

# Kyrgyz hero Kubanychbek eager for shot at Ayoub

Abdisalam Kubanychbek looks for a title shot against Ayoub after BRAVE CF 47

● Kubanychbek welcomes Dy's challenge

TDI | Manama

**B**RAVE CF 47: Asian Domination will put two of the biggest Lightweights in the continent on opposite sides, as Abdisalam Kubanychbek takes on Rolando Dy in the main event of the March 11th show. On the line, the right for Asian supremacy, but most importantly, a guaranteed title shot against Amin Ayoub.



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ABDISALAM KUBANYCHBEK



For Kubanychbek, the chance of fighting Ayoub is particularly appealing due to his differences with the champion. He wants that fight more than anything, but is aware of the danger that lies ahead of him in BRAVE CF 2020 Fighter of the Year, Rolando Dy.

"I consider Rolando a very experienced opponent, and I prepare very well for him. He can surprise me at any moment,

and I must be ready for this. I feel I have an advantage in size, I'm probably bigger than him, but he's more experienced. This is a great challenge for me", says "Omok", who complained once again about Amin Ayoub.

"I see Amin Ayoub as a very dangerous fighter, but for some reason he does not want to fight me. We are warriors and we must be ready for seri-

ous challenges at any time. My goal is to become the champion and I'm training hard for this".

BRAVE CF 47: Asian Domination will be the first of four events, culminating in a historic BRAVE CF 50, when the fastest-growing MMA organization will celebrate being the only promotion in history to get to 50 events while traveling to 21 different countries.

## Guliev dismisses Rudra, predicts first-round finish



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**A**li Guliev is a man with the confidence of an undefeated fighter. Riding a five-win streak, with all of his five professional fights ending with his hand raised, the Azerbaijani rising star will fight for the first time under the BRAVE CF banner, when he takes on India's pride Rana Rudra at BRAVE CF 47: Asian Domination.

And Guliev is already predicting a quick finish over Rudra and has his eyes set on a showdown with superstar Muhammad Mokaev, considered as the top rising star in the world of mixed martial arts.

"I don't have a lot of information about Rana, my opponent. My idea is to go out there and get the job done. To fight for BRAVE CF is a huge opportunity for Azerbaijan, and I plan to make the most of

it. I will finish him inside the first round, with submission. My wish then will be to fight Muhammad Mokaev. I have challenged him several times. He hasn't accepted but now I am BRAVE CF fighter too", says the young fighter, who promises BRAVE CF fans won't forget him after his debut.

"My message to BRAVE Nation is that they will not forget me for a long time. They have yet to see a fighter like me in action".

BRAVE CF 47: Asian Domination, which is headlined by a Lightweight bout between Abdisalam Kubanychbek and Rolando Dy - the winner will be next in line for a world title shot. The show will kickstart the 21 days of mayhem, with four events in 21 days, and will empower Asian MMA event, by giving continental fighters the global platform they deserve.

## Alaska rewards Teng with three-year deal extension

TDI | Manila

**W**ould-be franchise player Jeron Teng has been rewarded by Alaska with a fresh three-year contract extension worth the maximum salary in the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA).

"I'm happy and blessed to still be able to play for the Alaska Aces," said the 26-year-old Teng who could easily serve as the franchise's face under coach Jeffrey Cariaso.

The hardworking guard out of La Salle inked on the dotted line in the presence of Alaska team governor Dickie Bachmann, sports development and public relations manager CK Kanapi-Danielo and his agent Danny Espiritu. The terms of the deal, however, were not disclosed.

It was a move that greatly outlined the team's trust on the 6-foot-2 guard as a significant part of the ballclub moving forward.

"It was really only a matter of time with Jeron," said coach Cariaso.

"I'm happy that his contract signing is over with, and now he can focus on playing a very important role in our quest for our 15th championship."

Since being taken fifth overall in the 2017 PBA Draft, Teng has been one of Alaska's key players.

During the PBA Philippine Cup bubble inside Angeles University Foundation Sports and Cultural Center, he emerged as the second best performing player for Alaska averaging 11.3 points, 4.9 rebounds and 4.3 assists in 12 games, along with 0.8 steal and 0.3 block a game. He also put up career highs



Teng, left, is being groomed as future of the franchise

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ALASKA ACES COACH JEFFREY CARIASO

in field goal percentage (41.4 percent), three-pointers (31.2), free throws (76), and assists (4.3 assists per game).

The Aces barely made the playoffs but were knocked out in the quarterfinals by third seed TNT Tropang Giga.

Meanwhile, the Aces boosted their frontcourt by signing free agent big man Yousef Taha to a one-year deal.

The 6-foot-8 Taha is a serviceable big man who could provide inside presence for an Alaska side that is trying to move on after the retirement of long-time star slotman Sonny Thoss last year.

Taha was selected 12th overall by Air21 in the 2012 PBA Draft, before spending much of his career bouncing from the Express to Ginebra (2012-13), GlobalPort (now NorthPort in 2013), Petron (now San Miguel Beer from 2013-14) and San Mig (now Magnolia 2014-16), back to NorthPort in 2018 and finally with TNT in 2018-19.

The Aces had also inked free agent Gab Banal to a one-conference deal. Banal last played in the PBA in 2016 and has spent the last four years in the 3x3 circuit and the MPBL.

The Aces have already reached an agreement with star forward Vic Manuel to stay with the team.

## Quick-fire Lukaku helps Inter pull seven points clear

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**R**omelu Lukaku scored after 33 seconds and then set up a second as Inter Milan beat Genoa 3-0 to extend their lead at the top of the Serie A table on Sunday.

Inter are seven points ahead of second-placed city rivals AC Milan who are at Roma later Sunday, and 10 clear of champions Juventus, who were held 1-1 at Hellas Verona on Saturday and have played a game fewer.

Lukaku scored with the first chance at the San Siro, then laid on Matteo Darmian for Inter's second in the 69th minute. Alexis Sanchez came off the bench to add a third with 13 minutes to go.

"We're first in the standings and it's a good feeling," said Lukaku as Inter try to deny Juventus a 10th consecutive league title after finishing runners-up last season.

Antonio Conte's side followed on from last weekend's 3-0 derby win over Milan, notching up a fifth win in a row as they push for a first league title since 2010.

"We're happy because the work is paying off. It had already paid off last year, but the team is maturing a lot," said Conte.

"We know that there are 14 games left. Let's keep our antennas up until the end if we want to do something good."

Lukaku led the way, completing a give-and-go with Lautaro Martinez after good work from Nicolo Barella to fire in from an angle for his 18th Serie A goal of the season, one shy of leading scorer Cristiano Ronaldo.

Inter missed a string of chances to pull further ahead against their 13th-ranked rivals



Romelu Lukaku shoots to score



**Inter Milan try to deny Juventus a 10th consecutive league title after finishing runners-up last season**

with Barella and Darmian both rattling the crossbar and Mattia Perin denying a pair goal-bound efforts from Lukaku.

But the giant Belgian set up defender Darmian, who took the place of suspended Achraf Hakimi, for his first league goal for Inter, with Sanchez scoring minutes after coming off the bench getting his head to a rebound after Perin had denied Lukaku.

The 27-year-old has scored six goals in the last five games. "I'm in a good moment of

my career but the important thing is that Inter wins," added the former Manchester United player.

"These matches are opportunities for us to give signals to others, but the championship is long.

"We must not give up, last year we lost in these matches, this year we're growing."

Mid-table Genoa ended their seven-game unbeaten run under new coach Davide Ballardini before next weekend's local derby with Sampdoria.

Atalanta shook off their Champions League defeat to Real Madrid midweek with a 2-0 win at Sampdoria to move up to fourth, equal on 46 points with third-placed Juventus.

Ruslan Malinovskyi broke through five minutes before the break with Robin Gosens adding a second with 20 minutes to go in Genoa.

Duvan Zapata picked up an injury against Real and was ruled out along with Hans Hateboer, with coach Gian Piero Gasperini sitting out a touchline ban.