



SPORTING ASIA

Official Newsletter of the Olympic Council of Asia

Edition 63 - December 2023

XIE XIE HANGZHOU ASIAN GAMES BREAKS RECORDS

[Medal Standings](#)

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Olympic Council of Asia

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OCA Sponsors' Club



SPORTING ASIA

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Front Cover:

The digital torchbearer takes a final bow and extinguishes the cauldron at the closing ceremony on October 8.

(HAGOC)

Acting President's Message

HANGZHOU WAS THE PERFECT HOST FOR 19TH ASIAN GAMES



The 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou were a great success!

As a sportsman and sports administrator, I have attended many international multi-sport games around the world and I can safely say that the Hangzhou Asian Games were the best games I have seen.

Everything was beyond expectations and every aspect of the Hangzhou Asian Games was to the standard of an Olympic Games – and more.

We had a record total of 12,417 athletes from our 45 National Olympic Committees, proving once again the unity and solidarity of the Olympic Movement throughout the continent, and our athletes competed in 54 world-class venues.

The technical standard, too, was very high, with 13 world records, 26 Asian records and 97 Asian Games records all going into the history books during the 16 days of top-class competition and entertainment.

The atmosphere at the venues was also a highlight of Hangzhou 2022. The local people really embraced the 19th Asian Games and displayed their pride and passion for their own athletes as well as appreciating and cheering the achievements of all competitors.

The fact that more than 3 million tickets were sold for the 40 sports, 61

disciplines and 481 events proved the enthusiasm of the people to join in this Asian Games celebration and add another glowing chapter to the success story.

Hangzhou, indeed, was the perfect host for the 19th Asian Games, and I believe the event was an unprecedented success.

As the Acting President of the Olympic Council of Asia during the 19th Asian Games, it was truly an honour and a privilege to be in this esteemed position and to witness the warmth, hospitality and generosity of our hosts.

In closing, I would like to thank the Chinese Government and the organising committee HAGOC for their dedication and support over eight years of planning and preparation, and our 45 NOCs for contributing to a wonderful show.

I think it is going to be very difficult for anybody to match up to them in the future.

Xie Xie, Hangzhou!

Raja Randhir Singh
Acting President,
Olympic Council of Asia

Opening Ceremony

September 23, 2023



The magic of the opening ceremony. (Xinhua/Jiang Wenya)



The digital torchbearer lights the cauldron. (Olympics.com)



Lighting the way at the enchanting opening ceremony.



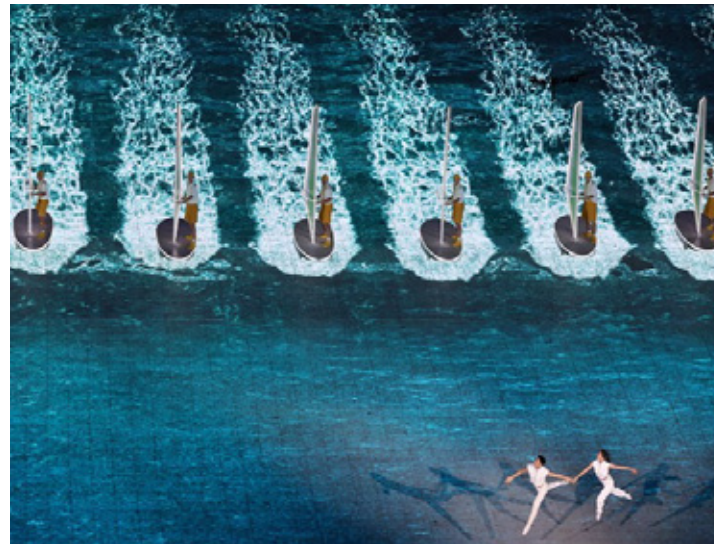
Performers carry shining bouquets.



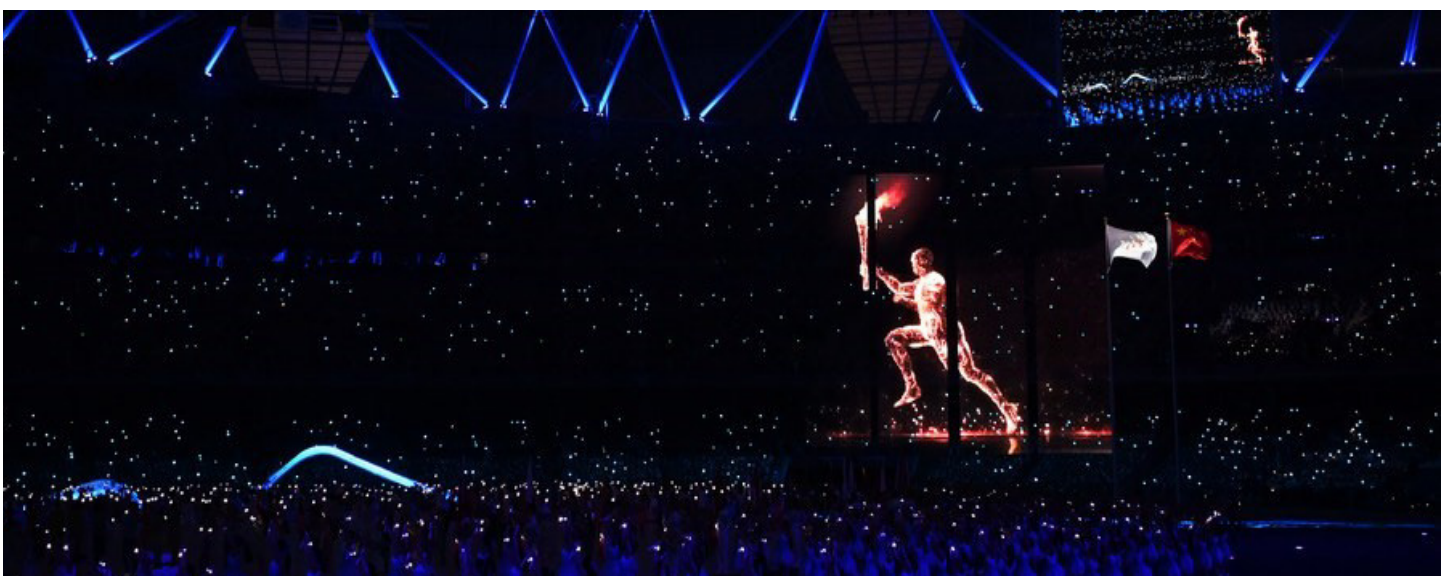
A view of the opening ceremony. (Xinhua/Chen Yichen)



The Chinese flag is carried into the arena.



It's a water world. (Xinhua/Yang Lei)



The digital torchbearer enters the stadium. (Xinhua/Huang Zongzhi)

LIVING THE MAGIC OF THE HANGZHOU ASIAN GAMES

Only after going back home, taking a few days rest and then switching back on to the 19th Asian Games can the magnitude of the achievement of the Hangzhou hosts really sink in.

In a nutshell, the Hangzhou Asian Games were brilliant!

Every morning was filled with anticipation of the action to be served up that particular day. Every afternoon was an opportunity to visit a new venue and see a different sport, sometimes for the first time. Every evening was alive with the buzz and excitement of top-class competition and the wide range of emotions that accompany such a spectacle.

The “look” and colours of the Hangzhou Asian Games were like a beacon of expectation; arriving at the venue, entering the arena, seeing the packed stands and the flags and hearing the uplifting theme song as the actors down below prepared to perform on the big stage.



Yes, at this point, the athletes did look like actors, with everything in place for the show and everyone waiting for their entrance.

This was the magic of the Hangzhou Asian Games – and the daily ritual that all those lucky enough to attend would surely be missing when life returned to normal back home.

There will be plenty of moments and memories that will put Hangzhou apart, however, and which will always make the experience something special.

It was the first Asian Games - and the first OCA games - after the covid pandemic which had forced a one-year postponement from 2022 to 2023. The 45 National Olympic Committees of the OCA responded in style to this sporting reunion by sending 12,417 athletes to compete in Hangzhou – over 1,100 more than the previous record of 11,300 for the 18th Asian Games in Indonesia five years earlier.

When the athletes arrived, they were transported to an Asian Games Village which played a huge part in the success of Hangzhou 2022.

It was not only the spacious apartments that impressed – no wonder every unit had been sold – but also the vast dining hall with a capacity of 4,200 people and a menu to suit all. Then there was the transport to get around the village, with free bicycles available and the ubiquitous, noiseless shuttle buses – open-sided to make it easy to hop on and off.



The mascot triplets brought fun and friendship to the Asian Games.



The people of Hangzhou really got behind the Asian Games, here at the Hangzhou Fuyang Water Sports Centre.

DAY AFTER DAY AFTER DAY

Organising committee HAGOC prepared 54 competition venues for the 40 sports, 61 disciplines and 481 events along with 31 independent training venues, while the Asian Games Village in Hangzhou was supplemented by sub-villages in the five co-host cities.

The OCA was full of praise for the Asian Games Village concept, with the Athletes' Village, Media Village and Technical Officials' Village accommodating three separate communities and with a total capacity of 20,000.

In summing up the Hangzhou Asian Games, the Acting Director General of the OCA, Vinod Kumar Tiwari, said: "This is one of the largest and greatest games ever, with over 12,400 athletes participating.

"The technical level standard has been very high, with so many world records and Asian Games records. From the OCA perspective, we are very happy with the whole games – technically, human resources-wise and standard-wise. We are very happy with it."

The OCA's decision to postpone the 19th Asian Games by one year proved to be absolutely correct – and it means there are only three years to wait, not four, until Aichi-Nagoya 2026.

(Jeremy Walker, Editor, Sporting Asia, OCA)



The organisers provided a spectacular setting for the equestrian competition at Tonglu.

Hangzhou 2022

Opening Ceremony:	September 23, 2023
Venue:	Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium
Opened by:	Xi Jinping, President, People's Republic of China
Closing Ceremony:	October 8, 2023
Venue:	Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium
Closed by:	Raja Randhir Singh, Acting President, OCA
Host City:	Hangzhou
Co-host Cities (5):	Ningbo, Wenzhou, Jinhua, Shaoxing, Huzhou
Competition Venues:	54
Sports:	40
Disciplines:	61
Events:	481
NOCs:	45
Athletes:	12,417
Team Officials:	4,975
Technical Officials:	4,700+
Media:	12,000+
Volunteers:	37,600
World Records:	13
Asian Records:	26
Asian Games Records:	97
Tickets Sold:	3.05 million
Ticket Revenue:	610 million yuan (USD 83.5 million)
20th Asian Games:	Aichi-Nagoya 2026, September 19-October 4.



Excellence, friendship and respect at the shooting.

CHINA DOMINATES HANGZHOU ASIAD WITH 201 GOLD MEDALS

Having topped the Asian Games medal rankings at every edition since 1982, there was never any doubt that China would finish on top of the table at home in Hangzhou.

Still, the host nation's dominance across the board left their major rivals wondering just how they can close the gap in the future, starting at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya when Japan will begin their challenge on home ground.

China's performance also set the stage for the Olympic Games in Paris next summer, when they plan to extend their reign over the world after conquering Asia so comprehensively.

For the record, China won 201 of the 481 gold medals available at Hangzhou 2022 – two more than their previous best of 199 gold medals at Guangzhou in 2010.

The host nation added 111 silver medals and 71 bronze medals for a total medal haul of 383.

Japan finished second with 52 gold, 67 silver and 69 bronze for 188, and Korea came in third with 42-59-89 (190).

There were exciting signs of an Indian renaissance when they finished fourth with 28-38-41 (107), while Uzbekistan rounded out the top five with 22-18-31 (71).

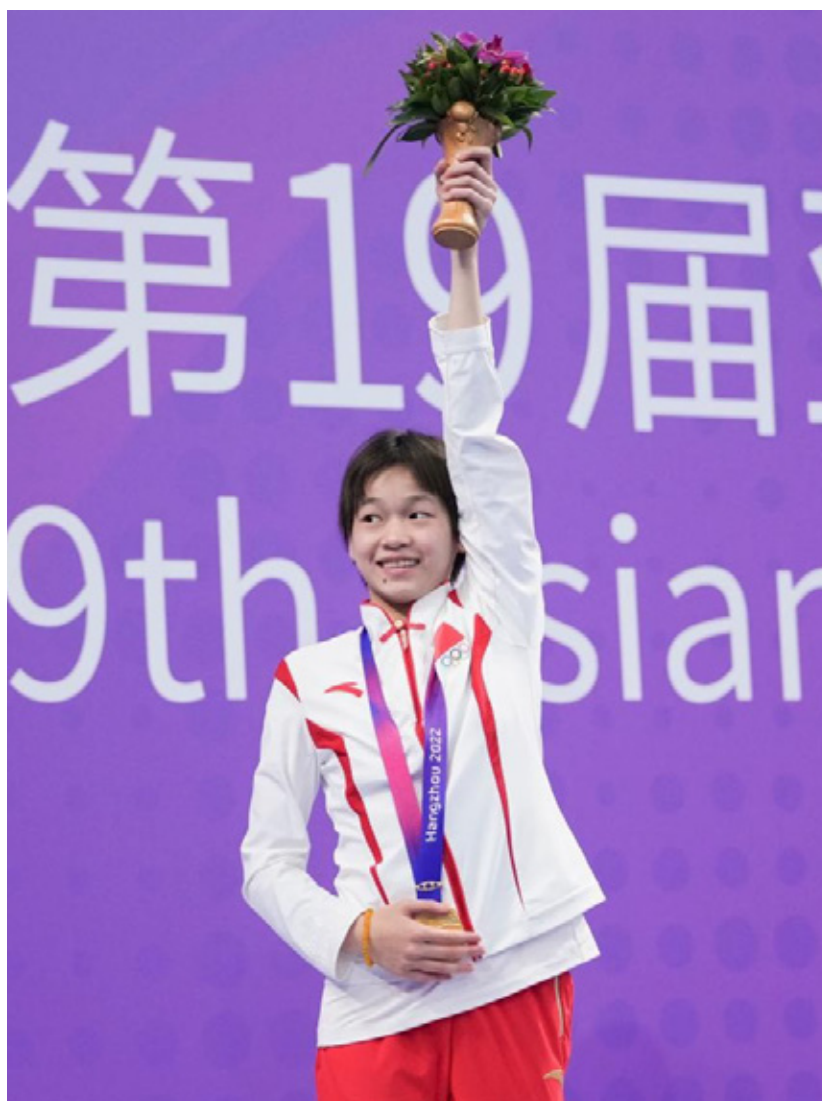
Making a welcome return to an international multi-sport event, DPR Korea finished 10th with 11 gold medals, 18 silver and 10 bronze for a total of 39 medals. Six of their gold medals came in weightlifting.

China was especially dominant in the swimming pool, winning 28 of the 41 gold medals on offer. At the previous Asian Games in Indonesia, China and Japan had both won 19 of the 41 gold medals.

Olympic champion Wang Shun commented: "Behind every medal, you have the hard work of science-based training sessions and a high level of professionalism going into every detail.

"This is the secret recipe of our gold medals – and, of course, we cannot forget the strong support from our government."

Looking ahead to next summer, Wang added: "My next goal is the Paris Olympics. I hope I can make every day count and get good results."







Quan Hongchan of China waves to the crowd after winning the women's 10m platform diving competition. (Xinhua/Xue Yuge)



Skateboard prodigy Cui Chenxi was China's youngest gold medallist at 13 when winning the women's street competition. (VCG/Getty Images)

Final Medal Rankings

Rank	Country/NOC				Total
1	China	201	111	71	383
2	Japan	52	67	69	188
3	Korea	42	59	89	190
4	India	28	38	41	107
5	Uzbekistan	22	18	31	71
6	Chinese Taipei	19	20	28	67
7	Iran	13	21	20	54
8	Thailand	12	14	32	58
9	Bahrain	12	3	5	20
10	DPR Korea	11	18	10	39
11	Kazakhstan	10	22	48	80
12	Hong Kong, China	8	16	29	53
13	Indonesia	7	11	18	36
14	Malaysia	6	8	18	32
15	Qatar	5	6	3	14
16	United Arab Emirates	5	5	10	20
17	Philippines	4	2	12	18
18	Kyrgyzstan	4	2	9	15
19	Saudi Arabia	4	2	4	10
20	Singapore	3	6	7	16
21	Vietnam	3	5	19	27

Rank	Country/NOC				Total
22	Mongolia	3	5	13	21
23	Kuwait	3	4	4	11
24	Tajikistan	2	1	4	7
25	Macau, China	1	3	2	6
26	Sri Lanka	1	2	2	5
27	Myanmar	1	0	2	3
28	Jordan	0	5	4	9
29	Turkmenistan	0	1	6	7
30	Afghanistan	0	1	4	5
31	Pakistan	0	1	2	3
32	Brunei Darussalam	0	1	1	2
32	Nepal	0	1	1	2
32	Oman	0	1	1	2
35	Iraq	0	0	3	3
35	Laos	0	0	3	3
37	Bangladesh	0	0	2	2
38	Cambodia	0	0	1	1
38	Lebanon	0	0	1	1
38	Palestine	0	0	1	1
38	Syria	0	0	1	1

Legend:  Gold Medal  Silver Medal  Bronze Medal

ZHANG EMBRACES IKEE IN MEMORABLE MOMENT

Competitors frequently embrace as a sign of mutual respect after a hard-fought battle.

But the tearful hug between Rikako Ikee of Japan and Zhang Yufei of China meant so much more following the women's 50m butterfly final in Hangzhou.

Zhang had just won the gold medal and Ikee the bronze – and the pair came together at the side of the pool following the official victory ceremony.

Neither could hold back the tears, and nor could many spectators in the aquatics centre on this moving and emotional evening.

Ikee was winning her first medal in international competition since recovering from leukemia, which had been diagnosed just five months after she was named MVP of the 18th Asian Games in Indonesia in 2018 for winning six gold medals and two silvers.

Zhang had supported and encouraged Ikee throughout her fight – and now was the time to let the tears flow and the emotion to be released.



Zhang Yufei of China embraces Rikako Ikee of Japan. (Reuters/China Daily)

The Chinese swimmer had earned her victory in the pool – and Ikee had earned her victory in her fight for life in a moment that transcended sport and highlighted the courage of the human spirit.

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner

Enjoy E-mobility @ the Asian Games with Geely



Zhejiang Geely Holding Group was founded in 1986 and entered the automotive industry in 1997. Since then, it has grown with a dedication towards technological innovation, talent cultivation, tempering of core strengths, sustainability. Geely has developed into a global enterprise engaged in the design, R&D, production, sales, and service of vehicles, powertrains, and key components. The Group is in the midst of transforming into a global mobility technology enterprise engaged in the fields of mobility services, digital technology, financial services, education, sports, and other business. In 2019, Geely Holding Group was listed on the Fortune Global 500 for eight consecutive years with annual sales of over 2.17 million vehicles, assets totaling over 330 billion RMB, and employing more than 120,000 people.

Headquartered in Hangzhou, the group owns several brands including Geely Auto, Lynk & Co, Geometry, Volvo Cars, Polestar, PROTON, Lotus, London Electric Vehicle Company, Farizon Auto, Terrafugia, CAOCAO, Qianjiang Motorcycle, Joma, Saxo Bank, Mitime Group, etc. The group and its subsidiaries have set up a global development network with R&D and design centres located around the world. The Group operates world-class manufacturing facilities in China, US, UK, Sweden, Belgium, Belarus, and Malaysia. Geely is also the largest shareholder in Volvo AB and Daimler AG.

In April 2019, Geely Holding Group became the official prestige partner of the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou. Under the slogan "Enjoy E-mobility @ the Asian Games with Geely," the Group will empower the games with green, intelligent, and humanistic technologies. Geely will develop a series of full autonomous mobility solutions by 2022 to service the 19th Asian Games.



GEELY
吉利控股集团

杭州2022年亚运会官方合作伙伴
Official Prestige Partner of the 19th Asian Game Hangzhou 2022

RAJA RANDHIR PRESENTS SILVER MEDAL TO DAUGHTER RIA

The Acting President of the OCA, Raja Randhir Singh, has had some proud moments in his long and distinguished career as an Olympic athlete and sports administrator.

But few – if any – can have matched his emotions on Sunday, October 1 at the Fuyang Shooting Centre.

Raja Randhir had the honour of presenting the silver medals in the women's team trap to his daughter, Rajeshwari "Ria" Kumari, making her Asian Games debut, and her two teammates, Manisha Keer and Preeti Rajak.

Raja Randhir first presented the bronze medals to Kazakhstan and then the silver medals to India. His 31-year-old daughter Ria was third in line, and father and daughter shared a small hug on the podium.

Later, as the athletes and medal presenters shared the podium for the photo shoot, Ria put her hands on the shoulders of her father – a touching moment for the onlookers.

"Yes, I am very proud of the fact that the team's won a medal and especially my daughter being a part of it," said the OCA Acting President.

"So, I am very excited, and to present the medals as well."

Raja Randhir said it brought back memories of his father, Bhalindra Singh, former President of the Asian Games Federation.

"In 1982 when I was a shooter, we also won the silver medal, the men's team, and my father presented the medals, so it's a good memory and leaves a good legacy for the family."



Ria puts a hand on the shoulder of her proud father, Raja Randhir Singh.

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner



杭州2022年亚运会官方合作伙伴
Official Prestige Partner of the 19th Asian Game Hangzhou 2022



A FUTURE WITH INFINITE POSSIBILITIES

AFGHAN WOMEN EARN CHEERS OF CHINESE FANS

Even though they lost all three Group D games in the women's volleyball competition, there was no denying the most popular team: Afghanistan's "Flying Angels".

The local fans adopted the team as their own, which was testament to the courage and determination of the players in travelling to China and making history as the first women's sports team from Afghanistan to compete in the Asian Games.

With their home country under Taliban rule, making it impossible for girls and women to play sport, the team had been training in Tehran at a 45-day camp to prepare for Hangzhou.

Although the players were disappointed with their performances in the defeats to Kazakhstan, Japan and Hong Kong China, feeling and knowing they could have played much better, they were able to show that the dreams of Afghan women are still alive and that they are welcome on the international sports stage.

The players and officials of the Afghanistan National Olympic Committee were full of gratitude for the efforts of the OCA, IOC and other sports organisations and agencies in securing

humanitarian visas in order for them to leave Afghanistan - and their ground-breaking appearance carried a symbol which women around the world could admire and applaud.



The Afghan women's volleyball team wave to supporters before their first match.

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner



BORNAN

SPORTS TECHNOLOGY

BORNAN is a worldwide state-of-art company within Sports Technology and Digital Transformation sector. Fostering long term valuable partnerships at a global scale, BORNAN gathers an extensive experience and proven results record in delivering world class sport events in every continent.

BORNAN Sports Technology delivers an end-to-end solution to sport industries utilizing top-notch project management capabilities, turning BORNAN into the perfect partner and supplier.

BORNAN's experience includes world class multisport events, as well as renowned single-sport competitions where IT Security and Data Integrity are elements of remarkable importance. Our highly qualified staff with +20 years of major events experience in the cross-section of sports, IT, project management, digital and innovation has previously worked at multiple international federations and participated in multi-sport events.

BORNAN's official headquarter is located in Lausanne (Switzerland), taking responsibility of the establishment and nurturing of strategic relationships with Organizing Committees, International Federations and Sport Associations, amongst other stakeholders. Operational headquarter is based in Madrid (Spain) and delivers systems development, digital and innovation tasks, commercial and account management, and event operations. Integration and innovation Testing Labs and a Showcase Room for clients is also based there.

A 3rd headquarter may be found in Doha (Qatar). Commercially focused on the Middle East and Asian markets, Doha office was established within the Aspire Academy, and leads our rapidly growing events portfolio and business in the region.

We are committed to our partners, deploying a customer oriented working philosophy including but not limited to visual recording and transmitting it to all the senses of the spectator in order to create the best storytelling to be remembered for life.

TORCH RELAY LIGHTS UP HANGZHOU, ZHEJIANG

In order to build momentum in the days leading up to the Asian Games opening ceremony on September 23, organising committee HAGOC devised a torch relay that grabbed the attention of the city and province.

Starting with a launch ceremony by the West Lake on September 8, the torch relay visited 11 cities in Zhejiang province and involved 2,022 torchbearers.

Every leg of the relay from September 8 featured local and national celebrities, including many sports stars in their home city or province, and the crowds really supported the relay all the way.

It was the perfect ploy to capture maximum attention from the media and public in the countdown to the 19th Asian Games, and ended with a special leg on September 20 when the 45 National Olympic Committees were all invited to send one torchbearer to run 50 metres. This gesture created a spirit of friendship, unity and camaraderie just three days before the opening ceremony, and had spectators lining the streets of the host city.

As for the opening ceremony itself, no one was prepared for the giant digital torchbearer striding across the Qiantang River and circling the stadium before joining Olympic swimming champion Wang Shun in lighting the cauldron. Magical!



Women's football star Wang Shuang (left) and Xinhua News Agency reporter Wang Qinou join the torch relay in Hangzhou on September 8. (Xinhua)

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner

2022

19TH ASIAN GAMES HANGZHOU 2022



361°

杭州2022年第19届亚运会官方合作伙伴
Official Prestige Partner of 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022

热爱造未来

CULTURAL TOURS REVEALED THE MAGIC OF HANGZHOU

With the competition dates of the 19th Asian Games running for 16 days from September 23 to October 8, plus a few days of preparation and adjustment, visitors need a break to their daily routine.

Hangzhou provided this in style with the choice of four cultural visits to entertain their guests and promote the tourist attractions of this ancient but modern Chinese city.

The tours, which included coach pick-up and drop-off, experienced guides and lunch in local restaurants, were a huge success.

Hangzhou's three UNESCO World Heritage sites of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, magnificent West Lake and the Archeological Ruins of Liangzhu City, tracing Chinese civilization back 5,000 years, were supplemented by the chance to see the impressive tidal bore of the Qiantang River.

The tours offered plenty of opportunity for exercise and fresh air and also to observe local life and visit shops for souvenirs.

The four tours offered by the organisers – and very well promoted and managed in the hotel lobbies – richly enhanced the Hangzhou experience and provided even more memories of a wonderful Asian Games.

"The cultural tours provided a wonderful insight into Chinese life and Chinese history. Everyone enjoyed them and had a great time," said Umedjon Yunusaliev, OCA Young Reporter from Tajikistan.



Local children greet the OCA guests on the Grand Canal tour.

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner



杭州2022年第19届亚运会官方保险服务合作伙伴

Official Prestige Insurance Services Partner of 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022

杭州2022年第19届亚运会 官方保险服务合作伙伴

ATHLETES' VILLAGE WAS KEY TO SUCCESS, SAYS TAJIKISTAN NOC

When asked for his impressions of the 19th Asian Games, Tajikistan NOC Secretary General Muhamadsho Abdullozoda has no doubts about the key to success.



Muhamdsho Abdullozoda.

"The Athletes' Village was very good, very compact," he said.

"I think it's only three minutes from everywhere you can get to the dining hall. The dining hall food is very good – and the dining hall is too big, and no lines for the athletes.

"The service for athletes inside the village, the shuttle bus is every three seconds. No line. No waiting. Any time.

"Also, the accommodation is very good, like a hotel. In every room they have a washing machine. For some Olympic Games we had a problem with soap or shampoo like this, but here they provide to all athletes enough of shampoo, toothpaste...everything you like they can provide to you."

Muhamdsho said the athletes and team officials staying in the village were also impressed with the spacious rooms.

"The buildings are very new, and no line in the lift. Also, the transportation from the village to go to the training or competition is very nice."

Muhamadsho has been attending the Asian Games with his NOC since 1998 and concluded: "Hangzhou was the best Asian Games in my lifetime, organised at a very high level."

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner

ICBC | Integrity Leads to Prosperity

Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (hereinafter referred to as ICBC) was established on 1 January 1984, through its continuous endeavor and stable development, the Bank has developed into the leading bank in the world, possessing an excellent customer base, a diversified business structure, strong innovation capabilities and market competitiveness. The Bank regards service as the very foundation to seek further development and adheres to creating value through services while providing a comprehensive range of financial products and services to 7,033 thousand corporate customers and 607 million personal customers.



The Bank has been consciously integrating the social responsibilities with its development strategy and operation and management activities, and gaining wide recognition in the aspects of promoting inclusive finance, supporting targeted poverty relief, protecting environment and resources and participating in public welfare undertakings. The Bank was ranked the 1st place among the Top 1000 World Banks by The Banker, ranked 1st place in the Global 2000 listed by Forbes and topped the sub-list of commercial banks of the Global 500 in Fortune for the sixth consecutive year, and took the 1st place among the Top 500 Banking Brands of Brand Finance for the third consecutive year. 12th September 2019, ICBC has become official prestige banking service partner of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022.



COMPETITION VENUES – OLYMPIC GAMES STANDARD

In the build-up to the 19th Asian Games, the common theme of visitors to Hangzhou was that the stadiums and competition venues were more than capable of staging the Olympic Games.

If China wants to bid for the Olympic Games again, Hangzhou is ready - now!

And so it proved, as the 54 competition venues for the Hangzhou Asian Games provided a picture-perfect backdrop for the action taking place as well as space-age design and eco-friendly operations.

Of the 54 venues, 12 were new – but it was difficult to tell which was new, refurbished or temporary as they all gleamed with the fresh and distinctive branding.

While the bigger stadiums sparkled in the autumnal sunshine, notably in the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre, it was some of the smaller, outside venues that exuded a special, carnival-like Asian Games atmosphere.

Two notable examples were the Hangzhou Fuyang Water Sports Centre and the Tonglu Equestrian Centre, both of which had been transformed into mini-villages and showcased the natural beauty of Hangzhou's mountainous landscape.



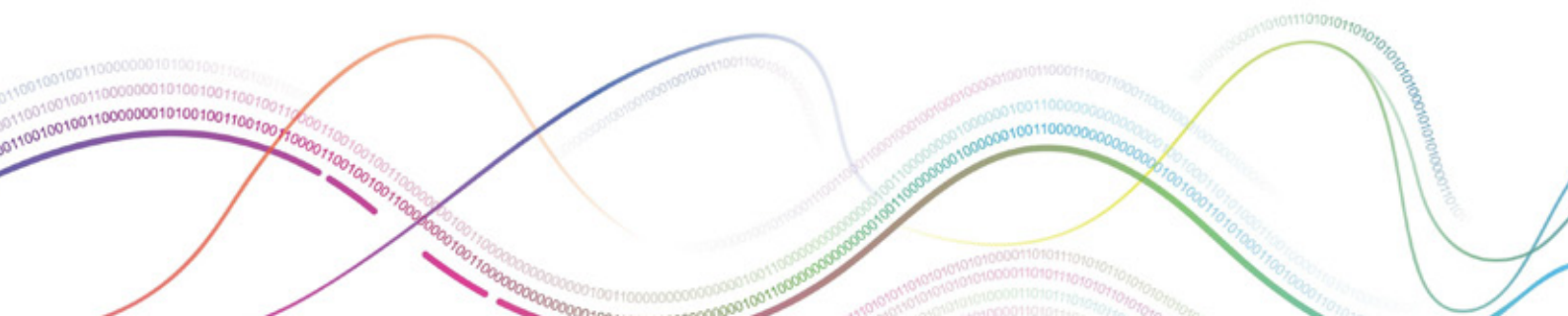
The Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre - world-class venues.

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner



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安全@未来 网络金盾护航智能亚运
Security @ Future
Cyber Golden Shield escorts Smart Asian Games



ESPORTS IS HERE TO STAY AFTER IMPRESSIVE DEBUT

One of the biggest talking points coming into the 19th Asian Games was the debut, as an official medal sport, of Esports.

Although Esports appeared in the 18th Asian Games in Indonesia as a demonstration sport, it was upgraded to a full medal sport in Hangzhou thanks to the professionalism and vision of the Asian Electronic Sports Federation and their Road to Asian Games campaign.

Hangzhou was waiting for Esports with a brand-new venue – the futuristic China Hangzhou Esports Centre – and with seven game titles offering seven gold medals.

For the record, China won four of those seven gold medals, Korea two and Thailand one, and Esports has already been included in the sports programme for the next Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya in 2026.



AESF President Kenneth Fok is pictured with OCA officials Song Luzeng and Wei Jizhong. (AESF)

For Hangzhou 2022, a total of 30 National Olympic Committees took part with 473 athletes competing in 219 matches in the following game titles: EA FC Online, Arena of

Valor Asian Games Version, League of Legends, Street Fighter V: Champion Edition, Dream Three Kingdoms 2, Peace Elite Asian Games Version and DOTA 2.

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner



长龙行 亚运情

FLY LOONGAIR FOR AMAZING ASIAN GAMES



BREAKING NEWS: BREAKING BREAKS RECORD FOR TICKET SALES

The World DanceSport Federation was delighted with the debut appearance of break dancing, or breaking, in Hangzhou, describing it as an “extraordinary experience”.

“Four thousand tickets were sold out in a mere 15 seconds, breaking the sales records of the most popular Breaking events,” the federation reported.

In attendance at the Asian Games were 25 B-Boys and 20 B-Girls from 13 countries and regions, who battled fervently to win a direct qualification spot at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. The silver medalists would also earn spots in the Olympic Qualifier series – the final phase of qualification for the Olympic Games.



Shigekix of Japan. (Getty Images)

“The audience was clearly stunned by the artistry and athleticism of the athletes. The outpouring of cheers grew to a peak from the Pre-selection on Day 1 till the Battle for Gold on Day 2,” the federation added.

B-Boy Shigekix of Japan and B-Girl 671 of the People’s Republic of China reigned supreme at the Gongshu Canal Sports Park Gymnasium, qualifying directly for Paris where the exciting sport will make its Olympic debut.

19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Prestige Partner



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赋能未来

PARIS 2024 PLACES ADDS TO ASIAN GAMES EXCITEMENT

With the Hangzhou Asian Games pushed back by one year and the international sports calendar chock-a-block with high-profile events, nine sports offered direct qualifying places for Paris 2024.

The nine were: archery, artistic swimming, boxing, breaking,

hockey, modern pentathlon, sailing, tennis and water polo.

While some of these sports, such as hockey, have used the Asian Games before to provide continental representatives in the Olympics, this extra edge certainly generated higher stakes in Hangzhou.



The Indian men's hockey team celebrate their 5-1 victory over Japan in the gold medal match – and direct qualification to Paris.

Boxing, for example, offered 34 places across 13 male and female weight categories, and the first Asian Games champions in breaking were also guaranteed a place in Paris.

Modern pentathlon, in a state of transition, provided 10 direct qualification spots, with five for the women and five for the men.

This extra incentive and opportunity pervaded these nine sports, and increased the profile of the athletes with Paris places on the line, even if the athletes could not finish on top of the podium.

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POOCH POWER LEAVES FANS BEGGING FOR MORE

There were many heroic performances on the track and in the field during the athletics competition at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium.

Intelligence was one of the key concepts of the Hangzhou Asian Games, and the robot dogs exactly embodied the vision of a smart Asian Games.

But the star of the show turned out to be a cute, robot dog – one of many ground-breaking, technological innovations in evidence at the Hangzhou Asian Games.

Demonstrating pooch power, the robot dogs served as porters in both the javelin and discus competitions, bringing back the equipment to the athletes. Not only could the robot dogs reduce manpower, they also reduced the risk of injury to humans standing way out in the field.

After completing their assigned tasks of transporting the equipment, these four-legged machines - also known as quadruped (an animal having four feet) robots - would wait on the sidelines for their next commands.



Robot dogs in Hangzhou. (People's Daily Online/Xie Shangguo)

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TEAM WELCOME CEREMONY SETS THE SCENE FOR NOCS

As expected, the official Team Welcome Ceremony in the Asian Games Athletes' Village was short and sweet yet full of colour and culture.

The official opening ceremony of the village took place on September 16, exactly one week before the opening ceremony of the 19th Asian Games, and was combined with the first welcome ceremony for the Chinese delegation.

The OCA's Acting Director General, Vinod Kumar Tiwari, complimented organising committee HAGOC for including three separate communities within the main Asian Games Village, for athletes, media and technical officials, and said this was a "first" for the Olympic movement and enhanced the spirit of unity and friendship among the participants.

After the opening ceremony, the Chinese athletes took souvenir photos and also were happy to pose for the media in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

As for the Team Welcome Ceremony for the visiting delegations, the athletes and officials were greeted by a cultural performance of drums and dancers wearing conical straw hats.

The fiery red and yellow costumes of the drummers and green and white uniforms of the dancers provided a bright backdrop for the delegations as they entered Flag Plaza in their own distinctive team colours.

After the raising of the national flag and the playing of the national anthem, the exchange of gifts took place between the village mayor and team leader, followed by the official photo shoot and media interviews to set the scene for the Asian Games.



Traditional drums sound the arrival of the delegation.



A charming cultural performance opens the ceremony.



China was the first delegation to be welcomed into the village, on September 16.

ONE ASIA CELEBRATION HIGHLIGHTS UNITY IN DIVERSITY

The Olympic Council of Asia celebrated 110 years of the Asian Games with an enchanting "One Asia" concert at the Intercontinental Hotel in Hangzhou on Sunday, September 24.

The event highlighted the unity in diversity across the Asian continent and featured musical instruments, song and dance which enthralled the audience.

It was a night when the OCA, organising committee HAGOC and the representatives of the 45 National Olympic Committees were proud to be Asian and proud of the role the Asian Games has played in bringing the continent together.



An enchanting performance.

The OCA Acting President, Raja Randhir Singh, said: "The Asian Games is not only about sports competition; it is a time to embrace our culture and our heritage."

The first Asian Games was held in New Delhi in 1951 but the roots go back much further, to the Far Eastern Championship Games in Manila in 1913 – 110 years ago.

There were also some formal proceedings to the evening, with the OCA Acting President, Chinese Olympic Committee President Gao Zhidan and Harbin Mayor Zhang Qixiang signing the host city contract for Harbin to organise the OCA's ninth Asian Winter Games in 2025, and the presentation of 18 Asian Games torches to the Hangzhou Asian Games Museum.

The evening also honoured the NOCs which had staged an Asian Games Fun Run in the build-up to Hangzhou and the sponsors and organisers of HAGOC's 10 Cities Tour of China, supported by Geely.



Raja Randhir presents the Asian Games torch to Chen Weiqiang.



Musicians perform "Sending All The Love".

One Asia finished with a debut rendition of the theme song "Sending All The Love", created and performed by leading artists from around the continent, as schoolchildren waved flags and sang along at the front of the stage to end the evening on an uplifting note.

○ At the gala dinner that followed, ANOC Secretary General Gunilla Lindberg spoke highly of the initiatives and efforts of the OCA to promote the Olympic movement and, as a mark of respect and gratitude, presented Raja Randhir with the ANOC globe representing the world's NOCs.

Sporting Asia celebrates sporting excellence at the 19th Asian Games and highlights some of the Hangzhou heroes.



Myanmar's sepak takraw team defeated Indonesia 2-0 in the men's team final to win the country's only gold medal of the Hangzhou Asian Games.



In a sensational finish, India's Parul Chaudhary overtook Japan's Ririka Hironaka on the inside to win the women's 5,000 metres gold medal, adding to her silver in the 3,000m steeplechase. (William West/AFP via Getty Images)



Erlan Sherov became the first judoka from Kyrgyzstan to win a gold medal at the Asian Games when he took the men's -90kg title.



Thailand's Arpichaya Yubol celebrates her gold medal in the women's individual golf competition at West Lake International Golf Course. The 21-year-old world No. 206 also won women's team gold. (AFP)



Chinese Taipei kayaker Chang Chu-han navigates the rapids to take gold in the women's single kayak (K1) at Hangzhou Fuyang Water Sports Centre. (CNA)



Kazakhstan's cycling superstar Alexey Lutsenko stands atop the podium for the third consecutive Asian Games after winning the men's individual time trial over 39.6km. (Kazakhstan Cycling Federation)



Iran's Reza Alipour Shenazandifard waves to the crowd after retaining the sport climbing men's speed title. (Xinhua/Yang Guanyu)



Yang Qianyu of Hong Kong, China races to the gold medal in the 139.7km women's road race in Chun'an County (Xinhua/Hu Huhu)



Malaysia's Sivasangari Subramaniam, 24, lets out a victory roar after winning the women's singles squash title – 15 months after being seriously injured in a car crash.



Saudi Arabia's Abdullah Al Sharbatly left Hangzhou with two gold medals after winning the team jumping and individual jumping competitions at Tonglu Equestrian Centre with a supreme display of horsemanship.



Indonesia ended China's hopes of a dragon boat grand slam by winning the men's 1,000m straight race at Wenzhou. China won the other five dragon boat races.



Asma Al Hosani, 19, of the United Arab Emirates wins jiu-jitsu gold in the women's -52kg category. (Xinhua/Jiang Wenya)



Kuwaiti shooter Abdullah Al-Rashidi equalled the world record with a perfect 60 hits on 60 targets to win the men's skeet individual title – at 60 years old.



Takhmina Ikromova of Uzbekistan is on her way to gold in the rhythmic gymnastics individual all-around final. (Xinhua/Cheng Min)



Vietnam hot-shot Pham Quang Huy celebrates his gold medal in the men's 10m air pistol.



Ri Song Gum of DPR Korea set two world records in winning the women's weightlifting 49kg title: 124kg in the clean and jerk and 216kg total after hoisting 92kg in the snatch. (AFP/Ishara S. KODIKARA)



Qatar's Olympic champion Mutaz Essa Barshim soars to gold in the men's high jump.



Li Yi became the first female Asian Games champion from Macau, China when winning the wushu women's changquan title.



Korea defeated Japan 2-1 in the final to win the men's football title for the third consecutive Asian Games.



Shanti Pereira was the pride of Singapore in winning the women's 200 metres title, adding to her silver from the 100m. It was Singapore's first gold in track and field since 1974 – 49 years ago.



Basketball-crazy Philippines ended a 61-year wait for gold by beating Jordan 70-60 in the men's final – their first Asian Games title since 1962.



Bahrain's Birhanu Balew smashes the Asian Games record in winning 5,000 metres gold in 13 minutes, 17.40 seconds. Balew completed a 10,000m/5,000m double in Hangzhou.



Baatarhuyag Otgonbold earned Mongolia's first archery gold medal in Asian Games history by defeating China's Qi Xiangshuo 6-2 in the men's recurve final.



Sri Lanka's Tharushi Dissanayaka, 18, celebrates her victory in the women's 800 metres. It was Sri Lanka's first gold in athletics since the Busan 2002 Asian Games.

OCA ACTING PRESIDENT OPENS HANGZHOU AG MUSEUM

The Acting OCA President, Raja Randhir Singh, took a break from the breathless action in the competition venues to open the Hangzhou Asian Games Museum on the morning of September 28.

Raja Randhir was accompanied by OCA Executive Board members, National Olympic Committee representatives and leaders of the organising committee HAGOC.

The museum is located in the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium and was completed before the 19th Asian Games had even started.

Thanks to the support of the OCA, NOCs and previous Asian Games host cities, the Hangzhou Asian Games Museum already has a vast array of attractive memorabilia and souvenirs

which is being added to on a regular basis by generous benefactors.

The museum is bright, spacious and well-planned and laid-out, combining the glories of the past with modern technology and interactive sections to attract visitors of all ages.

"I would like to congratulate HAGOC for this wonderful museum," said Raja Randhir at the inauguration ceremony.

"It really captures the history of the Asian Games in a very modern and attractive way, and will surely provide joy and entertainment for visitors for many years to come. The Hangzhou Asian Games Museum will serve as a fundamental part of the legacy of the 19th Asian Games."



Mao Genhong of HAGOC gives a welcome address.



Raja Randhir is shown around the museum.



Raja Randhir and fellow OCA Executive Board members attend the opening ceremony.

OCA YOUNG REPORTERS LIVE THE DREAM AT HANGZHOU

As part of the Olympic Council of Asia's Asian Games For All campaign, the OCA conducted the Asian Games Youth Reporter Project in association with five National Olympic Committees – Kuwait, Tajikistan, Palestine, Hong Kong-China and Mongolia.

The three-hour workshops took place between November 2022 and June 2023 and produced five intrepid students to join the OCA media team in Hangzhou. They all had one thing in common: a love of sport and the ability to communicate this passion through essays and news articles.



The Asian Games, with over 12,000 athletes from 45 countries and regions and spanning 16 days, would plant them firmly in the thick of the action and give them the chance to experience life on the front line of the sports media industry.

The OCA Youth Reporter Project began on September 23, the day of the opening ceremony, and allowed the students to attend the official reception at the InterContinental Hotel before boarding the buses to the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium. Already the students were networking with officials and sports administrators from their own National Olympic Committee and making plans to visit them in the Athletes' Village.

The magnificent opening ceremony, especially the parade of athletes, opened their eyes to the vast Asian continent and the charms of Chinese culture and the precision of their technology.

The first week of the Asian Games was spent with group activity, checking the competition schedule and booking the cars for

going to the venues and, more importantly, coming back.

The young reporters watched the action from the stands to see how the competitions are managed and to observe the positions of the media, especially the photographers, the TV cameras and the mixed zone where the athletes meet the media immediately after the competition.

MIXED ZONE MAYHEM

They also entered the mixed zone to see how this increasingly crucial aspect of media operations is managed, and interviewed athletes from their own country or region. They learned that there is no room for shyness or hesitation in the mixed zone, as the athletes will continue to walk past if there is no call or demand for their comments!

The official press conference, following the awarding of the gold, silver and bronze medals, is a much more formal and orderly affair, allowing the reporters to ask questions to the medal-winners while receiving simultaneous translation on earpieces as the conference progressed.

Then it came to writing the article, and recognizing the difference between a straight-forward news report featuring facts and comments and a personal viewpoint with their own observations and feelings about the sport or athletes in question.

With social media now providing instantaneous reports, within minutes or sometimes even seconds of the event finishing, the young reporters became aware of the need for speed and accuracy in their work.



From left Dana, Sara, Agatha, Umed and Shaikhah arrive at West Lake for an afternoon cruise.

After a hectic four days of group activities at various venues, the students were able to relax and join a cultural tour of the West Lake and Hefang Street in Hangzhou on September 28, organised by HAGOC especially for the OCA Youth Reporter Project.

MORNING, AFTERNOON AND EVENING SESSIONS

For the second week, the students were pretty much on their own, submitting their daily schedule, booking their own transport, following the competition, gathering comments and returning to the hotel to write their articles the same day.

Their morning-afternoon-evening sessions highlighted the non-stop work of sports media at such a big event and gave them an appreciation of the discipline and drive needed to keep going right to the end.

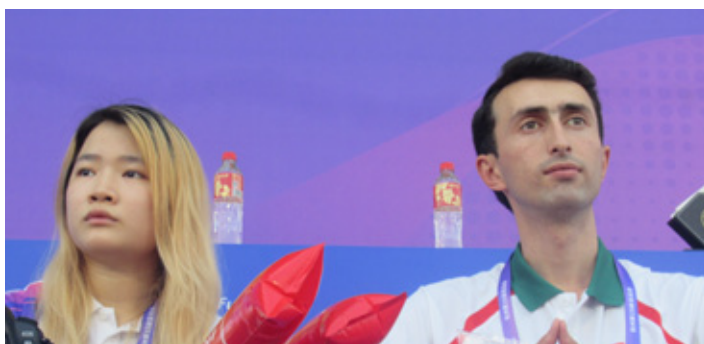
Thanks to HAGOC, the young reporters were also able to sample the delights and history of Hangzhou with the guest tours on offer to four places of interest.

Looking back, the days flew by and the young reporters learned so much in such a short space of time.

Going their separate ways was tough and sometimes emotional, but the OCA Youth Reporter Project had provided them with friendships and memories to last a lifetime, and enabled them to live the Asian Games dream in Hangzhou.

The five OCA young reporters were

Shaikhah Al Tamimi	(Kuwait)
Umedjon Yunusaliev	(Tajikistan)
Dana Thaer Khaled Kharaz	(Palestine)
Agatha Leung Nga Wing	(Hong Kong, China)
Enkhsaran Baasandorj	(Mongolia)



Agatha and Umed enjoy the rugby sevens medal matches.

THANK YOU, HAGOC

The OCA would like to say a big “thank you” to organising committee HAGOC for their support of the five young reporters during their time in Hangzhou.

The protocol provided was outstanding, from the moment they arrived at the airport through to their departure and journey home.

This VIP service included a personal assistant, a designated Geely car with driver and the attractive uniform provided by 361.

The tour of the magnificent West Lake and bustling Hefang Street, rounded off by a sumptuous banquet in a local restaurant, brought the five young reporters together and enabled them to bond and share experiences and customs of life back home.

The OCA cannot thank enough the effervescent Grace Gui for organising this special day and serving as a friendly tour guide and coordinator.

Also, the five-star lifestyle at the Hangzhou Marriott Hotel Qianjiang ensured a comfortable living and working environment.

Finally, the OCA thanks the five NOCs for hosting the Youth Reporter Project and showing great concern and taking care of their students in Hangzhou.



Shaikhah and Dana are joined by our tour coordinator Grace (right).

OCA Youth Reporter Project

By Shaikhah Al Tamimi (OCA Youth Reporter from Kuwait)

HANGZHOU ASIAN GAMES OFFERED GLOBAL INSIGHT, FAITH IN HUMANITY

Having spent two weeks away from home, immersed in a lively yet reserved culture, my experience as an OCA Youth Reporter had been an exquisite opportunity from start to finish.

As I reminisce my time in Hangzhou, I find myself emitting gratefulness for such chance to be at the core of one aspect I dearly cherish in humanity which is the athletic spirit in the face of adversities.

Despite some hardships faced with a splash of culture shock, the inner works of a sports journalist rapidly uplifted me as I alternated between venues and locations to witness the Games.

Since last year, a particular discipline I was eager to witness in person was Wushu, and the practitioners surely delivered awe-inspiring performances.

As I watch the routines unfold, I find myself almost in visual and spiritual harmony and trance, feeling the liveliness of each movement made by the Taijiquan player that evokes serenity.

The Games weren't just a mine for knowledge in the athletic field but a dazzling hotspot for meeting new people and friends from all over Asia.

After spending some time with HAGOC volunteers, I was able to have a closer look and feel of China's abilities in various fields in specific and the Asian ability in general.

From meeting the women Afghan volleyball team and voicing my utmost support in their path towards equality, to participants in the Games from officials to players and volunteers, the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou have provided me with a lifetime supply of a stronger stream of faith in humanity in the face of chaos and dualism.



Shaikhah and Dana visit the Kuka Deepsleep Box in the MMC.

JAPAN'S TEEN SENSATION ANRAKU CLIMBS TO GOLDEN HEIGHTS

In the midst of unexpected rainfall, Japan's Sorato Anraku climbed the wall to golden heights at the men's sport climbing boulder & lead final at the Shaoxing Keqiao Yangshan Sport Climbing Centre on Friday, October 6.

Rain fell shortly after the boulder session began and many climbers slipped when they attacked the wall, while others brought towels with them to wipe their shoes amid their climbs.

Solving all four boulder problems in miraculous speed and articulation, the 16-year-old rising star unsurprisingly obtained the gold with a total of 187.8 points (99.7 in boulder, 88.1 in lead).

Although he made it look like an easy climb despite the rainy weather, Anraku recalled his time during the competition.

"We waited for a while because of the rain. We got a little bit cold and felt a bit uneasy," he said.

"I took some risks in the lead session, but I also controlled my rhythm during the starting phase of the route."

Japan's climbing phenom displays one of the key elements of an experienced climber which is a calm and collected demeanor as they attempt to solve the puzzle to the top.



Sorato Anraku climbs to gold. (Xinhua/Yang Guanyu)

QATAR BEATS BAHRAIN IN GULF DERBY FOR HANDBALL GOLD

In an intense match filled with excitement and drama, Qatar defeated Gulf rivals Bahrain 32-25 to win the men's handball final on Thursday, October 5 and complete a

golden hat-trick following their victories in 2014 and 2018.



Qatar celebrate victory in the men's handball final. (Xinhua/Wang Peng)

With a red card given to Bahrain's Mohamed Habib Hasan Ahmed for a foul just 13 minutes into the first half, Qatar was able to bounce back in the second half to claim victory.

Bahrain led 14-12 at the break but Qatar produced a strong second half to draw level 17-17 and then go on to win by seven goals.

Bahrain scrambled to close the gap but Qatar's players were ever more determined and resolute in their game plan, especially in their fast breaks.

In the women's final, Japan upset defending champions and seven-time gold medal-winners South Korea 29-19 to win gold for the first time.

UZBEKISTAN CLAIMS HISTORIC FENCING GOLD MEDAL

Uzbekistan's women's sabre team made history by winning the first fencing gold medal for the country at the Asian Games on the last night of competition on Friday, September 29.

The Uzbeks beat Japan 45-42 in a tense, tough and dramatic final to break new ground for the sport back home.

The competition was fierce as Japan took the initiative through world No. 2 Misaki Emura.

Japan looked to be marching towards victory, despite 10 hits by Uzbekistan's Gulistan Perdibayeva in the third bout, but their progress was interrupted in the sixth round when Zaynab Dayibekova, the bronze medalist of the individual event, took on Japan's substitute Kanae Kobayashi.

The heat then turned in Uzbekistan's favour as Dayibekova outscored her Japanese rival 8-4 to astonishingly take the lead 30-29.

With quick and swift precise movements, Uzbekistan then held on to the advantage to make history with a 45-42 victory secured by Dayibekova.

In the men's epee final, Japan beat Kazakhstan 36-35 with the decisive point coming from individual gold medalist Koki Kano in a dazzling performance for their cheering fans.



Uzbekistan's golden girls. (Photo: Xinhua/Yang Lei)

OCA Youth Reporter Project

By Umedjon Yunusaliev (OCA Youth Reporter from Tajikistan)

FALLING IN LOVE – WITH HANGZHOU AND CHINA

When I first learned that I would be going to Hangzhou, following the OCA Youth Reporter Project in Dushanbe in April, I was absolutely delighted and thrilled.

Not only would I be attending the Asian Games and watching athletes from Tajikistan compete in a wide variety of sports, I would also be immersing myself in Chinese culture and learning more about the people and the history of Hangzhou.

For a long time, it has been a goal of mine to continue my education in China, once I have graduated from my university in Dushanbe, so the OCA Youth Reporter Project would be a big step in this direction.

Following my two weeks in Hangzhou, my resolve to live and study in China is even stronger and I am even more determined to follow my dream.

I can honestly say that I fell in love with Hangzhou and with China in an instant.

Whenever I had free time from my work as an OCA young reporter, I would go for a walk near the hotel to see every-day life in China.

I was in awe of the Qiantang River, watching the cargo boats transporting their goods in the peace and tranquility of the early morning, and also of the eye-catching statues, sculptures and other artistic exhibitions on display in the nearby park.

At night, the river and the Asian Games sports stadiums would come alive with lightshows and lasers, captivating young and old alike and creating a special festive atmosphere.

Only a short walk from the river and you were in the centre of the new, modern Hangzhou city, with its skyscrapers shining in the sun and the streets busy with people going about their business.

Wearing my official Asian Games uniform and my OCA accreditation card, I received a lot of attention from the Hangzhou people as I walked down the street. Even though there was a language barrier, I could sense the love and the warmth in their eyes, their smiles and in their calm and respectful demeanour, especially when taking photographs together.

I will never forget our day out by the West Lake and Hefang Street, where we were entertained by an ice cream vendor who teased us with a series of tricks before serving us with our ice cream. This ice cream show attracted a big audience, and the five OCA young reporters were made to feel like celebrities.

Further along Hefang Street I was attracted by a display of portraits and other drawings by an artist waiting for his next customer. I could not resist – and happily took my seat as he drew my portrait. It was ready in 30 minutes, and I will always treasure this special souvenir.

My best memories, however, will be forever stored inside my head and my heart – of the 19th Asian Games, of Hangzhou, of China and, most of all, of my beautiful friends on the OCA Youth Reporter Project.



Umed poses for a portrait.



Umed (right), Dana (left) and Shaikhah (second from left) are greeted by the ICBC multi-lingual robot receptionist Xiao Ai and her friendly colleague Xiao Mengyang. Xiao Ai has been programmed to talk in English and Chinese like a five-year-old girl when she welcomes customers to the ICBC outlet in the MMC and will even dance on demand.

TAJIK ATHLETES SHOW THEIR STRENGTH WITH SEVEN MEDALS

Tajikistan won a total of seven medals at the 19th Asian Games, comprised of two gold, one silver and four bronze.

Paris 2024 by reaching the semi-finals of the women's 57kg category and eventually earning a bronze medal.

What makes me proud as a Tajik is that we won all our medals in combat sports, showing our physical strength and a high level of technique due to hard training.

The two gold medals came in judo and boxing, the silver in judo and the four bronze medals in kurash (2), boxing and judo.

Our two Asian Games champions were Somon Makhmadbekov (men's judo -81kg) and Davlat Boltaev, who not only won the gold medal in men's heavyweight (92kg) boxing but also qualified for the 2024 Olympic Games. Thanks to his success at the Asian Games, Boltaev gained many new fans back home in Tajikistan and will be followed closely in Paris next summer.

A second boxer from Tajikistan, Mijgona Samadova, also qualified for



Davlat Boltaev (left) wins boxing gold for Tajikistan. (Xinhua/Wang Kaiyan)

DRAGON BOAT RACING THRILLS THE WENZHOU CROWDS

The Asian Games gave me the chance to watch many sports for the first time and to visit other cities in Zhejiang province.

This is why my journey by train to Wenzhou - the furthest of the five co-host cities from Hangzhou - to watch the dragon boat racing was a highlight of my Asian Games.



Dragon boat racing was spectacular. (AP/Eugene Hoshiko)

There was a real carnival atmosphere at the Wenzhou Dragon Boat Centre on the three days of competition from October 4-6. The racing was spectacular and exciting, as the rowers followed the pounding beat of the drummer at the front of the boat, and the large crowds produced deafening cheers.

This was more than just a sport in the Asian Games; it was history and tradition with a vibrant splash of colour.

It also showed the popularity of dragon boat racing in Asia, as 293 athletes from 12 countries and regions took part in the six events.

For the host nation China, their hard training paid off with five gold medals and one silver, while Indonesia won the other gold medal along with four silvers and one bronze.

HALA AL-QADI DELIVERS KARATE BRONZE MEDAL FOR PALESTINE

In an historic moment for Palestinian sports, Hala Al-Qadi achieved an exceptional milestone at the Asian Games. This young and talented athlete overcame barriers and challenges to secure the bronze medal in karate (women's kumite -68 kg) at Linping Sports Centre Gymnasium on Thursday, October 5.

She earned the bronze medal by defeating Chinese Taipei's Chao Jou with a score of 6-3, bringing home a historic medal that had eluded Palestine for 21 years.

This bronze is Palestine's second medal in the history of the Asian Games, following the first historic bronze won by boxing champion Munir Abu Kishk in 2002.



Hala Al-Qadi. (Quds News Network)

"I still can't believe I just took the bronze medal," said Al-Qadi, 22. "I came here hoping I would do my best, that I wouldn't get so nervous and scared. However, I was able to compete and win a few matches. Lost one, but we made it.

"I finally was able to get my country a medal. I hope I will be able to get the gold medal next time."

Before her participation in the Asian Games, Hala Al-Qadi prepared intensively by competing in the Arab Games held in Algeria in July when she earned a silver medal.

In her memorable bout for bronze, Hala Al-Qadi emerged victorious, securing a place on the podium.

Palestine has been participating in the Asian Games since 1990, but this edition is noteworthy as it sent its largest official delegation in its Asian Games history.

This moment was a source of joy for the Palestinian people, who celebrated this sporting achievement with great pride.

EQUESTRIAN EXCELLENCE BRINGS GOLD FOR SAUDI ARABIA

With pride and admiration, the four-strong Saudi team excelled in the sport of equestrianism at the Asian Games, winning the team jumping gold medal on Wednesday, October 4.

This moment will not be forgotten in Saudi sports history, especially in the realm of equestrianism, where the Saudi team showcased their exceptional skills and strong determination to compete at the highest levels.

As the saying goes, "Champions are forged from iron." This saying perfectly summarizes the journey of the Saudi equestrian team at the Asian Games and the remarkable success story of Meshari Al-Harbi and his teammates in securing the gold medal.

Meshari Al-Harbi expressed his joy, saying: "They are very happy to have won the gold medal today; this is what they have been working towards with their team for the past six months."

He mentioned that they trained in Europe to achieve this accomplishment and participated in numerous tournaments. He was chosen as one of the best riders to represent the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He pointed out that he has been practising equestrianism for 26 years and has won several league championships in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf region and Europe. He always strives to improve his performance.

Despite facing many challenges along the way, they achieved their goal. He mentioned that the competition was tough, especially against teams from Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Achieving perfect coordination between the rider and the horse in each stage of the competition was also a challenge. However, with rigorous training, they managed to overcome these challenges.

They had one clear goal: to represent their country in the best possible way and raise the flag of the Kingdom high. When they saw the flag waving in the sky, they felt immense pride and indescribable joy.



Dana interviews Meshari Al-Harbi.

BASHAR AL-TURK OFFERS GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR JORDAN IN MEN'S TRAMPOLINE

At the Asian Games on Tuesday, October 3, young Jordanian athlete Bashar Al-Turk dazzled everyone with his outstanding performance in the men's trampoline competition.

At just 21 years old, Bashar managed to shine and secure the sixth position in this prestigious sporting event.

Facing stiff competition from experienced athletes from China, Japan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, Bashar didn't hesitate to give his best. He delivered an exceptional performance in the trampoline competition, executing impressive moves and displaying remarkable focus and stability in the air.

Although he didn't clinch a medal, achieving the sixth position was a significant accomplishment for both Bashar and Jordan. This achievement serves as a source of pride for Bashar and motivates him to continually strive for excellence in his athletic journey.

Bashar expressed immense pride and joy in Jordan's participation in trampolining at the Asian Games for the first time, considering it an honour to represent his country in this sport on the Asian stage.

Looking ahead, Bashar aspires to win a medal at the Asian Games in Japan in 2026, and he believes that this dream is achievable. He is determined to elevate Jordan's name in the world of sports, aiming to represent not only his country but also the Arab nations at the international sports level.

Bashar had a message for young athletes: "Dare and take the first step. Try trampolining or any sport you are passionate about. Sports are not just physical activities; they are a gateway to self-discovery and an opportunity to connect with new people."



Dana interviews Bashar after his sixth-place finish.

A JOURNEY INTO THE WORLD OF CHINESE BEAUTY AND TRADITION

I'll start by saying "It was an unforgettable day" - and I truly mean it. I had a unique experience in this enchanting city with my fellow young reporters on a group tour on September 28, and we had a great time.

I knew I was about to immerse myself in a world of beauty, heritage and surprises. This trip combined stunning nature, unique culture and delightful experiences. Our adventure started with a visit to West Lake, a natural wonder that captures hearts. No words can describe the beauty of the infinite blue waters and the green landscapes surrounding it.

My boat trip left me in awe as I saw the islands that the Chinese had built. These islands stood tall, offering tranquil and breathtaking views. After finishing the boat ride, we strolled through Hangzhou's markets to experience the local cuisine and discovered amazing local flavours. This experience allowed us to taste a wide variety of delicious Chinese dishes, which added an unforgettable aspect to our journey.

As for exploring the city's streets and discovering its tourist and cultural landmarks, it was an essential part of my experience. Interacting with the local people and learning about their culture was a fundamental part of my journey. I learned their way of greeting and expressing gratitude. We all enjoyed taking souvenir photos, and the warm welcome from the locals made us feel like we were in our own comfort zone.

The end of the day in Hangzhou was exceptional, as I had the opportunity to savour fantastic dishes at a local restaurant. This dinner was a perfect conclusion to my adventure, as I tasted unforgettable Chinese cuisine.

In summary, this trip to Hangzhou was an unforgettable experience. It combined the beauty of nature, cultural heritage and the enjoyment of delicious food, leaving indelible memories in my life. This city has left me with a sense of wonder and a continuous appetite for exploring the wonders of the world.



Dana takes a trip down Hefang Street.

OCA Youth Reporter Project

By Agatha Leung Nga Wing (OCA Youth Reporter from Hong Kong, China)

A MAGIC MOMENT FOR HONG KONG, CHINA IN MEN'S FOOTBALL

When the stakes are high, always expect the unexpected.

This was the case when I attended the quarter-final of the men's football competition between Hong Kong, China and Iran.

The Iranians were the clear favorites going into the match, but there was a big shock awaiting them at the Shangcheng Sports Centre Stadium on Sunday, October 1 - China's National Day - when Hong Kong, China beat them 1-0.

Not only was this a major surprise considering the relative strengths of the two teams in Asian football, it also meant history as Hong Kong, China reached the semi-finals of the Asian Games men's football competition for the first time.



Celebrations for Hong Kong, China. (Agatha Leung)

The magic moment came in the 47th minute when forward Poon Pui-hin scored the only goal of the game. From this point on, Iran attacked relentlessly to try and find an equalizer, but Hong Kong held firm and their defence did not make any mistakes.

Although Hong Kong, China lost 4-0 to Japan in the semi-finals, and then 4-0 to Uzbekistan in the bronze medal play-off to finish empty-handed, I was fortunate and privileged to have witnessed a special moment for Hong Kong, China at the Asian Games.

EXPLORING THE BEAUTY OF WEST LAKE IN HANGZHOU

My visit to West Lake in Hangzhou was nothing short of enchanting. As a first-time visitor with limited time to explore, unburdened by the Asian Games schedule, I found myself captivated by the serene blend of nature and tradition.

West Lake's beauty defies comparison. Its tranquil waters and the surrounding verdant hills left me spellbound. Seeing the stone bridges and pavilions that dot the landscape are not just structures but storytellers, narrating tales of centuries gone by. Time seemed to stand still as I stepped into a realm where nature reigned supreme.

The words of the celebrated poet Su Shi rang true, "Desiring to compare West Lake to the beauty of Lady Xi, light makeup and heavy makeup are both fitting."

Despite my time constraints, the lake's serene aura offered a respite from city life. It created a tranquil atmosphere that fostered a deep connection with nature.

I also explored Hefang Street, which was bustling with tourists. This vibrant street was a microcosm of Hangzhou's cultural richness. Traditional shops selling handicrafts, local delicacies and colorful souvenirs lined the lively street, and the mingling aromas of street food filled the air. It was a sensory journey in itself, offering a taste of the city's heritage.

And then there was the cuisine. From squirrely fish to beggar's chicken, every bite was a culinary adventure.



Agatha enjoys the West Lake tour.

West Lake in Hangzhou was a soul-nourishing experience, a brief respite from the Asian Games schedule. It's a place where the chilling vibe harmonizes with nature's beauty, where traditions come to life, and where every moment feels like a cherished memory in the making.

RUGBY SUCCESS SHOWCASES CHINESE ATHLETIC POTENTIAL

Hong Kong, China's men's rugby sevens team clinched their second consecutive Asian Games championship in Hangzhou, beating Korea 14-7 in the final.

It was a significant win for Hong Kong that underscored the potential of Chinese athletes in the fast, physical and energy-sapping sport of seven-a-side rugby.

Cado Lee Ka-to scored the opening try in the final and pointed out that the victory solidified the notion that "Chinese are capable of competing in rugby". He expressed hope for more Chinese players to join the Hong Kong team.

Lee acknowledged that this championship was tougher to secure than the previous one in Jakarta in 2018. He noted: "Last time, there was no expectation. This year, people knew we had the ability to win."

The Chinese star was elated about the victory and stated: "After winning at the last Asian Games, we thought we didn't need to win again."

Lee also shared that he hadn't expected to compete in the Asian Games at the beginning of the year due to a shoulder injury. He expressed deep gratitude for his teammates' unwavering support. Coach Paul John had faith in him, as did his other 11 teammates. This trust in their abilities paved the way for their gold medal triumph.



The victorious Hong Kong, China team. (Agatha Leung)

With their sights set on the future, Lee and the team are now fully focused on the upcoming Olympic qualification event in November and a place at the Olympic Games for the first time.

With the kind cooperation of Asian Games official sponsor Canon, Agatha was able to use a professional camera during her time in Hangzhou. Here are three of her photos from the rugby sevens.



Fans of Cado Lee in the stands. (Agatha Leung)



Cado Lee being interviewed in the mixed zone. (Agatha Leung)

OCA Youth Reporter Project

By Enkhsaran Baasandorj (OCA Youth Reporter from Mongolia)

FROM MONGOLIA TO PARIS TO HANGZHOU FOR OCA YRP

When I put my name down for the OCA Youth Reporter Project to be held in Mongolia on June 22, little did I know how this would impact my life.

Being selected to attend the 19th Asian Games as a young reporter of Mongolia by the OCA was truly an honour, and I am delighted that the OCA covered and managed every step of my journey from Paris, where I am studying, to Hangzhou.

I spent six days with the OCA team before returning to business school in Paris, and, having a diverse group of young reporters from Kuwait, Palestine, Hong Kong and Tajikistan, while I represented Mongolia, was a unique experience.

I learned many things throughout my journey, as I had never been a reporter at such a significant international sports event before.

If I were to mention a few things about Hangzhou 2022, the first thing that comes to mind is how grand and well-organised it was. Given that people came from 45 Asian countries and regions, the event was incredibly diverse.

What left a strong impression on me was the stringent security measures at every entry point leading to a Hangzhou 2022-related area. They meticulously checked everything, from cars to bags, every time you wanted to enter a venue or village. These high standards of security were upheld thanks to the well-trained volunteers.



Sara (second from right) outside the Marriott Hotel.

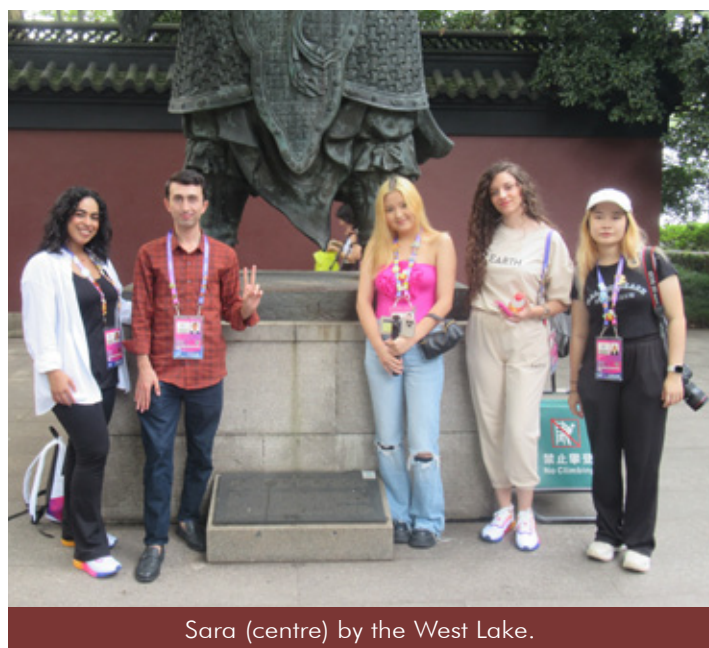
Volunteers were not limited to event areas; many were working in various capacities in Hangzhou, making it easier for our team as they guided us to different venues. The overall management of Hangzhou 2022 was highly impressive. The technology and communication systems were well-designed and helpful.

From the moment I arrived, our team attended the morning swimming heats, providing me with valuable experience. I had the opportunity to interview Mongolian female swimmers after their heats in the mixed zone. While I had seen mixed zones on TV or in videos, experiencing it in real life was very interesting. I observed some reporters sitting with their laptops on the ground in front of the TV screens when there were no athletes around. However, when athletes arrived, especially if they were famous, reporters would rush to secure interviews. I realised that I needed to be well-prepared to compete in this dynamic environment.

Since Mongolian swimmers were not well-known internationally, I had the chance to interview them in my native language. I interviewed four athletes, asking questions to each team member. However, I learned that it was more effective to direct questions to the team leader, as it reduced the chances of confusion or overlapping answers, especially since three team members were participating in their first international games.

The next day, I witnessed the sport of wushu for the first time and attended the official press conference with the medal winners to gather comments for my article.

This learning journey was truly unforgettable. Together, we explored many new things and gained valuable experiences at every turn. I am grateful for the opportunity to have been part of Hangzhou 2022 and the OCA Youth Reporter Project.



Sara (centre) by the West Lake.

MMC HIGHLIGHTS GRAND SCALE OF 19TH ASIAN GAMES

Visiting the Main Media Centre - the head office for 12,000 media - really highlighted the scale of the Asian Games.

The MMC covered four exhibition halls, and the OCA young



Sara (second from right) and her fellow young reporters outside the MPC.

reporters called in at all of them: International Broadcast Centre, Main Press Centre for journalists and photographers, Host Broadcaster Office for China Media Group and the Life Service Centre for rest and relaxation.

We were able to see how the different forms of media covered the Asian Games, with the TV studios in the IBC and the 400 work stations and private offices for media organisations in the MPC. It seemed like everyone was on the move.

Fortunately, I was able to spend some time with the Mongolian media and attend sports competitions to gain insight into their work.

As I conducted interviews, I learned how to formulate questions and provide answers effectively. When the media team interviewed me, I knew how to provide the responses they needed. I was pleased that I could express myself fully in the video. I also conducted an interview in the village to write an article.

Another highlight was watching a Mongolian athlete win a bronze medal in judo – one of our national sports back home – and also attending table tennis, my favourite sport!

LIFE IN THE ASIAN GAMES VILLAGE – A MONGOLIAN VIEWPOINT

The diversity of the Asian Games was encapsulated in the Asian Games Village, which accommodated 20,000 people in three separate communities: Athletes' Village, Media Village and Technical Officials' Village.

During my stay in Hangzhou, I had the privilege of touring the Mongolian team's residence within the Athletes' Village. The Mongolian team and their team leader warmly welcomed the Mongolian media team and me as I represented the Young Reporters of the OCA.

There was the opportunity to observe the activities of the Mongolian team, and it was striking how united they were. Athletes commonly visit therapists for meditation and massages. The 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Organizing Committee provided 15 volunteers to support the team. These volunteers are crucial in coordinating transportation because the competition venues are spread out across the city.

New Mongolian athletes arriving at the village were impressed by the warm reception and the impressive infrastructure. The village is secured and monitored, ensuring athletes' safety and privacy while preventing outside disturbances. The variety of food options was also appreciated, catering to the diverse preferences of the athletes.

Galbadrakh Khishigsaikhan, a Mongolian long-distance runner

participating in her second Asian Games, remarked that she encountered athletes she had met at the World Championships and her friends who had competed in various international events.

Similarly, Narandulam Munkhbayar, another Mongolian athlete participating in his third Asian Games, expressed his fondness for the scenic views from his room. During his morning jogs, he enjoys interacting with athletes from other countries, some of whom they have previously met at international festivals.

Tamir Khangal, a Mongolian National League volleyball player, appreciated meeting new people and making friends within the vast village. He commends the security measures and the multilingual greetings extended by volunteers. Khangal has explored many areas within the village and particularly enjoyed the commercial center, which features innovative robotics. For instance, there was a chance to play table tennis against a robot, which sets the village apart from other international games.



Sara's photo inside the Main Press Centre.

SWIMMING STARS ZHANG, QIN NAMED ASIAN GAMES MVPS

For the first time in Asian Games history, and in keeping with the promotion of gender equity, the Olympic Council of Asia named a female and male Most Valuable Player for Hangzhou 2022.

With the generous support of Asian Games Prestige Partner LoongAir, the OCA held a press conference at the Main Media Centre on October 7 to announce that two Chinese swimmers had picked up the MVP awards – and USD25,000 each in prize money.

China's "Madam Butterfly", Tokyo Olympic champion Zhang Yufei, was named female MVP for winning six gold medals in Hangzhou, while "Breaststroke King" Qin Haiyang earned the male MVP award for winning five gold medals and one silver.

The Chairman of LoongAir, Liu Qihong, also announced that the two MVPs would also receive a series of benefits in terms of free flights and other privileges from the local airline.

Neither athlete could receive their award in person as they were competing in a World Cup meet in Germany, but addressed the press conference through video call.

"Securing the MVP title for China has truly brought my pre-competition dreams and commitments to fruition," said Zhang.

"Throughout the tournament, I have experienced firsthand the tremendous growth and advancement of Chinese sports, the meticulous preparations guided by scientific principles and the spirit of teamwork that has propelled us forward.

"These factors have not only allowed me to compete on the global stage against top-tier international athletes but have also attracted world-renowned coaching teams to our homeland.

"Let us join hands in fostering a new era for Chinese sports, where progress knows no boundaries and collaboration knows no limits."



Zhang Yufei won six gold medals. (HAGOC)

ZHANG YUFEI

NOC: China

Birthplace: Xuzhou

Date of Birth: April 19, 1998

Age: 25

Asian Games Gold (6):

Women's 50m freestyle

Women's 50m butterfly

Women's 100m butterfly

Women's 200m butterfly

Women's 4x100m freestyle relay

Mixed 4x100m medley relay



杭州第19届亚运会
The 19th Asian Games

The Chairman of LOONGAIR, Liu Qihong.

Qin, who sparkled at the World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka in July by winning all three breaststroke events plus a mixed relay gold, showcased his prowess on home soil by securing five gold medals, including two relays, plus one silver in Hangzhou.

"The notion of being crowned as the MVP was not part of my pre-Games aspirations," said Qin. "My primary focus revolved around achieving personal breakthroughs and wholeheartedly dedicating myself to every event."

"Moving forward, I will reflect upon the lessons learned from this Asian Games and carefully plan my next steps. My aim is to strive for even greater achievements at the Paris Olympics next year."

The Honorary Life Vice President of the OCA, Wei Jizhong, headed a selection panel that included a representative from all

five OCA zones to make sure that the performances of all athletes from the 45 National Olympic Committees had been monitored.

Mr Wei said the award had been made based on five criteria:

- * competition performance, including number of medals and records broken
- * sportsmanship
- * the influence on public opinion
- * discipline
- * fair play.

QIN HAIYANG

NOC: China

Birthplace: Shimen County, Hunan Province

Date of Birth: May 17, 1999

Age: 24

Asian Games Gold (5):

Men's 50m breaststroke

Men's 100m breaststroke

Men's 200m breaststroke

Men's 4x100m medley relay

Mixed 4x100m medley relay

Asian Games Silver (1):

Men's 200m Individual Medley



Qin Haiyang won five gold medals and one silver. (HAGOC)



The press conference was held on October 7.

IOC PRESIDENT THOMAS BACH CHATS WITH ASIAN ATHLETES

The President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, paid a visit to the Athletes' Village in Hangzhou to discuss the modern Olympic movement with Asian athletes.



The IOC President meets Asian athletes. (Nur Laily)

The OCA asked the 45 National Olympic Committees to nominate one athlete to attend the meeting, which was held in the Chefs de Mission meeting room on the third floor of the NOC Services Centre on the morning of September 23.

In keeping with gender equity, the OCA asked NOCs from certain geographical zones to send one female athlete and from other zones to send one male athlete.

The IOC President hosted the informal gathering and stressed the importance of athlete input into the running of the Olympic movement at all levels. He also asked athletes to view their opinions on any matters of concern and to give advice for the future.

The IOC President believes that athletes and former athletes should be at the forefront of the Olympic movement – a view that is shared by the OCA and was in evidence during the Asian Games with the historic athlete elections for the OCA Athletes' Committee. (See Pages 44-45)

LAO NOC MOURNS PASSING OF HQ STAFF IN AG VILLAGE

The Olympic sports movement in Asia was united in grief during the Hangzhou Asian Games to mourn the passing of a member of the Lao NOC headquarters staff.

Mr. Phouthdamone Chanthalasy, 46, was working for the Lao contingent to provide daily reports and results of Lao athletes to media back home. He was married with two children.

"He died due to a sudden illness," said a statement from the NOC. "OCA, HAGOC, NOC Laos, his colleagues and Iran medical team tried to save his life to the best of their abilities, but could not save his life."

The time of death was recorded as 1.30pm on Saturday, September 30.

"The death of Mr. Phouthdamone Chanthalasy has caused us to lose a well-known and experienced sports reporter expert. The loss of a good friend and good father brings sadness and regret to the organisation, family, children and relatives, friends," the statement added.

"The organisation and staff of the Ministry of Education and Sports, along with all sports federation members, will remember your good deeds and work forever. His name will be firmly embedded in our memories forever."

A funeral was held on October 3 and attended by OCA Acting Director General Vinod Kumar Tiwari, OCA Hon. Life Vice President Wei Jizhong, members of NOC Laos and other SEA region NOCs, and HAGOC representatives.



RIP Phouthdamone Chanthalasy.



Mourners pay their respects at the funeral in Hangzhou.

JAPAN AIMS TO 'INSPIRE EVERYONE' AT 20TH ASIAN GAMES

On the eve of the closing ceremony of the 19th Asian Games, the 20th Asian Games in Japan came into the spotlight during a reception at the Marriott Hotel on October 7.

Representatives from the OCA, Chinese sports authorities and National Olympic Committees were welcomed to the reception by leaders of the Japanese Olympic Committee and AINAGOC – the organising committee of the next Asian Games in Aichi Prefecture and its capital city Nagoya in 2026.

After the welcome addresses, VIP dignitaries joined together in the traditional ritual of breaking the sake barrels and toasting the success of the 20th Asian Games in just three years' time.

JOC President Yasuhiro Yamashita, Aichi Governor Hideaki Omura and Raja Randhir Singh, Acting OCA President, were among the VIP guests.

Raja Randhir Singh gave a toast following speeches in English by Yamashita and Omura.

"We will take over the legacy of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games," Yamashita said, adding that the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games would be staged in a compact and sustainable manner.

"Our Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games will inspire everyone," Omura said. "We will express to the world our slogan: Imagine One Asia."



VIP guests gather on the stage. (Kyodo News)

The reception also introduced the rich culture, traditional cuisine, beautiful scenery and hospitality of the central Japanese prefecture, showcasing its readiness for a splendid competition.

Japanese athletes spoke of their excitement of representing the country in a home Asian Games, while the guests were entertained by a fast and furious karate performance.

Japan is set to host the 20th Asian Games from September 19 to October 4, 2026. It will be the third hosting for Japan, following Tokyo in 1958 and Hiroshima in 1994.



Raja Randhir Singh toasts the success of the 20th Asian Games. (Kyodo News)



20th Asian Games
Aichi-Nagoya 2026

OCA Athletes' Committee Elections

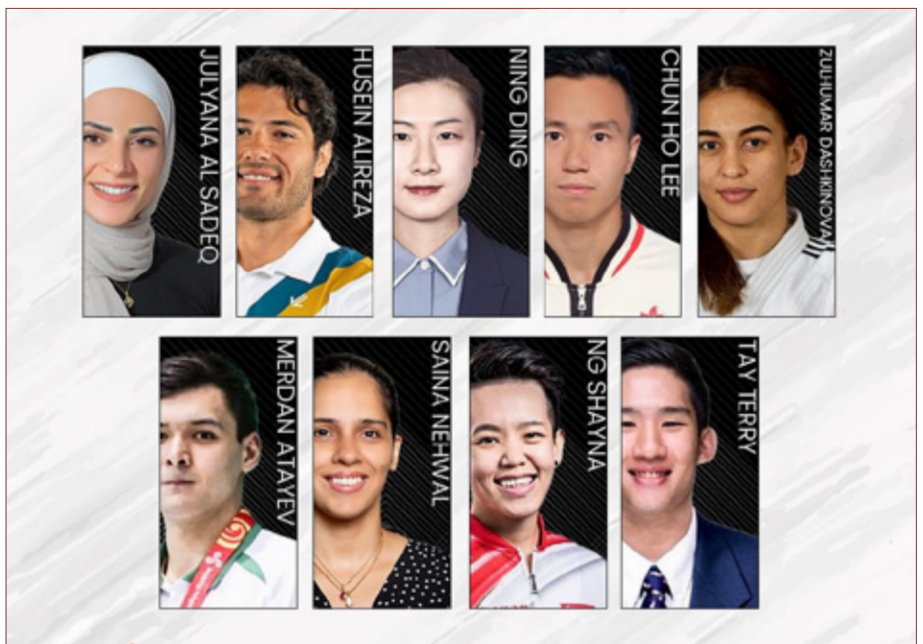
NINE MEMBERS ELECTED FOR NEW OCA ATHLETES' COMMITTEE

For the first time in OCA history, Asia's athletes elected the members for the new OCA Athletes' Committee during the 19th Asian Games.

The athletes were presented with a list of 26 candidates and had to select one female and one male athlete from each of the five OCA zones, making a total of 10 athletes to be elected.

However, with no male candidate nominated by the National Olympic Committees in South Asia and only one female candidate, this resulted in a clear run for Indian badminton star Saina Nehwal.

The voting ran from September 18 to October 6 and the OCA set up several attractive voting stations inside the dining hall of the Athletes' Village in Hangzhou as well as the five sub-villages and three residences.



The OCA introduces the nine athletes elected by their fellow athletes at the Asian Games.

At the close of voting, the OCA announced that 7,785 athletes had voted – 66 per cent of the total number of athletes taking part in the 19th Asian Games.

The Chair of the OCA Athletes' Committee, Mikako Kotani, said she was "delighted" with the high level of interest, not just in the voting but also in the number of candidates put forward by the NOCs.

"I can only say congratulations and good luck for your new action of the OCA Athletes' Committee," Mikako said in a message to the nine new members.

"I have been feeling like a mother of the Athletes' Committee members for a long time but now I feel like my new baby is born.

"So, I look forward to having the first meeting to elect the new Chair and Vice Chair and I am really anxious to hand everything down to our new Chair. But I will be always there...as a grandmother from far away, but best of luck for the future activities of the OCA Athletes' Committee."

The OCA's Tony Tarraf, who organised and coordinated the election, added: "I would like to tell them that they have a big responsibility on their shoulders, together with them for sure.



Tony Tarraf and Mikako Kotani attend the OCA press conference on October 7.

"I saw a lot of them doing their campaigning day and night for the last three weeks and, starting from tomorrow, we need to focus together on how we can move forward.

"We need to keep on doing the great job that is already done before with Chair Mikako, a remarkable job done in the last two or three years until this moment, and this is the reason why we are here.

"I am sure they will be doing a great job together as a team and this will really help again the OCA Athletes' Committee to support the athletes and keep on doing what we are doing, which is placing athletes at the heart of everything we do."

DING NING OPENS NEW CHAPTER IN HER BOOK OF LIFE

Olympic table tennis champion Ding Ning has embarked on a series of new roles in recent years, transitioning from an athlete to a Peking University teacher and from a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference to a member of the OCA Athletes' Committee, continuously opening new chapters in her journey of life, Xinhua News reports.

"I have participated in so many major competitions, faced so many people, but today there was indeed a moment when my mind went blank," Ding said of the moment the OCA announced her election as a member of the Athletes' Committee at a press conference on October 7.

This July, Ding graduated with a master's degree from Peking University and stayed on campus as a teacher. The multiple changes to her identity over the past two years have already taught Ding how to adapt quickly.

"Growth experiences have taught me that only by daring to challenge and rise against the wind can we see the light through the clouds. The insight gained from studying at Peking University prove this," 33-year-old Ding said, adding that her learning experience at PKU deepened her understanding of sport.

However, the beginning is always difficult, and joining the OCA is no exception.

"Because it was the first-ever election of the OCA Athletes' Committee, I didn't have any reference points. I had to feel my way, even though I have an outgoing personality. Introducing myself to everyone every day requires great initiative. I was shy and needed time to adapt," Ding said.

But with her cheerful personality, she quickly adapted to the rhythm and got to know many new colleagues during the candidacy period. "Candidates come from different countries and regions, with diverse sporting backgrounds. The process of communication has been a great experience."

Ding considers herself honored to be elected, saying that serving as a member of the Athletes' Committee will not only allow her to grow further but also provide inspiration and assistance to other athletes.

"Every athlete must face retirement and transition, so I hope that in the future, I can not only help more athletes pursue their dreams, but also provide more support in their lives and future choices," Ding said.



Ding Ning attends the OCA press conference. (Xinhua/Pan Yulong)

OCA NOMINATES THREE ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

On October 31, the OCA announced that they had added three more members to the newly elected Athletes' Committee for 2023-2026.

They were India's luge legend and six-time Winter Olympian Shiva Keshavan to fill the vacant spot for a male nomination from South Asia, and high jumpers Naoto Tobe (Japan) and Mutaz Barshim (Qatar) representing the host cities of the next two Asian Games – Aichi-Nagoya in 2026 and Doha in 2030.

The members are:

East Asia: Lee Chun Ho, HKG (karate, male) and Ding Ning, CHN (table tennis, female)

South East Asia: Terry Tay, SGP (gymnastics, male) and Ng Shayna, SGP (bowling, female)

South Asia: Saina Nehwal, IND (badminton, female) and Shiva Keshavan – IND (male – nominated winter sports)

Central Asia: Merdan Atayev, TKM (swimming, male) and Zulhumar Dashkinova, TKM (judo, female)

West Asia: Husein Alireza, KSA (rowing, male) and Julyana Al Sadeq, JOR (taekwondo, female)

Nominated members: Naoto Tobe JPN (athletics, male), host country of 20th Asian Games, and Mutaz Barshim QAT (athletics, male) host country of 21st Asian Games.

✦ The members will hold an online meeting and select a Chair and Vice Chair of the new OCA Athletes Committee for the term 2023-2026.

Closing Ceremony

October 8, 2023



The arena is swathed in green.



Larger-than-life pictograms light up the night sky.



OCA Acting President Raja Randhir Singh greets spectators.



One Asia.



The flags of China and Japan fly side by side as Hangzhou passes the baton to Aichi-Nagoya 2026.



The digital torchbearer leaves the audience spellbound.



The torch is handed over.



Goodbye, our Hangzhou hero!

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