

MATCH REPORT July 5

PNRL Shield Round 1, Game 2 – Manila Storm v Gorillas Rugby

2026 PNRL Shield - Official Round 1 Match & Roster Report

Tournament: Pambansang Ragbi Liga ng Pilipinas Shield

Date: July 5, 2026

Venue: PhilSports ULTRA Stadium, Pasig, Philippines

Match 2: Manila Storms vs. Gorillas Rugby (R1G2)

- **Weather Conditions:** Started under worsening skies; hit by torrential rain and high winds that forced an official event pause. Resumed after the sun returned.
- **Final Score:** Manila Storms **10 – 6** Gorillas Rugby

This highly anticipated clash quickly became one of the most dramatic matches of the opening round, with **Gorillas Rugby** producing a disciplined defensive stand against a powerful **Manila Storms** side recognised as three-time champions. From the opening exchanges, the Gorillas refused to be intimidated by the Storms' reputation, meeting every attacking raid with strong first contact, urgent cover defence, and committed scrambling near their own line. In the difficult early conditions, Gorillas Rugby found reward for their pressure, crossing for a first-half try before **Charles Ong** added the 2-point conversion to give them a 6–0 lead.

As the match developed, the weather intensified into a severe tropical storm, bringing torrential rain, dangerous winds, and unsafe conditions around PhilSports ULTRA Stadium. Visibility dropped, the playing surface became increasingly slippery, and handling became more difficult as both teams battled the worsening conditions. With the storm moving across the venue and safety risks increasing for players, officials, staff, and spectators, the match was officially stopped, and the venue was evacuated as a precaution. Players and team staff were sent back to sheltered areas while supporters were directed away from exposed sections of the stadium. The interruption lasted for around one hour, completely changing the rhythm of the contest and leaving both teams to reset mentally and physically before returning to the field.

The stoppage had a major impact on the flow of the game. Before the delay, Gorillas Rugby had built energy through their defensive pressure and early scoreboard lead, but the long pause forced both sides out of their rhythm. The wet surface also changed the tactical approach after the restart, placing a greater emphasis on controlled carries, safer passing, stronger kick-chase pressure, and disciplined defence. For Manila Storms, the break became a chance to regroup and settle after a difficult opening spell, while Gorillas Rugby had to work hard to rebuild the intensity that had carried them through the first half.

When play resumed under clearer skies, the Gorillas continued to defend with courage, repeatedly slowing down the Storms' attack and forcing the champions to work for every meter on the slick surface. However, Manila Storms gradually found their composure after the restart. Their experience showed in the closing stages as they shifted momentum through direct running and quick support play, with unanswered tries from **Maxwell Ganiga** and **Jan Clarence Luteria** turning the match around. Despite Gorillas Rugby's determined resistance and impressive defensive effort, the three-time champions held on to claim a hard-fought 10–6 comeback victory.

Key Player Performances

- **Charles Ong** was a key contributor for Gorillas Rugby, adding the important 2-point conversion that gave his side early scoreboard pressure and rewarded their strong first-half effort.
- **The Gorillas defensive unit** stood out as a collective force, repeatedly shutting down Storms attacking sets, scrambling well near the line, and forcing the defending champions to chase the game after the restart.

- **Maxwell Ganiga** sparked Manila Storms' comeback with a second-half try, helping shift momentum back toward the three-time champions after the long weather delay.
- **Jan Clarence Luteria** delivered the decisive attacking contribution, crossing for the Storms' second unanswered try and helping seal the 10–6 result.
- **Manila Storms' experienced core** showed composure under pressure, recovering from the disruption of the tropical storm and executing late in the match when the contest tightened.

Scoring Summary

- **First Half:**
 - **Gorillas Rugby:** 1 Try – Unspecified Player (4 pts)
 - **Gorillas Rugby:** 1 Conversion – Charles Ong (2 pts)
 - *Halftime Score: Manila Storms 0 – 4 Gorillas Rugby*
- **Second Half:**
 - **Manila Storms:** 1 Try – Maxwell Ganiga (4 pts)
 - **Manila Storms:** 1 Try – Jan Clarence Luteria (4 pts)
 - **Gorillas Rugby:** 1 Conversion – Unspecified Player (2 pts)
- **Final Score: Manila Storms 10 – 6 Gorillas Rugby**

Team Roster Sheets

Manila Storm:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Maxwell Ganiga | 16. John Mark Navarro |
| 2. Jan Clarence Luteria | 17. Derek Javelosa |
| 3. Gabriel Ganiga | 18. John Bernard Agunod |
| 4. Larcel Owen Caparros | 19. Jesse James Reyes |
| 5. Alberto Montilla | 20. Zylmar Asagra |
| 6. Romario Capule | 21. Joselito Jalandonjir |
| 7. Ronald Yombi | 22. Paul Castillo |
| 8. Jr Ramirez | 23. Sidny Librado |
| 9. Juliann Feleo (Captain) | |
| 10. Sean Masip | |
| 11. Joshua Pilic
(Vice-Captain) | |
| 12. Kenneth Siva | |
| 13. James Osias | |
| 14. Lee Conlu | |
| 15. John Denmer Tulabot | |

Gorillas Rugby:

1. Maxi Ignacio
2. Jemil Ande
3. Charles Ong (#2)
4. Miguel
5. Mahmoud Hajij
6. JP Vega
7. Eubie Lebumfacil
8. Glenn Michael
9. Ethan Ignacio
10. Alaster Mallanao
11. Miguel Adiao
12. Lucca Borromeo
13. Dwayne Buensalida