

„We want our team to do the right thing at the right time“, Mary Ang Ser Hui talks to the IHF about the Handball Federation of Singapore and their expectations for this first Youth Olympic Games.

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Mary Ang is not only President of the Singapore Handball Federation, she is also founder of the young male handball team who will represent the host country at the YOG for the first time ever in a handball tournament.

The Handball Federation of Singapore (HFS) is very young. When was it recognized by the government?

Ang: HFS was recognized as a National Sports Association and was affiliated to Singapore National Olympic Committee in 2009 and it became an official member of the IHF at the 2009 Congress which took place in Cairo.

So the YOG are the first international competition for the Singapore boy's handball team. How did you find and build up this team?

Ang: We started in 2008 having friends teaching handball in schools and sending their students to the federation. We actually had girls and boys coming from different sports and started to coach them. As the training was not enough we decided in 2009 to advertise in different newspapers to recruit more people in the specific age groups.

How many young people came?

Ang: More than 100 came and they all started more or less on the same basis. So we built up five teams, three boys and two girls, and distinguished them in the Olympic colors.

What about the coaches? How did you choose them?

Ang: We didn't have professional coaches and took them from outside Singapore. The teams were in intensive training for 3 months, so we could choose the best girls and the best boys teams in July 2009.

What were the requirements of your selection?

Ang: It is not only about performance. Their entire attitude, the team spirit and attendance of the players are important for us.

So in July 2009 you had selected the final squads?

Ang: Yes, we called them the gold and silver teams and started to train them by organizing friendly games in Hong Kong, Korea, China, where they could play in the adult category. We pushed them to the limits.

This sounds like you are having high expectations in your team?

Ang: We are not putting too much pressure on them. We want them to have fun but also to do the right thing at the right time.

And how will it go on after the Youth Olympic Games?

Ang: Of course we will go on developing handball in schools. It takes time but it is all about passion, and the quantity defines the quality.