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## **Borromeo lifts RP booters past E. Timor**

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MANILA, Philippines—Former Philippine team skipper Aly Borromeo struck in the 68th minute to secure a hard-earned 1-0 victory over minnows Timor Leste Friday at the start of the Asean Football Federation Championship Qualifying Tournament at the National Stadium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The result was less impressive compared to the 7-0 victory fashioned out by the RP Team two years ago in Bacolod.

“Sure, the Philippines beat Timor, 7-0, in the last match but this game is played at a neutral venue and also Timor did not have some of the quality players they have now,” said national coach Juan Cutillas, whose squad came into the tournament as the best-ranked squad at No. 165 in the world.

Always a threat during set pieces because of his height and his ability to head the ball with power, the 6-foot-2 Borromeo got on the end of a corner kick, took one dribble and smashed the ball with his right foot to the top right corner.

It was Borromeo’s second international goal and all of them have turned out to be game-winners.

The Kaya FC star also struck from the penalty spot to lift the Philippines past Cambodia, 1-0, in the previous qualifying tournament.

The win also marked the fourth straight game that the RP defense and goalkeeper Neil Etheridge did not surrender any goal.

The Filipinos, without striker Phil Younghusband, who scored four times against Timor Leste two years ago, were rather wasteful early on with Ian Araneta missing a clear-cut chance when he sent a free header wide in the 12th minute.

“We dominated the game but just couldn’t make the most out of our opportunities,” Etheridge, who plays club football for English Premiere League side Fulham FC, told the Inquirer in an e-mail. **Cedelf P. Tupas**

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