

We have to work on the individual movements, on the one-on-one-play and on the general speed.” Interview with Wang Ming Xing, coach of the Singaporean Boys Youth Team

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Wang Ming Xing, playmaker of the Chinese Olympic Team in the 1984 Los Angeles Games and former coach of one of the most successful provincial teams in China, has been in Singapore for six months now preparing the boy's team here for the Youth Olympic Games.

You came to Singapore to train the Youth team and to get them ready for the Youth Olympic Games. What was your impression after the first training session?

Wang: After my first training session with the team I realized that they love handball, but that there is still a lot to do to get them on a professional level.

What did you focus on during the trainings?

Wang: As the team was lacking in experience, we had to use the first two months to train the most basic elements in handball. I focused on throwing and passing technique, the different movements in defense and attack – as well as one-on-one-play.

The next two months I focused on the team tactics. On average the Singaporeans are not so tall in size. That's why I decided for an offensive 3:2:1-defense. We also had some alternative training with 5:1 and 6:0 defenses.

During the last two months I taught them, how to play in competitions. But after all, it is very difficult to get a team ready for international competitions in only six months.

After these six months of coaching, what is your current impression of your team?

Wang: The boys are very hard working. They practice two hours every day, in addition to their studies at school. I can see that they have potential to improve and go further. There is a lot of development which can be done. Handball is still quite a young sport in Singapore, but it is successfully expanding, so you can bring the sport to the schools in order to find more potential handball players.

How do you think you could proceed in developing handball in Singapore?

Wang: The most important strategy has to be the promotion of handball in the schools. The equipment, for example balls, is available. Important at this stage would be to have videos, books, all kinds of support in coaching methods, to give us the possibility to educate teachers.

I think that handball in Singapore could have a similar development as football.

Is there also a girls youth team?

Wang: Yes and I trained them both in the beginning, but decided for the boys team to enter the Olympics.

Today we have the third handball competition day and Singapore played their second match on Saturday. They did not qualify for the semis, but did you achieve the goals you personally set?

Wang: My expectations were higher before the Olympics started. But after the first match day, I had to set a new goal, which I think we reached.

What impression do you have of the team after their first performance?

Wang: The team learned after their first match, that this level of competition is not simply playing or training. They quickly understood that they have to reach a more professional level and they are also willing to train harder and to continue the work when the competition is over. All my players are highly motivated, even though it is different in Singapore concerning sports. School and studies are much more important and comes first for Singaporean parents.

If you had to choose your favorite boys team at this Olympics, for which team would you go?

Wang: I would choose four teams: Korea, France, Brazil and Egypt.

Why these four?

Wang: Korea as they are fast in attacking; France because of their strength; Brazil and Egypt since they have strong team tactics in both attack and defense.

What are your main goals for the future, what can be improved to develop the players?

Wang: To improve the efficiency of the players, we have to work on the individual movements, on the one-on-one-play and on the general speed. To find taller players for the defense would of course also be an advantage. But mainly we have to create an own playing philosophy for Singapore, to reach a higher level in the future.