

KAZAKHSTAN'S WINTER WARRIORS

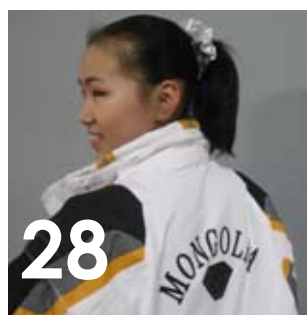
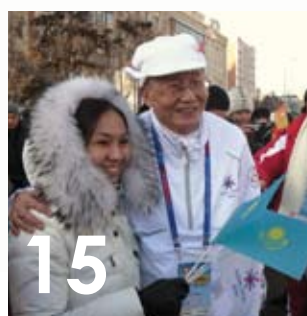
HOSTS DOMINATE 7TH AWG



OCA President to stand for re-election
OCA 57th Executive Board meeting
OCA Fencing Youth Camp 2011

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SPORTING ASIA

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FRONT COVER:

Kazakhstan's Alexandr Chervyakov celebrates one of his three gold medals in biathlon

PRIDE AND PASSION IN ASIAN SPORTS MOVEMENT

The past few months have been among the most hectic in the history of the Olympic Council of Asia, with three major events taking place from November 2010 to February 2011: the 16th Asian Games in Guangzhou, the 2nd Asian Beach Games in Muscat and the 7th Asian Winter Games in Astana and Almaty.



As President of the OCA I must say I am very proud of our achievements in staging these three multi-sports Games in quick succession.

Despite the global economic crisis of recent times, none of our Games suffered from a lack of infrastructure, a lack of government or commercial support or from a lack of passion to participate from our 45 National Olympic Committees.

Indeed, the three Games in question enhanced the reputation of the OCA and reflected the rapid development of Asian sport in general. They fully lived up to our slogan of "Ever Onward".

All 45 NOCs played their full part in this period, with the participation of 12,300 athletes in a total of 67 sports. Of the 2,224 doping tests conducted, only 12 positive results were returned, including six from bodybuilding.

We had an excellent working relationship with the IOC, WADA and the 67 International Federations and Asian Federations, and I would like to thank all the stakeholders for their great cooperation in ensuring the success of our events.

My deepest appreciation goes to H.E. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos of the Sultanate of Oman and H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as to the Chinese Olympic Committee, Oman Olympic Committee, Kazakhstan Olympic Committee and the Guangdong provincial government for their successful hosting of our Asian Games, Asian Beach Games and Asian Winter Games, respectively.

The three Games have left wonderful legacies to benefit generations to come, such as Asian Games Town in Guangzhou, Al-Musannah Sports City in Oman and the magnificent winter sports venues of Kazakhstan.

The OCA now begins a new chapter in its history, and we must continue to improve Asian sport and take the Olympic Movement to a higher level.

There are busy times ahead with our diverse portfolio of multi-sports events, but I believe we can overcome any obstacle with our unity and solidarity and can achieve our new goals.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah
President, Olympic Council of Asia

IOC PRESIDENT PRAISES OCA ACHIEVEMENTS

The President of the International Olympic Committee, Jacques Rogge, showed his support for the OCA once again by attending the 7th Asian Winter Games in Astana and Almaty.

This followed his earlier visits to the 16th Asian Games in Guangzhou in November and to the 2nd Asian Beach Games in Muscat in December, and proved his appreciation of the OCA's efforts to promote sport and the Olympic ideals throughout the Asian continent.

"I would like to pay a great tribute to the President, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, for the exemplary way he is leading the OCA," said Dr. Rogge, in his address to the OCA Executive Board in Astana on January 31.

"I would like to congratulate him, as Asia is definitely the most dynamic continent for the last five years. We have seen Asia grow and strengthen and be more and more competitive in all competitions."

Dr. Rogge cited China's 51 gold medals at the 2008 Beijing Olympics as a prime example, but stressed that many other Asian NOCs had won medals at the highest level.

"We have a wonderful collaboration with the OCA and consult each other on many aspects," he added. "There is no better example than the trip we made together last year to Palestine and Israel, which led to a meeting of the two NOCs in Lausanne."

The IOC President described the OCA and its President as a "shining example" in the Olympic movement, and said he looked forward to working with Asia in the future.



IOC President Jacques Rogge

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR DOHA'S GREEN SUMMIT

The IOC has launched the registration process for the 9th World Conference on Sport and the Environment, which will take place in Doha, Qatar, from April 30 to May 2, 2011. Under the motto "Playing for a Greener Future", the event is being organised in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme and the Qatar Olympic Committee.

9th WORLD
CONFERENCE
ON SPORTS AND
THE ENVIRONMENT



organisations and the business world will converge on Qatar to present the latest environmental success stories in sport, identify current and future challenges and explore new solutions for sustainability in sport at all levels. A highlight will be the presentation of the 2011 IOC Sport and Environment Awards.

Representatives from the sports community, environmental organisations, universities, governments, intergovernmental

A full programme and updated information will be published soon on www.olympic.org/doha2011. Learn more about the event on the official website at www.wcse2011.qa.

IOC HOSTS PALESTINE-ISRAEL SPORTS TALKS

The International Olympic Committee hosted the first meeting between the National Olympic Committees of Israel and Palestine aimed at addressing a number of outstanding sports-related issues.

The meeting, which took place at IOC HQ in Lausanne on January 20, was held in a very constructive and cooperative spirit.

The free movement of Palestinian athletes, coaches, officials and sports equipment, as well as visiting foreign athletes, was widely discussed, and an understanding was reached between the two NOCs.

It was agreed that both NOCs would make an assessment of the current difficulties they faced and work together on concrete proposals and solutions before referring to their respective public authorities.

The IOC confirmed that it would provide experts to work on a long-term sports development strategy in Palestine in order to assist not only the athletes but also coaches and sports administrators, and to identify ways to better promote sport and its values at grassroots level.

In the short term, priority will be given to assisting Palestinian athletes to compete in the Olympic Games in London next year. In that respect, the representatives of the NOC of Israel said they were ready to offer training opportunities to Palestinian athletes.

The participation of Israeli athletes in international competitions was another subject raised during the meeting, and all participants stressed their good will to use when possible their influence to address the issue with the relevant parties.

The meeting was opened by IOC President Jacques Rogge, and attended by IOC Chief of Staff Christophe de Kepper and NOC Relations Department Director Pere Miró.

The Israeli delegation was composed of NOC President Zvi Varshaviak and NOC Secretary General Efraim Zinger. The Palestinian delegation, headed by NOC President Major General Jibril Rajoub, included NOC Director of International Relations Khalid El-Yazji, Tanya Jaar from the International Affairs Desk of the Palestine Football Association and Jerome Champagne, advisor to the Palestinian Authority for the development of sport and football.



Palestine NOC President Major General Jibril Rajoub (left), IOC President Jacques Rogge and Israel NOC President Zvi Varshaviak meet in Lausanne. ©IOC/R. Juillart



The beautiful Olympic Stadium in Nanjing is the setting for the second Youth Olympic Games in 2014

IOC HAPPY WITH NANJING 2014 PREPARATIONS

The International Olympic Committee's Coordination Commission for the 2nd Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China, in 2014 concluded a successful first visit to the host city in January.

The Coordination Commission's work followed a two-day, city-to-city debrief given by the Singapore Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee to the newly established Nanjing Organising Committee.

Chaired by IOC member Alexander Popov, the Coordination Commission was pleased with the progress made by the local organising committee as it approaches the one-year mark in its preparations.

This first visit gave the Coordination Commission the opportunity to conduct a full site visit that included the Nanjing Olympic Sports Centre, which will play host to a number of sports for Nanjing 2014.

The Nanjing Organising Committee also presented its updated master plan for venues, with the integration of golf and rugby sites

included. Progress has been made on the Youth Olympic Village, the only key venue that needs to be constructed for the Games.

Popov said: "We are very impressed with the progress that the organisers have made in the short time since Nanjing was elected in Vancouver last year.


"Preparations are well advanced and the team has been building a strong foundation from the very beginning. They have wasted no time in learning from Singapore 2010, and the IOC has no doubt that Nanjing 2014 will continue to build upon the success of the first Youth Olympic Games."

Lu Zhipeng, Standing Vice Secretary General of the Nanjing Organising Committee and Vice Mayor of Nanjing, added: "Nanjing will study and learn from the successful experience of the Singapore Youth Olympic Games organisers, and will make sure that all the opportunities and unique resources in Nanjing and its Organising Committee are utilised."

NEWS IN BRIEF FROM AROUND THE CONTINENT


 The International Handball Federation Council has awarded Qatar the men's World Handball Championship in 2015. IHF President Dr Hassan Moustafa announced the decision in Malmo, Sweden, on Thursday, January 27. Denmark will host the women's event after Korea withdrew.

Aside from Qatar, Norway, France and Poland also bid for the men's World Championship. All nations presented their bids to the IHF Council, after which Dr Moustafa said: "All four presentations were very good. It was a very close decision between four top handball nations."

 On Tuesday, January 25, IOC President Jacques Rogge met with Tsakhia Elbegdorj, the President of the Republic of Mongolia, who was accompanied by a delegation from the Mongolian NOC: Demchigjav Zagdsuren, President; Judger Otgontsagaan, Secretary General; and Jambal

Khatanbaatar, member of the Executive Board.

Three days later the IOC President had lunch with a delegation from the NOC of Qatar: Sheikha Al-Mayassa Bint Hamad Al-Thani; Sheikh Saoud Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani; Sheikh Jassim bin Abdulaziz Al-Thani, Minister of Business and Trade; and Abdulla bin Khali, Health Minister.

 The IOC and the Local Organising Committee for the 14th World Conference on Sport for All are calling for presentation papers for the event, which will be held in Beijing, China, from September 20-23, 2011.

Experts and practitioners in the field of Sport for All have the opportunity to submit abstracts for oral and poster presentations. Contributions must be submitted via the online system by March 15.

57th OCA Executive Board meeting

Astana, Kazakhstan: January 31, 2011



Executive Board members gather in Astana for the 57th OCA EB meeting

SOFTBALL PITCHES STRONG CASE TO OCA EB

The future of softball in the Asian Games is back on the agenda after a passionate plea to the OCA Executive Board by Low Beng Choo, President of the Softball Confederation of Asia.

The Malaysian sports official asked the EB to include softball in the 17th Asian Games in Incheon, Korea, in 2014, along with baseball as one sport, after it had been omitted from the list released by the OCA and Incheon organisers in December.

Ms. Low reasoned that the inclusion of women's softball would lead to gender equality with men's baseball; that the two sports would share the same venues; and that each sport would have a six-day schedule in the Asian Games programme.

The Softball Confederation of Asia was fully supported by the Baseball Federation of Asia in its bid to retain its place in the Asian Games since making its debut in Beijing 1990.

OCA President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah was very sympathetic to the presentation, and recommended that softball be included in the 2014 Asian Games alongside baseball.

He also proposed that officials from softball and baseball should meet at OCA HQ in Kuwait to produce a formal agreement in which the two sports would be treated as one in all future Asian Games, while retaining their autonomy as governing bodies.

The OCA President's comments received widespread support in the meeting, notably from Japanese Olympic Committee President Tsunekazu Takeda.

"If softball is not included in the Asian Games, we cannot switch it to another OCA event such as the Winter Games, Beach Games

or Indoor Games," said President Takeda. "It would kill softball."

The future of softball is now being discussed, and the OCA's Coordination Committee for the 17th Asian Games will send its recommendation to the Executive Board after consultation with IAGOC. The next OCA Coordination Committee meeting will be held in Incheon on April 12.

BIG SUPPORT FOR NOCS

Organisers of the 17th Asian Games in Incheon, Korea, in 2014 are building a 50,000-strong support team for the National Olympic Committees attending the Asiad.

Incheon organisers informed the EB members that 50,000 citizens would be assigned to the NOCs to offer a warm hospitality service, fan support and to serve as tour guides. Each NOC will be designated between 400 and 4,000 supporters.

The progress report also revealed that organising committee IAGOC will train 20,000 volunteers to assist with Games operations. Recruitment will begin in 2012.

AIMAG CONTRACT SIGNED

Korean Olympic Committee President Y. S. Park signed the host city contract with OCA President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah for the 4th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games (AIMAG) in Incheon, Korea, in 2013.

Combining the Asian Indoor Games and the Asian Martial Arts Games for the first time, the 4th AIMAG is set to take place in August 2013 and feature nine sports. It will serve as a high-profile test event for the 17th Asian Games the following year.

WINTER GAMES COME 'HOME' TO SAPPORO

If the Asian Winter Games had a home, then Sapporo in Japan would be the best candidate.

Sapporo hosted the first two editions of the AWG in 1986 and 1990, and the OCA will return to the famous winter sports city on the northern-most of Japan's four main islands, Hokkaido, for the eighth AWG in 2017.

The official host city contract was signed during the 57th OCA Executive Board meeting by OCA President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah and by the President of the Japanese Olympic Committee, Tsunekazu Takeda.

Speaking about Sapporo's strong links to the OCA, Sheikh Ahmad commented: "I believe that, for the OCA, Sapporo was the founder of the Asian Winter Games when we started in 1986 and 1990.

"As a city, Sapporo gave strong support to the idea of an Asian Winter Games. In Asia it is rare to find a city with snow and ice

and mountains, but Sapporo has all these, and also has the experience of hosting the Winter Olympic Games in 1972."

The OCA will be heading to Japan much sooner than 2017, however, as the 30th OCA General Assembly takes place in Tokyo on Thursday, July 14, 2011.

The previous two days will involve Standing Committee meetings on July 12 and the Executive Board on July 13, while the 100th anniversary celebrations of the Japanese Olympic Committee continue on July 15-16.

A sports symposium will be held on July 15, and the centenary celebration and reception takes place the following day at the Grand Prince Hotel New Takanawa. IOC President Jacques Rogge will be in attendance.

The OCA will mark the occasion by presenting a special award to the family of the late Dr. Jigoro Kano, the founder of judo and the first Asian member of the IOC in 1909. The JOC was founded in 1911.



OCA President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah and the President of the Japanese Olympic Committee Tsunekazu Takeda.

KOREA TO HOST 2ND OCA SPORTS CONGRESS

The Olympic Council of Asia announced on January 31 that the 2nd OCA Sports Congress will be held in Korea on June 16-17, 2011, either in Seoul or Incheon.

The 1st Sports Congress took place in Kuwait City in March 2009, coinciding with the inauguration of the new OCA Headquarters.

The 2nd Congress will be expanded to include, for the first time, both the Asian Olympic family and commercial sports: Asian National Olympic Committees, sports administrators, Asian sports federations, sports business, sponsors and media.

As the profile and prestige of Asian sport continues to grow, the 2011 OCA Asian Sports Congress will directly address the major opportunities and challenges for Asian sport in the so-called "Asian Century".

H.E. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, OCA President, appointed Mr. Shin Yong Suk, OCA Vice President, as Organising Committee President. They will be supported by an Advisory Board comprising Asian sports and business leaders.

The detailed programme will be announced soon through the OCA.

OCA PRESIDENT TO STAND FOR RE-ELECTION



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah

His Excellency Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah will stand for re-election as President of the Olympic Council of Asia at this year's General Assembly in Tokyo on July 14.

The OCA President announced his decision on February 14 in a letter circulated to all OCA Executive Board members and to the president and secretary general of the 45 National Olympic Committees affiliated to the OCA.

Sheikh Ahmad has undertaken numerous significant sporting positions globally. He has been President of the Olympic Council of Asia since 1991 and a member of the IOC since 1992.

"It has been a singular honour for me to serve as President of the OCA since 1991," he continues.

"It has been a journey which I have cherished very much, especially due to the fact that I have received the whole-hearted support and cooperation of friends and colleagues like your good self.

"With your guidance and advice I hope to continue to serve the Asian Olympic Movement to the best of my ability and make the OCA one of the most active and revered continental associations in the world.

"I therefore look forward to your support during the forthcoming 30th OCA General Assembly in Tokyo on July 14, 2011."

HIGH-PROFILE SUPPORT FOR SHEIKH AHMAD

The announcement by OCA President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah that he will be standing for re-election this year has prompted letters of support from sports leaders around the continent. Here is a selection of comments:

Indian Olympic Association Secretary General **Raja Randhir Singh**: "It has always been a pleasure working with you and watching sports growing step by step in the Asian continent under your dynamic leadership."

Japanese Olympic Committee President **Tsunekazu Takeda**: "Our endeavour through the OCA leadership has grown into quite an achievement within the Olympic Movement. The legacy should be kept going. I am certain that our capacity remains undiminished."

Olympic Council of Malaysia President **HRH Tunku Imran**: "Today, OCA is not only financially sound but, more important, the unity and solidarity within OCA and its member NOCs is solid and strong. The many programmes and projects initiated by Your Excellency are visionary, and their successful implementation has made OCA the envy of the whole world."

NOC Iraq President **Raad Hammoodi**: "I seize this opportunity to confirm to you our full support for you as President of OCA in the next term, being such a qualified, effective, efficient

and outstanding person for this post."

United Arab Emirates NOC Vice President **Yousuf Yaqoob Al Serkal**: "Under your Presidency, the Olympic Council of Asia has served the best to promote the Olympic Movement in our continent for the past 20 years."

DPR Korea NOC President **Pak Myong Chol**: "You have rendered strenuous efforts for the dissemination of the Olympic spirit and ideal and for the development of the Olympic Movement in Asia. With the Presidency of Your Excellency, the Olympic Movement in the region of Asia has been vigorously driven forward, creating the great achievements for the Olympic and sports development in Asia."

Y.S. Park, President of the Korean Olympic Committee: "The increase in participation, better sporting performance of Asian countries and expansion of the Asian Winter, Beach and Indoor Games is a testimony of OCA's success under your aegis. You have the leadership and passion needed to make a lasting difference in the future of our region and its global presence. Your election should be a foregone conclusion."

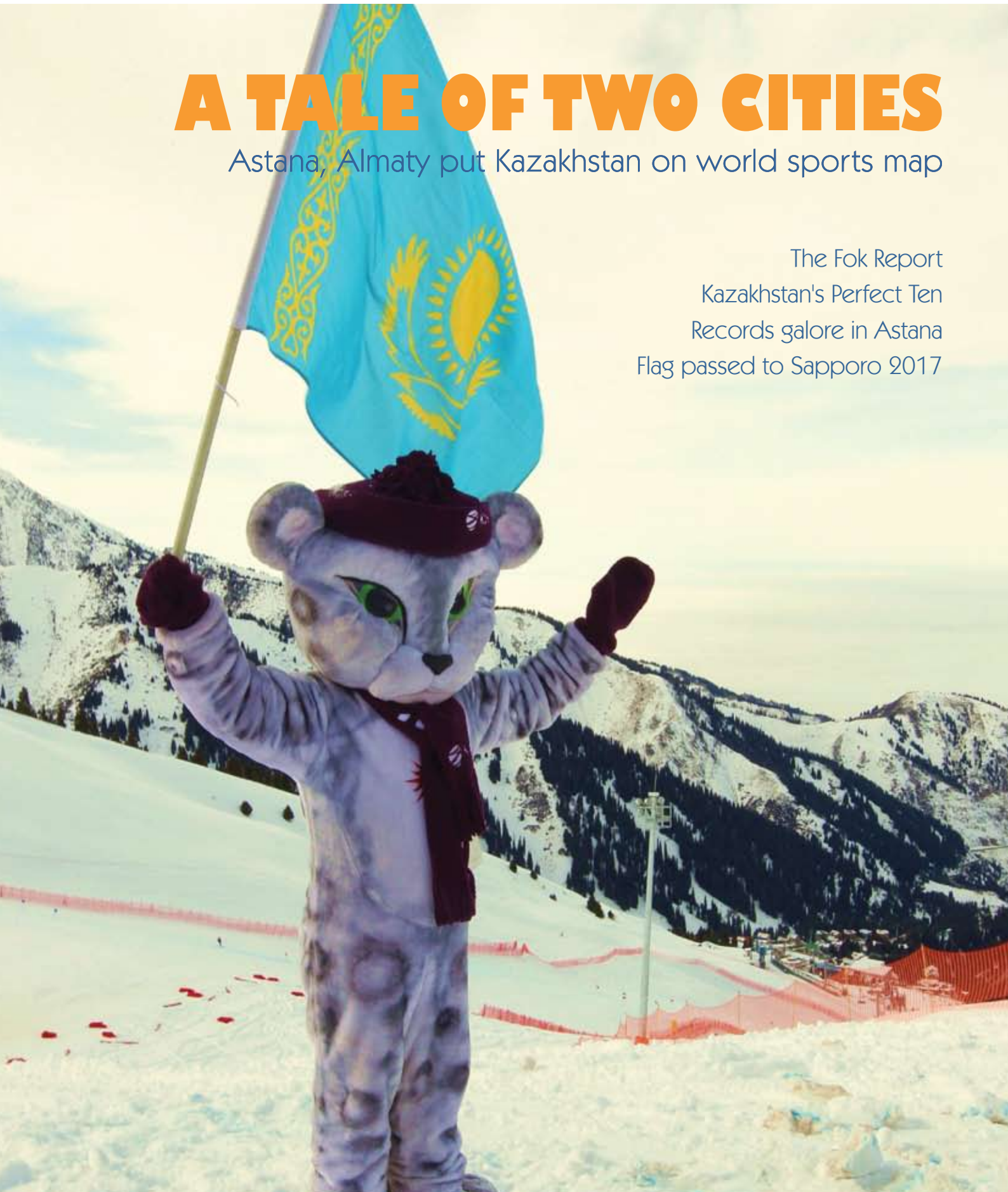
China, Indonesia, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Uzbekistan have also pledged their full support to Sheikh Ahmad.

Sporting Asia's 16-page special on the 7th Asian Winter Games starts here!

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Astana, Almaty put Kazakhstan on world sports map

The Fok Report
Kazakhstan's Perfect Ten
Records galore in Astana
Flag passed to Sapporo 2017





ASTANA-ALMATY RECEIVE GRADE A FROM OCA

Olympic Council of Asia Vice President **Timothy Fok** reflects on the 7th Asian Winter Games in Astana and Almaty, and thinks of seven good reasons why they will be remembered as a great success for host country Kazakhstan, both inside and outside the competition arena.

1 The success must start at the very top with the strong support of the head of state, H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev. Government resources are vital to the success of an event of this magnitude, as is the commitment to see the job through when times get tough. The preparations were not without their difficulties due to the drastic financial crisis, but the commitment never wavered and Kazakhstan was able to stage a memorable Winter Games in two host cities. The head of state attended both the opening and the closing ceremony, another factor that proved his support.

2 The co-hosting worked very well. I must admit there were a few doubts at the beginning, but the two cities displayed their own unique identities while joining together for the Games. With Astana hosting the indoor sports such as speed skating and figure skating and Almaty mostly the outdoor winter sports such as alpine skiing and ski jumping, there was a very smooth flow to the Games.

3 Kazakhstan finished on top of the medals table. Usually you think of the big three – China, Korea and Japan – but on this occasion there was no doubt Kazakhstan deserved to finish on top in gold medals and total medals. Their

athletes had trained very hard and prepared well, and they showed that they want to become a world power in winter sports. This also reflects the development of Asian sport.

4 IOC President Jacques Rogge attended the Games. This was another big factor as the presence of the IOC President commands instant respect and attracts media attention to the Games. It was the IOC President who informed the OCA Executive Board of Kazakhstan's interest in bidding for the 2022 Winter Olympics, and this announcement produced sports news around the world. There is no doubt that the personal interest of the IOC President contributed to the overall success of the Games.

5 The Games have left a wonderful legacy in both host cities. The new speed skating stadium in Astana was truly magnificent, and was described as the best in the world by some observers from strong winter sports countries. As for Almaty, we are sure the venues for the alpine skiing, cross-country and biathlon, and for the ski jumping, will attract new and young winter sports enthusiasts. This is in keeping with the OCA policy to promote a healthy lifestyle.

6 The pride and passion of the local people. This could be heard on the torch relay, at the opening ceremony, in the stadiums of Astana and the mountains of Almaty. The local people really showed a pride in their country and a passion for winter sports, and were also very generous in cheering for the other athletes, too. This was particularly noticeable in the figure skating, and was very much appreciated by the visiting NOCs and by the OCA. I include in this category the volunteers, who were mostly students and

Photo gallery



Mosque "Nur-Astana"



The monument "Astana-Bayterek"



Cheering the torch relay

7th Asian Winter Games

Astana-Almaty, Kazakhstan: January 30 – February 6, 2011



Avalanche! A fearless workman clears the snow from the roof of the Indoor National Cycle Arena at Astana, venue for the short track and figure skating.

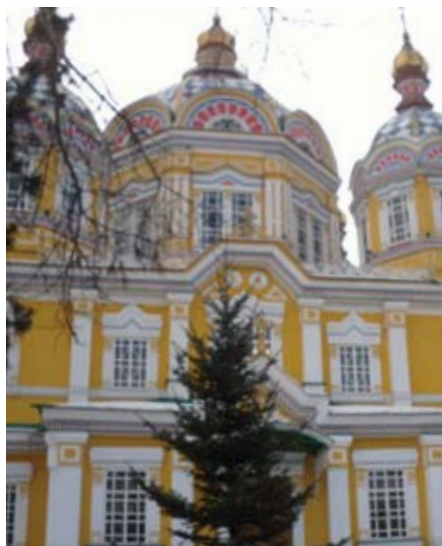
who were proud to represent their home country and project a positive image to the visitors. They were not being paid; it came from the heart.

7 Fierce competition led to a host of new Asian records. Hardly a day went by without a new Asian record being set

at the speed skating venue or on the short track at the converted national indoor cycle arena. Japanese, Chinese and Koreans – not to mention a lone speed skating hero from Kazakhstan – flew round the ice and rewrote the record books, highlighting the high level of competition among Asia's winter sports elite.



Volunteer service...with a smile!



The famous Cathedral at Almaty



The futuristic speed skating stadium at Astana

7th Asian Winter Games

Astana-Almaty, Kazakhstan: January 30 – February 6, 2011



Welcome Iran!



A warm smile on a cold day



Local children are captivated by the team welcome ceremony



The Kazakhstan delegation enters Ice Town

PRIDE AND PAGEANTRY AT T

Offering a glimpse into the culture of Kazakhstan and the warm hospitality of its people, the team welcome ceremony provided a perfect introduction to the 7th Asian Winter Games for the visiting delegations.

The welcome ceremonies took place at Astana Ice Town and were full of colour and pageantry for the teams and on-lookers alike.

They were short and snappy, too, which everyone appreciated as they were exposed to the freezing temperatures, icy wind and occasional snow flurries.

Jordan's Chef de Mission, Ghalia M. Nooreddin, summed it up perfectly. "It's amazing, it's lovely," she said of Ice Town. "All Astana is fantastic. It is so futuristic in a way. It's very nice."

The delegations were led through Ice Town to the ceremonial plaza by AWG volunteers. Once they were assembled in front of the



TEAM WELCOME CEREMONY

stage, a group of high-stepping soldiers from the national guard brought the flag into the arena, where it was raised to the strains of the national anthem.

After a short welcome address and team introduction by a high-ranking official of the organising committee, the Chef de Mission of the team was invited on stage to make a short speech or just to exchange souvenir gifts with the hosts.

A glamorous team of protocol assistants in national costume added to the festivities for the photo shoot, after which the athletes and officials could seek shelter and refreshment in a brightly decorated yurt – the traditional tented home of the Central Asian nomads.

The ceremony was all over in a matter of minutes, but the memories – and important first impressions of Kazakhstan and the hosts – will last a lifetime.



Hand on heart: Korean pride



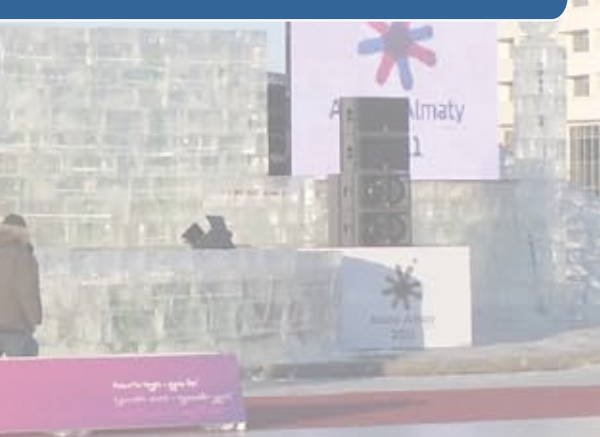
The flag of China is brought into the arena



DPR Korea team members check out Ice Town



Jordan NOC and AWAGOC exchange gifts





The OCA emblem lights up Astana Arena



One of the highlights of the Opening Ceremony

GIANT SNOWBALL FIGHT HIGHLIGHTS OPENING CEREMONY

With opening ceremonies becoming more and more complex, high-tech and theatrical, it needs something a little special to make an impact these days.

Kazakhstan found exactly that – with a good old-fashioned snowball fight!

An assortment of gadgets and souvenirs awaited the guests in the customary opening ceremony gift pack on the seats of Astana Arena on January 30, but it was the packet of four, snowball-sized white sponge balls that would steal the show.

Two-thirds of the way through the ceremony, a group of children performing on stage indicated it was time for the packets to be opened, and the audience did not need a second invitation.

Within a few seconds, thousands of snowballs were flying through the air, aimed at friends, family, strangers and VIPs alike. Mayhem reigned for a few chaotic minutes in the meticulously-planned opening ceremony schedule as the fun and laughter of the simple snowball fight filled the arena.

As a vehicle for breaking down barriers and bringing people together, the snowball idea was a master stroke by the organisers and instantly made everyone feel a part of the 7th Asian Winter Games.

In his address, OCA President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah urged the athletes and officials to enjoy every moment in Kazakhstan, which he described as “a special place in the world – a bridge between Asia and Europe” and a country with rich tradition.

“Although it is cold at this time of year, the hearts of the Kazakh people remain warm and are always open to welcome us into their home,” the OCA President said, to loud cheers from the sell-out crowd.

“For this we are very grateful. It gives us the confidence and the belief that the 7th Asian Winter Games in Astana and Almaty will be the success we have dreamed of for many years.”

He would be proved right over the next few days.

AMBITIOUS RELAY RALLIES ENTIRE NATION

By camel and by horse, over snow-covered plains and across misty waters...the torch relay for the 7th Asian Winter Games will be remembered as one of the most spectacular in the history of the Olympic Council of Asia.

The festivities began at OCA HQ on January 11 with the torch-lighting ceremony at Kuwait Tower. The following day the flame arrived in Almaty to signal the start of an ambitious nationwide tour to promote the Winter Games in all regions of the vast republic.

The torch was accompanied on the entire trip by a camera crew with a mobile TV studio that sent out daily progress reports about the relay on the major TV channels.


As well as civic dignitaries and sports personalities involved in each leg of the relay, the organisers selected 800 applicants to carry the torch and provide a day to remember in the build-up to Kazakhstan's biggest ever sports event.

By the time the torch reached the capital city Astana the excitement was at fever pitch. On the last day of the relay, January 30, several OCA officials carried the torch through the city streets and witnessed at close-quarters the pride and enthusiasm of the local people as chants of "Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan" broke out at regular intervals.



Map of torch relay

OCA Vice President Timothy Fok, Honorary Life Vice President Wei Jizhong, Sports Committee Chairman Zhang Jilong and Medical Committee Chairman Dr Mani Jegathesan were among the OCA family members to brave the sub-zero temperatures and receive the warm cheers of the local people on the road to Astana Arena for the opening ceremony.

 Turn to Pages 16 and 17 to celebrate the Torch Relay of the 7th Asian Winter Games.



The flame is carried from the Palace of Peace and Concord in Astana.



TORCH RELAY LIGHTS



Magnificent Golden Eagles guard the torch



The torch is carried on horseback



A camel joins in the fun

UP KAZAKHSTAN



Supporting the relay, from Kuwait to Aktobe to Astana



Skis are the best mode of transport in these conditions



The flame travels across misty waters



Golden girls...Kazakhstan's women's hockey team

FACT BOX

991 Athletes

27 NOCs

480 Technical Delegates/
Officials

5 Sports

11 Disciplines

69 Events

3,500 Volunteers

2,400 Media

KAZAKHSTAN SETS NEW MEDAL MARK

Kazakhstan's athletes surpassed all expectations by surging away from Asia's sporting aristocrats at the top of the medals table of the 7th Asian Winter Games.

In winning 32 of the 69 gold medals and a total of 70 medals across the 11 disciplines, Kazakhstan broke the duopoly of Japan and China and became only the third country to finish on top of the final medal standings.

Their previous best performance had been a second-place finish behind China in 1996, and their golden haul of 32 eclipsed the previous record of 29 won by Japan in the inaugural Asian Winter Games at Sapporo in 1986.

In the build-up to the Games, Kazakhstan's Minister of Tourism and Sport, Temirkhan Dosmukhambetov, set a target of 25 medals in total for the host country and a top-three finish, but even he under-estimated the preparation, the power and the determination of the Kazakh athletes.

There were rich pickings for Kazakhstan in several sports, notably ski orienteering, cross country and biathlon.

Thanks to the efforts of Mikhail Sorokin and Olga Novikova, the home team swept all eight gold medals in ski orienteering, while Alexey Poltoranin was the star of the cross country team, which claimed six of the 12 gold medals available.




The biathlon team won five of the seven events, including a victory for Vancouver Winter Olympics silver medallist Yelena Khrustaleva in the women's 15km individual race, and the

freestyle skiers claimed four of the six gold medals, with two for moguls specialist Yuliya Galysheva.

Kazakhstan cleaned up in the team sports, winning the men's bandy and men's and women's hockey, and produced a new Asian record-holder in Denis Kuzin, who stunned his rivals to win the men's 1,500m speed skating title.

Kazakhstan's 32 gold medals were comprised of: 8, ski orienteering; 6, cross country; 5, biathlon; 4, freestyle skiing; 3, alpine skiing; 2, ice hockey; 1, bandy, figure skating, ski jumping, speed skating.

MEDAL TABLE

Rank	Country				Total
1	Kazakhstan	32	21	17	70
2	Japan	13	24	17	54
3	Korea	13	12	13	38
4	China	11	10	14	35
5	Mongolia	0	1	4	5
6	Iran	0	1	2	3
7	DPR Korea	0	0	1	1
7	Kyrgyzstan	0	0	1	1
Total		69	69	69	207

KAZAKHSTAN'S PERFECT TEN

Of all Kazakhstan's 32 gold medals at the 7th Asian Winter Games, perhaps none produced scenes of joy and pride comparable to the victory of Denis Ten in the men's figure skating at Astana on Friday, February 4.

There was a fair sprinkling of relief, too, as the young ice wizard from Almaty had failed to match his commanding performance in the short programme the previous evening, and there was doubt as to whether his free skate would be good enough to hold off the chasing pack.

In the end, the advantage he held overnight carried him home on a tidal wave of euphoria and he was able to deliver what his fans had been craving.

"I was so impressed by the crowd," he told Sporting Asia.

"I would really like to thank everybody here who supported me because it really helped me during my performance. It was a big honour to skate in Kazakhstan for the first time in my life and I really enjoyed the competition.

"The crowd was just amazing. I almost lost my fears when I was skating. It was a big pleasure to skate here."

Ten, 17, is regarded as one of the brightest prospects in world figure skating, and became the first skater from Kazakhstan to win a medal at an International Skating Union competition when he took gold in the 2008 ISU Junior Grand Prix at Gomel, Belarus. He finished 11th at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics but has set his sights much higher for Sochi 2014.

Looking ahead to the next Winter Olympics, he said: "Time passes really fast. This season is really tough for me because I



Golden boy...Kazakh figure skater Denis Ten

changed my training place to the United States after six years in Moscow; it is an adventure for me.

"This competition was very important because I did not do well in the last three competitions. But this time I tried my best because it was in my country and I could see lots of people who believe in me.

"I really hope that in Sochi I will be prepared well and be ready in my physical condition and my psychological condition. I hope I will be a top skater there because I still have three years and I will work very hard. I really hope that I will be much better in Sochi."

The Kazakh youngster is further motivated by his Korean ancestry, as he is a descendant of a Korean General, Min Keung Ho.

"My grand-grand-grandfather is a very famous general of Korea and it is a big pleasure for me to skate and to know that my grand-grand-grandfather is a general. Every time I skate I think about him and I try not to fail him. I am so proud of my blood!

"Koreans are very nice to me. When I go to Korea I feel like I am in my second home country. It is a big pleasure for me that I skate for Kazakhstan and the Koreans still love me!"

PROFILE

Name: Denis Ten

NOC: Kazakhstan

Date of birth: June 13, 1993

Age: 17

Height: 1.66m

Place of birth: Almaty

Base: Los Angeles, California

Coach: Frank Carroll

Olympic Games: 11th at Vancouver 2010



Kanako Murakami won the women's figure skating title at 16 years old

JAPAN CONTENT WITH SECOND PLACE

After failing to win a gold medal at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, Japan had something to prove to their regional rivals Korea and China at the 7th Asian Winter Games.

With a second-place finish on 13 gold medals – the same as Korea but with twice the number of silver medals – the Japanese will feel they have restored some pride and are on track for a much-improved performance in Sochi 2014.

Cross country produced the most gold medals, five in total and two apiece for Keishin Yoshida and Masako Ishida, and speed skating was not far behind with four – and a couple of Asian record-breakers in the process.

Joji Kato, bronze medallist in the men's 500m at Vancouver 2010, rewrote the continental records for the fastest 500m (34.98 seconds) and for the fastest 2 x 500m (70.0 seconds), while Masako Hozumi beat her own Asian mark in the women's 3,000m with a time of 4:07.82 seconds. Hozumi added a second gold medal in the 5,000m.

In one of the most popular events of the Games, Japan recorded a 1-2 finish in women's figure skating through 16-year-old Kanako Murakami and Haruka Imai, 17.

Japan's 13 gold medals came from: 5, cross country; 4, speed skating; 2, ski jumping; 1, biathlon, figure skating.



Lee Seung Hoon won three gold medals for Korea in speed skating

LEE BURNS ASIAN RECORDS

Although Kim Sun Joo won two alpine titles, the women's downhill and Super-G, there was no doubting the star of the Korean team: speed skating sensation Lee Seung Hoon.

The Vancouver Winter Olympics champion in the men's 10,000m, and silver medallist in the 5,000m, took home three gold medals, one silver and two Asian records as Korea won five of their 13 gold medals in speed skating.

Lee set new Asian marks in winning the 5,000m (6:25.56) and the 10,000m (13:09.74) – beating his own record on each occasion - and added the 35-lap mass start gold to his impressive collection. A second-place finish in the men's team pursuit, behind Japan, on the last day of the Games denied Lee a golden grand slam.

On the short track, Sung Si Bak was involved in two Asian records: in the men's 1,000m (1:27.368) and in the men's 5,000m relay (6:44.705). Sung broke the 1,000m record in the semi-finals but could finish only third in the final after crashing.

Korea's 13 gold medals came from: 5, speed skating; 4, short track; 3, alpine skiing; 1, cross country.

CHINA LOOKS TO THE FUTURE AFTER 4TH-PLACE FINISH

For the first time in the history of the Asian Winter Games, China finished outside the top three. From first place on home territory in Changchun in 2007 with 19 gold, the Chinese slipped to fourth with 11 gold medals, two fewer than Japan and Korea and 21 adrift of Kazakhstan.

These Games were all about experience and development, however, as 66 of China's 129 athletes were making their AWG debut, and 85 of them did not participate in the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.

Among the absentees was medal machine Wang Meng, who won three gold in the Vancouver short track competition but was now studying English in New York during a season out of competition.

The short track team still won four gold medals in Astana, including an Asian record for Liu Qihong in the women's 500m (43.964 seconds), and there were speed skating titles for Wang Fei (women's 1,500m) and Yu Jing (women's 500m), again in Asian record times.

Wang beat her own mark from Changchun 2007 by clocking 1:58.37 and Yu posted new records for the 500m (37.85) and the 2 x 500m (76.09).

China's 11 gold medals came from: 4, short track; 2, figure skating, freestyle, speed skating; 1, biathlon.



Yu Jing celebrates an Asian speed skating record

MONGOLIA, IRAN EARN SILVER MEDALS

Apart from the top four of Kazakhstan, Japan, Korea and China, four more NOCs won a sprinkling of silver and bronze medals.

With a silver medal in bandy, thanks to a 17-2 victory over Kyrgyzstan, and four bronze medals from ski orienteering, Mongolia claimed fifth place.

Gerelt-Od Bayaraa was involved in three of the four bronze medals, finishing third in the men's sprint and long distance individual races and being part of the three-man relay team.

The ski orienteering course in Almaty also proved to be a happy hunting ground for Iran, who won a silver medal in the men's relay and a bronze in the men's middle distance through Beejan Kangarloo. A superb effort by alpine skier Mohammad Kiyadarbandsari earned him a bronze medal in the men's Super-G.

Iran finished sixth with one silver and two bronze, while Kyrgyzstan picked up a bronze in bandy and DPR Korea in pairs figure skating.



Mohammad Kiyadarbandsari earned a bronze medal

CULTURAL ASIAD DESERVED A GOLD MEDAL

With the Olympic Council of Asia in town – in two cities to be precise – what better time to promote your own culture, tradition and history?

Organisers of the 7th Asian Winter Games did not waste this opportunity, and provided a cultural feast for visitors and locals alike in the co-host cities of Almaty and Astana.

A city tour was illuminating in itself, with Almaty still displaying the signs of Soviet austerity as opposed to the futuristic structures of the modern new capital Astana, which in places resembled the site of a moon landing.

The days and nights offered exhibitions, shows and musical performances, with something for everyone during competition down-time.

Two of the Cultural Asiad highlights in Astana were Ice Town and the “World of Nomads” indoor exhibition.

Ice Town attracted hordes of visitors on a daily basis with its striking ice sculptures, family playground and rink for mass skating. This was also the venue for the team welcome ceremonies, after which athletes and officials would brave the icy winds to check out the park.

It was a lot warmer inside the Korme Exhibition Centre, where the “World of Nomads” told the story of the earliest inhabitants of the Central Asian plains and the harsh existence they had to endure.

With arts and craft fairs, traditional music, dance and theatre, a display of daredevil horseback riding and photo opportunities at every turn, the World of Nomads was a strong contender for gold medal of Cultural Asiad!



OCA Media Committee Chairman Manuel Silverio with some of the prize winners in the International Art and Essay Competition



POC Secretary General Steve Hontiveros takes a ride round the World of Nomads



Irby in ice!



Welcome to the World of Nomads

IEC PROVIDES GLOBAL STAGE FOR AWG

The growing popularity of winter sports in Asia was reflected in the amount of television coverage distributed by Stockholm-based agency IEC In Sports.

Appointed by the organising committee as recently as November 2010, IEC still managed to build up an impressive list of broadcasters hungry for action from the mountains of Almaty and the skating rinks of Astana.

China's CCTV provided 60 hours of live coverage on Channel 5 and had over 30 staff on site, reflecting the country's rise in winter sports. CCTV's terrestrial, cable and satellite feeds served 220 million households.

Although China's achievements on the snow and ice cannot yet match their results at the Summer Olympics, they still won an impressive five gold medals and 11 medals in total at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, generating interest at the continental level around the world's most populous country.

Korea, who won an Asia-best six gold medals in Vancouver and 14 medals in total, was served by three main stations in MBC, SBS Sports and KBS with a combination of live and delayed broadcasts, highlights packages and extended news coverage.

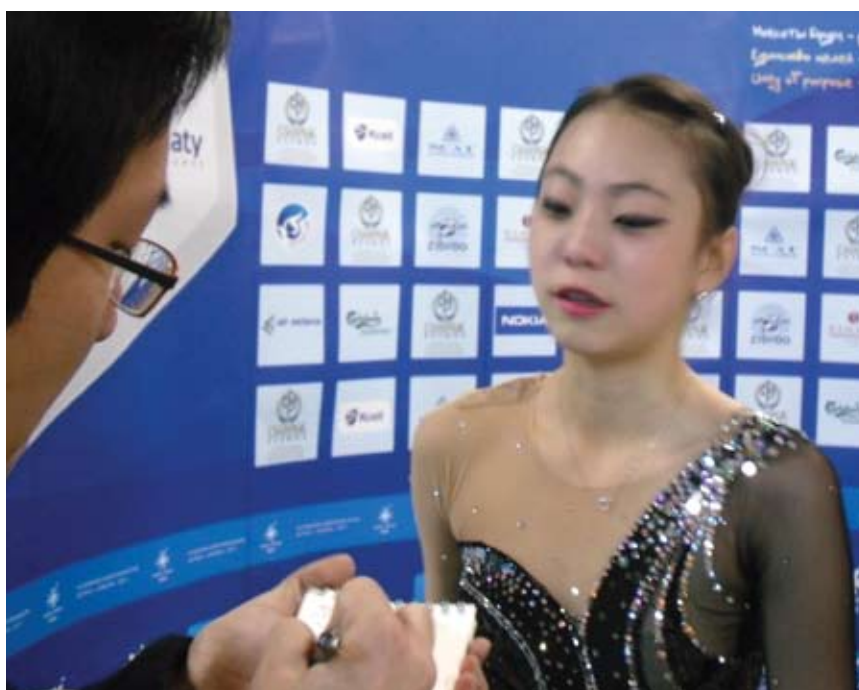
Japan's NTV served 6 million households through the platforms of terrestrial, cable and satellite channels, while there was also coverage in Hong Kong (Cable TV), Macau (TDM), Uzbekistan (UTV), Malaysia (Astro Supersport) and Iran (IRIB).

With ESPN Star Sports, Al Jazeera and Russia's RTR Planeta also on board, the 7th Asian Winter Games received a truly global feed through IEC.

"It has been very well received. The quality of the production was the selling point," said Guy Horne, Director, Sports Rights, for IEC In Sports Asia Pacific Ltd, based in Hong Kong.

Jonas Persson, CEO of IEC, described the AWG project as a very exciting challenge. "Asian nations took 11 gold medals at the Vancouver Winter Olympics and winter sports are gaining in both standard and popularity," he said.

His words were reflected in the market IEC was able to establish in all corners of Asia and beyond, as the quality of the broadcast signal produced stunning images of the Asian Winter Games and the rugged natural beauty of Kazakhstan.



Korea's Kwak Min Jeong was a popular target for TV and media

ASIAN WINTER GAMES - MEDAL TABLE HISTORY

Year	Games	Host	1st place (Gold)	2nd place (Gold)	3rd place (Gold)
1986	I	Sapporo	Japan (29)	China (4)	Korea (1)
1990	II	Sapporo	Japan (18)	China (9)	Korea (6)
1996	III	Harbin	China (15)	Kazakhstan (14)	Japan (8)
1999	IV	Kangwon	China (15)	Korea (11)	Kazakhstan (10)
2003	V	Aomori	Japan (24)	Korea (10)	China (9)
2007	VI	Changchun	China (19)	Japan (13)	Korea (9)
2011	VII	Astana-Almaty	Kazakhstan (32)	Japan (13)	Korea (13)

PRESIDENT NAZARBAYEV CLOSES WINTER GAMES

There was a high-profile conclusion to the 7th Asian Winter Games when the Head of State of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev, declared the Games closed at the Baluan Sholak Sport Palace in Almaty on Sunday, February 6.

“The best athletes of Asia from 27 countries competed for 69 sets of medals, which is a record,” Nazarbayev told the audience.

“We have learned to understand each other better. I believe this is the main achievement of the 7th Asian Winter Games.”

Nazarbayev said the world had witnessed Kazakhstan’s capability of hosting a major sports event, and added that the new venues would be suitable and ready to stage the Winter Olympics.

Earlier in the evening, Almaty Mayor Akhmetzhan Yessimov had thanked the organisers and the sponsors, and had special words of praise for the hundreds of volunteers who had assisted guests and participants during their stay in Kazakhstan.

“I thank the Olympic Council of Asia for supporting the Asian

Winter Games in Kazakhstan, and I am thankful for all the guests and international experts who have contributed to the Games,” the Mayor said.

“We are not saying goodbye. I am sure there will be more meetings in the future.”

Responding on behalf of the OCA, Vice President Timothy Fok declared the Games a big success.

“You have supported the Olympic Council of Asia and the Asian Winter Games with all your energy and all your enthusiasm,” he said, to wild cheers from the crowd.

“Your passion for winter sports burns as bright as the Olympic flame, and your pride in your country has moved us all. Although we are going home, our memories of the people of Kazakhstan will remain with us always.”

The Mayor of Almaty passed the OCA flag to Vice President Fok, who in turn handed it to the Deputy Mayor of Sapporo City, Noriaki Ikushima. Sapporo will host the 8th AWG in 2017.



A page from the past



Mini-mascots join in the fun



The OCA flag is carried by guards



The flag is passed to Sapporo 2017



Afghanistan

Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN) reports that a delegation from Afghanistan's National Olympic Committee, led by Muhammad Zahir Aghbar, visited inmates at the Pul-i-Charkhi Prison in Kabul and distributed tracksuits, shoes, volleyballs, basketballs and other equipment to the prisoners. Director Aghbar also promised the prisoners that the NOC would soon provide them with wrestling mats, weightlifting and taekwondo gear, as well as volleyball equipment.

(www.afghan-web.com)



Bahrain

Bahrain's Al Ahli have been crowned back-to-back champions of the Gulf Clubs Handball Championship following a tense 4-3 shootout victory over Qatari hosts Al Rayyan. The final in Doha was a nail-biting encounter as the teams remained deadlocked 29-29 after four overtime periods. Ahli now have won the Gulf clubs title a record eight times.

(www.gulf-daily-news.com)



Bangladesh

The occasion of certificate distribution for the 11th South Asian Games for joint officers and volunteers was held on February 8, 2011, at the Bangladesh Olympic Association Bhaban. Bangladesh hosted the South Asian Games for the third time in Dhaka from January 29 to February 9, 2010.

(www.noc-ban.com)



Bhutan

KD Choeda Enterprise were crowned champions of the Sha Dhar archery tournament after defeating Laya Tours and GNH in the finals played on January 26. The champions were awarded Nu 60,000 while runners-up Laya Tours and third-placed GNH received Nu 55,000 and Nu 50,000, respectively.

(www.bhutanobserver.bt)



Brunei Darussalam

The martial art of Shorinji Kempo was brought to the Belait district on February 8 as the Indonesian Shorinji Kempo Federation (Perkemi) continued its tour of the four districts. The exhibition, organised by the Department of Youth and Sports alongside the Brunei Darussalam National Olympic Committee, was held at the Mumong Sports Stadium in Kuala Belait. The spirited display from the 16 Kenshis (disciples), fresh from their exhibition in the capital, was attended by approximately 100 people, including some 50 students from 13 local schools.

(www.bruneiolympic.org)



Cambodia

The National Olympic Committee of Cambodia announced the unanimous adoption of a charter in which all the necessary features of the Olympic Charter are ingrained during the Extraordinary General Assembly at Naga World Hotel and Casino on February 15.

The new charter will replace the ad hoc administrative guidelines currently in force after formal approval from the International Olympic Committee, strengthening the NOCC's standing in the Olympic Movement.

NOCC President Thong Khon, who chaired the annual gathering which was attended by representatives from all 33 affiliated sports federations, described the unwavering support for the new charter as a victory for change.

"We have to diligently follow the charter once it is approved by the IOC and work towards the common goal of propagating Olympism in its true spirit," he said.

NOCC Secretary General Vath Chamroeun presented a comprehensive insight into the various aspects of the new constitution, saying significant work had to be done to protect Olympic property and promote the Olympic philosophy.

NOCC adviser Ken Gadaffi made a wide-ranging presentation dealing with such important issues as autonomy and good governance in the Olympic Movement, while devoting another section to sports arbitration.

The Assembly also named former NOCC President Mey Samedy as Honorary Life President.

(www.phnompenhpost.com)



China

Chinese Olympic Committee Secretary General Song Luzeng thanked the Olympic Council of Asia for the successful hosting of the 16th Asian Games during his official visit to Kuwait on Tuesday, February 15.



In a meeting with OCA Director General Husain Al-Musallam, Song highlighted the importance of good cooperation between the OCA and COC and expressed his appreciation for the OCA's support and guidance in hosting the 16th Asian Games in Guangzhou last November.

"The COC has been enjoying and benefiting from an excellent relationship with the OCA for the past few years," said Song. "My visit to Kuwait is to exchange certain opinions on the work between us. The OCA has been supporting the COC in many aspects, and this good relationship has not only contributed to China's sports development but also benefited our Asian Olympic Movement."

With China now organising the 2012 Asian Beach Games at Haiyang and the 2013 Asian Youth Games at Nanjing, Song added: "Those two Games provide another two platforms for different sports and athletes. I have no doubt that organising them will certainly boost the development of Chinese sport, the OCA and the Asian Olympic Movement."



DPR Korea

The DPR Korea team at the 7th Asian Winter Games reflected the fact that their winter sports athletes are more comfortable on the ice than the snow. The Koreans attended with 32 athletes in four sports: women's ice hockey, speed skating, short track and figure skating.

On the subject of their lack of participation in the skiing events, DPRK HQ staff Kang Ryong Gil said the athletes were just not ready. "Perhaps in two or three years we will enter," he added.



Hong Kong, China

The Bank of China Hong Kong Sports Stars Awards 2010 attracted over 40,000 online votes from the public before the January 31 deadline. The Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, also organised a sports media luncheon to introduce the voting mechanism. Members of the media were invited to vote for their favourite Hong Kong sports stars, junior sports stars, team-only sport and team event.

(www.hkolympic.org)



India

Richa Mishra and Virdhawal Khade won 11 and eight gold medals respectively to be adjudged the best swimmer in their respective sections as the swimming competition concluded at the 34th National Games in Ranchi on Saturday, February 19.

The 2010 Asian Games bronze medalist in the 50m butterfly, Khade finished with eight gold medals - all in record times - two silver and two bronze for 64 points. Richa, the 27-year-old Delhi girl, garnered 16 medals (11-4-1) and seven meet records from her 17 individual events for 103 points.

(The Times of India).



Indonesia

The government plans to build stadiums in East Nusa Tenggara's Flores and Sumba Islands, and has allocated Rp 10 billion (US\$1.13 million) for the construction of a youth centre in the provincial capital of Kupang, the Youth and Sports Affairs Ministry says.

(www.thejakartapost.com)



Iran

Iran's Chef de Mission at the 7th Asian Winter Games, Eisa Saveh Shemshaki, was keen to highlight the percentage of female athletes involved in skiing in the Islamic Republic when talking to the media in Kazakhstan.

Iran's team of nine athletes included three women in alpine skiing, with thousands more back home following their performances.

"I have been head of the ski federation for 25 years, and in that time we have succeeded in making 15 new pistes in our country," he told local TV. "Every week about 20,000 people are on the ski slopes, and 40 per cent of them are women. Our women do not have any problem wearing the Islamic hijab while playing this sport."



Iraq

Iraq's Central Association for wrestling discussed its curriculum for 2011 and highlighted a number of negative points that affected the work of the association last year at its annual conference in Baghdad in January.

Several National Olympic Committee executive officers attended the conference.

(www.alsumaria.tv)



Japan

With the Asian Winter Games heading to Japan for a fourth time in 2017, the city of Obihiro is set to stage the speed skating events in its role as satellite city for the main winter sports hub Sapporo. In 2008, Obihiro was designated as a model environmental city in Japan.



Jordan

A total of nine million JDs will be allocated to Jordan's sports federations over the coming year. Under the presidency of HRH Prince Feisal Al Hussein, the Jordan Olympic Committee's Executive Board approved the budget, which has been reduced from last year.

The Board also approved the name change of the Bodybuilding Federation to become the Jordan Bodybuilding and Fitness Federation in accordance with its international federation.

Other presentations were made by the various committees and it was also decided to continue the programme of providing financial rewards to athletes achieving good results at major international events.

It was also announced that HRH Prince Feisal has received an invitation for Jordan to host the 2015 Pan Arab Games.

(www.joc.jo)



NOC President Temirkhan Dosmukhambetov has described the 7th Asian Winter Games co-hosted by Astana and Almaty as a milestone in the sporting history of the republic, which this year celebrates its 20th anniversary of independence from the former Soviet Union. Kazakhstan became only the fourth host of the Asian Winter Games, after Japan, China and Korea.

Speaking at the 57th OCA Executive Board meeting in Astana on January 31, the Sports Minister said Kazakhstan owed a debt of gratitude to the Head of State, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who had shown unwavering support to the Games during the global financial crisis.

It was through his commitment and dedication to the project that Kazakhstan was able to host the Games in such ideal conditions, said the Minister.

"We have 11 sports disciplines and 69 sets of medals, and all the venues for the 7th Asian Winter Games have been built to world standards using the highest and newest technology available," he added. "They are the new symbols of architecture in Astana and Almaty."

Minister Dosmukhambetov is pictured (left) carrying the flame on its arrival in Almaty on January 12 from OCA HQ in Kuwait.



Korea achieved their minimum target of 10 gold medals and a top-three finish at the 7th Asian Winter Games by winning 13 titles and finishing third in the final standings, behind Japan only on a countback of silver medals.



The Kuwait Cricket Association held a press conference on Thursday, February 17, at the Movenpick Hotel & Resort Al Bida'a in Salmiya to announce details of the 10-team Asian Cricket Council Women's Twenty 20 Championship 2011 to be staged in Kuwait from February 18-25.

Those present included Sheikha Naeema Al Ahmed Al Sabah (head of Kuwait women's cricket) and Haider Farman (General Secretary, Kuwait Cricket Association). Group A: China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Bhutan and Oman. Group B: Kuwait, Nepal, Malaysia, UAE and Thailand.

(www.arabtimesonline.com)



Kyrgyzstan finished joint seventh alongside DPR Korea in the final medal standings for the 7th Asian Winter Games after collecting a bronze medal in the bandy tournament played at the outdoor Medeu Skating Arena on the outskirts of Almaty.

Kyrgyzstan's hopes of a place in the final - and the chance of a silver medal in the three-team tournament - were dashed when they suffered a 17-2 defeat at the hands of Mongolia on the opening day of competition. As expected, Kazakhstan easily claimed the gold medal in a sport which is also known as Russian hockey.



The 4th National Student Games will run from April 1-9 in Savannakhet province, reports the Lao News Agency. At a news conference in Vientiane, Minister of Education Dr. Phankham Viphavanh said the Games would be part of the preparations for athletes ahead of the 9th National Sports Games in Luang Prabang in 2012.

The Student Games will also serve as preparation for the 16th ASEAN University Games, which will be hosted by Laos in 2012. The 11 sports on the programme for the upcoming Games are: athletics, rattan ball, football, volleyball, petanque, basketball, ping-pong, badminton, top spin, cross bow and taekwondo.

The Games expect to attract more than 1,700 athletes from state and private secondary schools and will offer 800 medals: 260 gold, 260 silver and 280 bronze.

The inaugural National Student Games were held in Vientiane in 2000, the second edition in Khammouane province in 2002 and the third in Luang Prabang province in 2007. (www.kpl.net.la)



Lebanon

Beirut Marathon founder May El Khalil received the Laureus Sport for Good Award at the presentation evening for 2010 in Abu Dhabi on February 7. Khalil won the award for her organisation of the Beirut Marathon, which has grown into one of the most important dates in the Lebanese calendar.

(www.dailystar.com.lb)



Macau, China

The venue for the finals of the 2011 FIVB World Grand Prix – the Macau East Asian Games Dome – has received a satisfactory pass mark following an inspection visit by the event's technical delegate, Shanrit Wongprasert. The six-team final round of the annual women's volleyball international tournament takes place from August 24-28.

(www.fivb.org)



Malaysia

The 2011 Olympic Council of Malaysia Sports Goodwill Ambassadors annual gathering was held on February 19 at OCM Indoor Sports Complex, Wisma OCM Phase II, Kuala Lumpur, with around 60 participants. The four speakers included Peter de Souza, a sports management consultant based in Canberra, Australia, and the son of the late Herman de Souza, a former Vice President of OCM, and Dato' Peter Velappan, the former General Secretary of the Asian Football Confederation. (www.olympic.org.my)



Maldives

Sri Lankan cricket legend Sanath Jayasuriya launched the Maldives Invitational Beach Games 2011 in spectacular fashion at a ceremony in the Ekuweni indoor court on February 10. Jayasuriya, who landed in Male just an hour before the ceremony, shared his thoughts on the prospects of the Maldives staging its first ever multi-sports games.

"I've been here before quite a few times and I know how this country looks after people and how it treats them as guests. I'm so glad to be here to launch the Beach Games. I hope that all the athletes will enjoy their stay here and have a memorable Beach Games," Jayasuriya said.

Maldives Olympic Committee President Ibrahim Ismail and the Minister of Human Resources, Youth and Sports, Hassan Latheef, also shared their thoughts on the games.

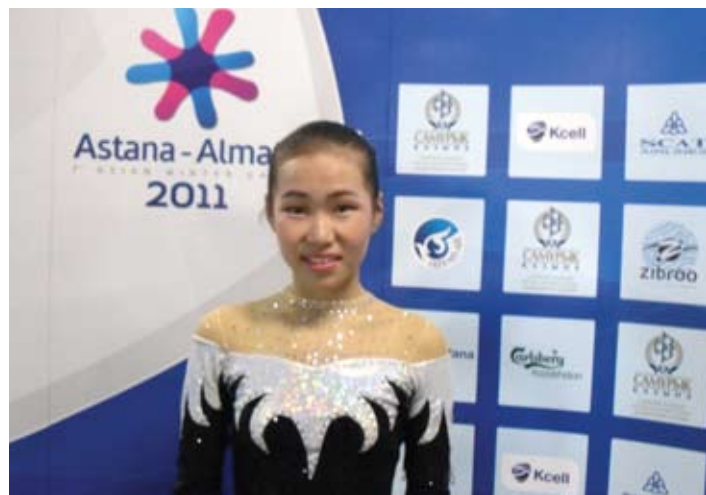
The Maldives Olympic Committee is in negotiations with 92 countries to visit the shores of the Maldives, from September 18-25, and will feature a range of sports, from beach football and beach cricket to surfing and kabaddi.

The venues for the games will be Male, Kuda Bandos, Gd. Thinadhoo, Himmafushi and Hdh. Hanimaadhoo. (www.nocmaldives.org)



Mongolia

Mongolia's Maral-Erdene Gansukh, 14, made history at the 7th Asian Winter Games by becoming the first figure skater to represent her country. Born in Mongolia, Maral moved to Japan with her family when she was five years old and took up figure skating in Nagoya only two and a half years ago.



"This is my first international competition," said Maral. "I enjoyed it a lot and I am happy with my score. It's such a nice feeling to be competing here with the figure skaters from Japan, Korea, China and so many different countries."



Myanmar

Myanmar will be organising the SEA Games in 2013 after an absence of more than 40 years. Myanmar is one of the founder members of the Southeast Asia Peninsular (SEAP) Games Federation, which later was expanded to become the present Southeast Asia (SEA) Games Federation in 1997. Myanmar organised the 2nd SEAP Games in Yangon in 1961 and the 5th SEAP Games in 1969.

They have proposed 25 sports for the 27th SEA Games, to be held in their new capital city Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon: athletics, aquatics, archery, badminton, billiards & snooker, bodybuilding, canoeing / kayak, chess, cycling, football, golf, judo, karate, pencak silat, rowing, sailing, sepak takraw, shooting, taekwondo, table tennis, tennis, traditional boat race, volleyball, weightlifting and wushu.

Palembang, the capital city of South Sumatra province in Indonesia, and Jakarta will host the 26th SEA Games this November.



Nepal

Nepal Olympic Committee President Dhruva Bahadur Pradhan visited OCA HQ in Kuwait on February 14 to present a detailed progress report on the Olympasia Project Nepal. During his stay in Kuwait, Pradhan explained the difficulties and challenges and expressed his gratitude to the Olympasia Project for helping to develop sport in Nepal.

"The Nepal government has offered us the land to build a Nepal Olympic Committee head office, but I also want to thank the Olympic Council of Asia for offering us very much-needed financial support," he said.



"By providing the initial 'seed financial funding' to Nepal, the Olympia Project is so important for us. That is why we could start building our four-storey head office in Kathmandu with a library, meeting room, conference hall and our own working space. Hopefully we can complete the project this year and offer great facilities to different sports federations."



Oman

Rashad bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Hinai, under-secretary for the Ministry of Sports Affairs, has described the Tour of Oman cycling race as another feather in the cap for the Sultanate's sports scene. "The Tour of Oman is an excellent event with both local and worldwide interest," he said, at the prize presentation.

"Coming straight after the success of the Asian Beach Games and to be swiftly followed by the FIFA beach world cup qualifiers starting on February 27, Oman is getting a place on the international map as an ideal location to host world-class events."



Pakistan

The Pakistan Ju-Jitsu Federation received the formal recognition and full membership of the Pakistan Olympic Association at the POA General Council annual meeting on February 12 under the chairmanship of POA President Syed Arif Hasan.

OCA Vice President Syed Arif Hasan praised the performance of the federation and informed the house that it was ju-jitsu which placed Pakistan 11th in the 1st Asian Martial Arts Games 2009 at Bangkok, where the Pakistani team brought home three gold, two silver and two bronze medals.



The POA President also thanked the President of the Asian Ju-Jitsu and Belt-Wrestling Federation, Khalil Ahmed Khan, for his personal dedication and extraordinary support in promoting ju-jitsu in Asia and particularly in Pakistan. The 7th National Ju-jitsu Championship was held from January 20-22 at Lahore and featured 10 federation affiliates.



Palestine

Fencers from Palestine were among an entry of 274 athletes for the 2011 Qatar Fencing Grand Prix for men and World Cup for women in epee at the Aspire, Academy of Sports Excellence, in Doha in mid-February. The other countries represented included Australia, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Iraq, Japan, Italy, Kazakhstan, Libya, Mexico, Netherlands, Portugal, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Tunisia, Ukraine, USA, Venezuela, Turkey, Spain and Qatar.

(www.qatarolympics.org)



Philippines

With three figure skaters at the 7th Asian Winter Games in Kazakhstan, the Philippines certainly made an impression on the audience in Astana – and the event made an impression on the athletes, too.

"This is a really good experience. Just going to the opening ceremonies is definitely something that will inspire me to go to the Winter Olympics. This is my dream," says Mericien Venzon, who travelled from home in San Francisco, USA, to represent the Philippines.

"There are three of us here, two girls and one man. It is the second time our country has been in the Asian Winter Games and we are just trying to build the skating in the Philippines for the future."



Qatar

A course on "Sports Injuries and Rehabilitation" organised by the Sports Affairs Department of the Qatar Olympic Committee began on Sunday, February 20. The target audience for the four-day course were administrators, coaches and assistant coaches from local sports federations and clubs alongside the police and military sports associations, Qatar Women's Sports Committee and Emiri guards. Tariq Saeed Al Ali, Director of Qatar Olympic Academy, inaugurated the course and welcomed the participants and lecturer, Dr. Hassan Mohammad Al Nawasrah.



Saudi Arabia

Prince Nawaf bin Faisal bin Fahd bin Abdulaziz, General President of Youth Welfare who is also President of the Saudi Arabian Olympic Committee, has confirmed that the Saudi Arabian Olympic Committee will support the re-nomination of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah for the post of President of the Olympic Council of Asia for a coming term when the OCA General Assembly holds its next meeting in the Japanese capital Tokyo on July 14, the Saudi Press Agency reports.



Singapore

Thanks to their record-busting heroics at last year's Commonwealth Games and Asian Games, a cool \$4.22 million was presented to top athletes such as swimmer Tao Li and sharpshooter Gai Bin at an awards dinner on February 17.

The money was given out by the Tote Board and Singapore Pools under the banner of the Multi-Million Dollar Award Programme - a long-running incentive scheme that rewards athletes who win medals at major Games. A total of 43 athletes received cheques.

(www.snoc.org.sg)



Sri Lanka

All South Asian nations have given their consent for Sri Lanka to host the inaugural South Asian Beach Games in the southern city of Hambantota, which is also the bidding city for the Commonwealth Games in 2018. Sri Lanka expects to host the South Asian Beach Games from August 22-29, 2011, in a highly successful manner and prove its organisational skills in sports events.

(www.srilankaolympic.org)



Syria

The Junior Friendship Show Jumping Tournament kicked off on Thursday, February 17, at Bassel al-Assad Shooting and Equestrian Club in Dimas with the participation of eight countries: Qatar, Jordan, Lebanon, Denmark, Germany, France, South Africa and Syria.

The Chairman of the General Sport Union, Muaffaq Jomaa, pointed out at the opening ceremony that Syria strongly supported this sport and was seeking to build a firm base for young riders, according to the Syrian Arab News Agency.

The Honorary Chairperson of the Syrian Equestrian Union, Mrs. Manal al-Assad, described the event as a great opportunity for young jumpers to gather, compete and exchange experience to upgrade their level to that of professional riders. The junior national equestrian team of Syria is participating with 13 riders.

(www.sana.sy)



Chinese Taipei

Invited by the Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee, a delegation of 22 members of the Standing Committee on Sports of the Thai Senate visited Taipei from January 12-16.



Led by H.E. Vorawoot Rojanaparnich, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Sports, the delegation exchanged views on sports development and promotion within the Asian Olympic Movement with key figures of the CTOC, representatives from the sports authority and Mr. Jing-Ping Wang, President of Legislative Yuan (Parliament) and chief adviser to the CTOC.

The topics included the prospective exchange programme between the Thai and Chinese Taipei sports communities.

The delegation also called in at the National Sports Training Center and the National Stadium in Kaohsiung, and in general found the trip very productive and impressive.

In addition, Thomas Tsai, President of CTOC, presented a Merit of Honour to H.E. Rojanaparnich in recognition of his remarkable contribution to the Olympic Movement in Asia.

(CTOC)



Tajikistan

A new modern sports complex, Avicenna, has been built in the administrative centre of Hissar district. The opening ceremony on February 12 was attended by Ms. Ruqiya Qurbonova, Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Maliksho Nematov, Chairman of the Committee for Youth, Sports and Tourism Affairs, Mr. Abdurazzoq Saidov, President of project financiers OJSC Avicenna, and senior representatives from the Hissar district administration.

(Asia-Plus)



Thailand

Thailand won five out of six games in the Premier Division second-tier men's ice hockey competition at the 7th Asian Winter Games in Kazakhstan. After losing to Kyrgyzstan in their opening game, the Thais beat Bahrain, Athletes from Kuwait, Malaysia, Mongolia and UAE.



Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste will be one of five teams competing in the Asean Football Federation Under-23 Championship 2011, along with Singapore, the Philippines, Myanmar and hosts Indonesia. The tournament, which is being billed as preparation for the SEA Games in November, will most likely be held in Palembang from July 18-24.

(www.thejakartapost.com)



Turkmenistan

A sports festival took place in Ashgabat on the eve of National Flag Day at the Olympic Sports Complex under the motto "Turkmenistan - the Country of Health and High Spirit." It was organised by the Ashgabat Khyakimlik and the Ashgabat subdivision of the State Committee for Tourism and Sport.

The festival brought together athletes of all ages and demonstrated the policy of the Turkmen state regarding a healthy lifestyle. There is no doubt the decision of the Olympic Council of Asia to award the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games 2017 to Ashgabat has created much interest in the community, especially young athletes with the aim of representing their country in the OCA event.



United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates continued their winter sports development by entering a men's team in the 7th Asian Winter Games ice hockey tournament, playing in the second-tier Premier Division.

"Ice hockey has gained a lot of support from the government and a lot of attention from the public, and that is reflected in the number of children and youngsters being registered at the academy at Abu Dhabi Ice Sports Club," said UAE Chef de Mission Hamad O. Al Sheryani, who is Executive Director of the club.

"We have teams from under 10 years old, and three players from our under 18s have been selected for the Asian Winter Games. Also in Abu Dhabi we have just formed a ladies ice hockey team," he says.

Al Sheryani said a new stadium for ice sports, with a capacity of 10,000, would further boost interest in not only ice hockey but in speed skating, curling and figure skating.



Uzbekistan

The International Federation of Football History and Statistics has announced a list of the best referees in the world in 2010, reports the Uzbekistan National News Agency. In the survey, held among experts from 83 states, the FIFA referee from Uzbekistan, Ravshan Irmatov, was ranked second among 20 referees, scoring 128 points. Irmatov, 33, was also rated 26th in the world for the best referees of the decade. This was the highest position for an Asian ref.

(www.uza.uz)



Vietnam

Pele will visit Vietnam in March to attend a coffee festival in Buon Ma Thuot Town organised by the Trung Nguyen Corporation and the Dak Lak People's Committee, according to VnnNews.net. The organisers say the Brazilian football legend will be among many culture and sports ambassadors from famous coffee-producing and consuming countries like Brazil and Colombia to attend the event.

(www.vnnnews.net)



Yemen

Al Shoala represented Yemen in the Arab Clubs Volleyball Championship in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in February.



Action from the women's team epee competition at the 2006 Asian Games in Doha

OCA Youth Camp 2011 to focus on fencing

The third OCA Youth Camp in the 2009-2012 Olympic quadrennial will focus on fencing in 2011, specifically the epee discipline, the OCA has announced.

Once again the camp will be held at the Sports Authority of Thailand complex in Bangkok, and will take place from July 1-14.

All National Olympic Committees affiliated to the OCA are permitted to send one male and one female athlete between the ages of 14 and 17, along with one coach, to the camp. The costs will be met by the OCA.

"However, if any NOC wants to send more athletes or coaches at their own expense, they are very welcome to do so," says Haider Farman, Director of the OCA's Asian Games department and youth camp coordinator.

As usual, the OCA will call on the services of an internationally-recognised instructor(s) to conduct the course, and will reveal further details after confirmation from the International Federation.

The OCA youth camp focused on judo in 2010 and on shooting in 2009.

2011

June 16-17: **2nd OCA Sports Congress**, Korea

July 1-14: **OCA Youth Camp (fencing)**, Bangkok, Thailand

July 13: **58th OCA Executive Board**, Tokyo, Japan

July 14: **30th OCA General Assembly**, Tokyo, Japan

2012

June 16-23: **3rd Asian Beach Games**, Haiyang, China

2013

4th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, Incheon, Korea (August - provisional)

2nd Asian Youth Games, Nanjing, China (dates to be confirmed)

2014

September 19-October 4: **17th Asian Games**, Incheon, Korea

4th Asian Beach Games, Phuket, Thailand (dates to be confirmed)

2016

5th Asian Beach Games, Nha Trang, Vietnam (dates to be confirmed)

2017

8th Asian Winter Games, Sapporo, Japan (dates to be confirmed)

5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (dates to be confirmed)

OCA Sponsors Club

Diary of Events

