in Bangkok. Admittedly short on preparation, the Bus men came out sharp with Senegalese striker Robert Lopez Mendy breaking the ice in the fifth minute with a left footer to the bottom corner off a cut back from new team mate Pika Minegishi. "We were pressured them and we were unlucky not to get more goals," Porteria said. "We only had four or five training sessions so we were really tired. But we just stuck in there and got the win." "We're not fit that's why we wanted to keep the ball. We just showed the heart to survive the game," he added. Despite their dominance, the Bus men only scored Thursday, January 16, 2020 C3 their second goal just before half time when Marañon's deflected effort had Shan goal keeper Thiha Sithu nailed to his spot. Zin Min Tun pulled a goal back in the 73rd minute, but Porteria quickly restored the two-goal cushion by meeting Mike Ott's pass in side the box. Maximin Djawa set the stage for a thrilling finish as his 87th-minute strike made it 3-2. But Ceres hung on to pick up the victory, moving within two wins of reaching the group stage of Asia's most prestigious club competition.