

Nepalese shuttler meets dream man

Losing at the Asian Games was not too frustrating for Nepal's No 2 woman shuttler Sujana Shrestha after she was able to "talk" to her idol, Lin Dan.

Lin, a Beijing Olympic gold medalist and three-time world champion, has a huge female fan base thanks to his superb badminton skills and good look. Shrestha was no exception, although there was no talking between the two

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per se given the language barrier.

"I talked to him. Oh, actually it was not talking to him. I asked to take a photo with him. Lin is my idol. He is a

great player and a great person," said Shrestha. "I'm really enjoying my stay here."

She lost her singles and doubles matches in the round of 32 on Tuesday.

"I could have done better," said the 22-year-old, who is also covering the event as a journalist.

Shrestha, who was raised in an orphanage, picked up badminton when she was seven and went on to become Nepal's second-best shuttler.

She plays in the country's badminton club but picked up journalism to support herself and is now a student at the College of Journalism and Mass Communication in Katmandu.

All quiet on the bowling front

The bowling competitions have been the 'quietest' of all events so far at the games.

Bowling began on Monday and goes through next Wednesday.

Hwang Sun-ok from the Republic of Korea won the gold medal in the women's singles and Filipino Engelberto Rivera took the men's crown after the first two days of competition. However, their feats hardly inspired a rush to the sport's venue.

"It is by no means due to a lack of spectator interest in the sport that the competition has been so quiet and deserted," said Pan Yuehong, a Chinese bowler.

"There are no seats at all set out for spectators ... only about 100 for the media."

The bowling competition



The Asian Games beach volleyball cheer squad entertains the crowd on Wednesday.

EDMOND TANG / CHINA DAILY

BIKINI GIRLS DRIVE BEACH BOYS TO DISTRACTION

Bikini-clad Asian Games beach volleyball cheer squads are proving too hot for some competitors who claim the scantily-clad dancers make it impossible to concentrate.

"They had an effect on how we played," Yemen beach volleyballer Adeb Mahfoudh told the Tianfu Morning News on Wednesday.

"I think they had something to do with our losing the match."

The Yemeni men's team lost its clash on Tuesday to an apparently more focused team from Indonesia, the paper said.

Organizers of the Guangzhou Asiad have hired four cheerleader squads, each made up of eight girls in swimsuits, to entertain fans during breaks in the beach volleyball

action, said the newspaper.

Besides cheering on the already capacity crowds, the girls also perform routines that include traditional Chinese elements including martial arts and fan dancing.

"These girls are very beautiful. With them here, more people will pay attention to beach volleyball," said Mahfoudh.

"If I can, I hope to watch them perform at the next match."

During an "inspection" tour on Tuesday, Kenneth Fok, deputy delegation head of Team Hong Kong — and reportedly romantically involved with China's Olympic diving champion Guo Jingjing — said the beach volleyball venue was "orderly" and the rally team was "sexy", the paper said.



GOH CHAI HIN / AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Frederick Ong of the Philippines bowls a throw during the men's singles competition on Monday.

only allows for the presence of athletes, coaches, two officials from each team and the media. Even friends and relatives of the athletes are banned from attending the event.

"I don't think our performances have been altered without the encouragement of our fans," Pan said. "We are used to the absence of spectators during training and we can't pay too

much attention to the spectators during competitions."

A loser at Asiad, a hero in Timor-Leste

"I just came here to represent my country," said Barros Jacinto after finishing at the bottom of the men's weightlifting 77kg category on Tuesday.

Barros comes from Timor-Leste, a small country in South-east Asia with a population of 1.1 million.

Barros finished the snatch and jerk with a total of 160kg in Group B, which consists of lower-level lifters. His performance was 80kg lighter than four of the six lifters, and 50kg behind women's 48kg winner Wang Mingjuan of China.

Barros said he was happy just to have been selected.

"I'm really proud of that. It's my first time participating at such a big event," said the father of two.

"My family and my friends in Timor-Leste were watching the

competition live on TV. They are also proud of me and my teammates," he said.

Timor-Leste sent 29 athletes to participate in nine sports in Guangzhou. Barros, who works as a security guard back home, only started weightlifting three months before the Guangzhou Games.

"I hold the second-best record for power lifting in my county, so I wanted to try weightlifting, a sport that combines not only power but also technique," he said.

Looking to the future, he said he would continue pursuing the sport.

"I now recognize the gap between the standard level and where I am. I'll go on following my dream no matter what," he said.

Reporter rings up a fine at the chess

A local reporter was fined 2,000 yuan when his mobile phone rang during the chess tournament on Tuesday.

He was ushered out of the venue by the chief referee and told he would be fined \$300.

"According to the rules, no players are allowed to be late for the competition and no mobile phones are allowed to be used during the competition," said the chief referee.

The reporter was not the first person to be punished because of a mobile phone violation.

A foreign chess team captain and two staff at the chess academy were also driven out of the competition's venue by the chief referee when their mobile phones rang during the tense event.



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