

Info Brochure Women's Junior World Championships in Korea 2010

Team information

Group A:

Norway:

It was a total surprise as Norway had missed the Women's Junior World Championships 2008 in Macedonia, as the Northern Europeans represented absolute world class in women's and women's juniors handball. But one year later the Norwegians were on the throne again: In Hungary Norway remained unbeaten in the whole U19 European Championship in eight matches (seven victories, one draw) and won the title well deserved by beating the host in the final 29:27 – the dishonour of missing the WCH was tilted. So Norway was directly qualified for the WCH in Korea as the European Champion. For them it's the twelfth participation at a Juniors World Championship. In 2005 the girls from the current Olympic Champion nation ranked second as their best ever WCH result, after Norway had lost the final in the Czech Republic against Russia. In 1995 and 2003 Norway won the Bronze medal at the Junior's WCH, in 1997 they ranked fourth. The Norwegian coaches Valery Putans and Tom Morten Svendsen can count on a very strong and efficient junior's programme in Norway, starting with very young age categories. Nearly all players of the current team for Korea play in the first Norwegian league, one of the best in whole Europe. Nora Moerk even played in the EHF Champions League final with her club Larvik and is member of the women's national team.

France

The success of women's handball in France began with today's women's national coach Olivier Krumbholz. He started his campaign for improving women's youth and junior teams in the 1990's. And within less than a decade the French women had climbed to the top. In 2003 they became Women's World Champions – and aside their junior programme improved and players like current World Handball Player of the year, Alison Pineau started their international career in the younger age categories. Despite their traditional strong youth and junior teams France never won a medal at Women's Junior WCH, even as they now participate for the twelfth time, the same as Norway. The best ever result was place 5 in 1995 and place 7 at the last WCH in Macedonia in 2008. In 2009 France missed the EURO semi final by losing against later-on finalists Norway and Hungary. But then France didn't have any problems in qualifying for Korea by winning their qualification tournament with three victories against Croatia, Iceland and surprisingly against Romania. France is known for physical strong players like Wendy Lawson or Eva Turpin from the French record champion Metz HB. The plan of head coach Paul B. Landure is to prepare those players for the women's national team. The WCH in Korea is an integral step for this challenge.

Germany

It was the biggest surprise at the Junior's WCH in Macedonia 2008, when the German girls reached the final and took the title for the first time ever in history by winning the final against Denmark very closely 22:21. Three of those reigning World Champions are still in the team of new coach Andrea Schwabe: Marlene Zapf, Kim Naidzinavicius and Julia Wenzl (all playing for first league clubs). But as the title holder isn't qualified directly for the next WCH the Germans had to play a qualification tournament, as they missed the medals at the EURO 2009 as the fourth ranked team. But as this tournament Germany only lost against the Netherlands and qualified as second team from this group for Korea. Including the former teams of FRG and GDR it's the 20th time a German team is qualified for a Women's Juniors World Championship. And both former nations struggled hard to win the title, but never reach this objective before 2008. The best result of the unified German team was the Bronze medal

in 2001, in 1979 and 1983 the GDR won the Silver medal after losing the finals each against the Soviet Union, the best result for FRG was the Bronze medal in 1987. The current team seems to be one of the favourites in Korea, but the Preliminary Round with matches against three European top teams looks very hard, so the first objective is to reach the Main Round. Interesting fact: Two of the German Juniors already play abroad: Pia Hildebrand for the current Champions League winner Viborg (Denmark) and Caroline Schmele in Metz (France).

Tunisia

Women's handball is on a straight way up in Tunisia: Specially the good performance of the women's team at the World Championship 2009 (14th rank) gives hopes for the future, as this team is already completely regenerated with young players. But despite this fact the women's junior team should be another source for the upcoming generation of Tunisian handball. They qualified for Korea as the Silver medallist of the African Junior's Championships, only beaten by great favourite Angola in the finals. For Tunisia it's the third participation at a Junior's WCH after 2003 (13.) and 2005 (18.). But the chances to reach the Main Round look very low, as the Northern Africans have to play in the strongest of the four groups in the Preliminary Round against top teams like Norway, France, Germany and Serbia – and only the three best ranked teams qualify for the Main Round. Most of the Tunisian juniors play for the clubs from ASM, ASF Sahel, ASF Tebouda and SCMA. As the top players are ought to play abroad to improve their skills and learn highest international standard, even two Tunisian juniors in the team of head coach Samir Ghorbel already play in France: Chaima Kablouti and Hedia Cherif.

Serbia

In former times Yugoslavia was one of the worldwide leading nations in men's and women's handball – now Serbia is the successor of those teams. Yugoslavia was the first ever Women's Juniors World Champion in 1977, as they beat Soviet Union in the final in Romania. Later on the Yugoslavian teams imprinted the handball – and the Juniors WCH: In 1981 they won Silver after losing the finals against Soviet Union, in 1979 they took the Bronze medal, as they won the Bronze final against Hungary. Another two times (1983 and 1989) they reached the semi finals, but didn't win a medal. After the Yugoslavian wars the country was split and for some years the team (and nation) was called Serbia and Montenegro – but hasn't been as successful as before. The best rank at a Junior's WCH was place 8 in 1999 after the team had missed three consecutive WCHs. As also Montenegro founded their own state and national team Serbia is playing on their own since some years. In 2009 they ranked eleventh at the EURO, but now they qualified for Korea as the clear winner of the strong qualification group against Poland, Czech Republic and Ukraine (three victories in three matches). The team of head coach Zlatko Causevic consists mostly of players from the Serbian top clubs Red Star and Knjas Milos. Top player is Dragana Cvijic, who already plays for the women's team and is one of the key players of Slovenian former Champions League winner Krim Ljubljana on club level. She already scored nearly 400 goals in the younger age national teams.

Greenland

They were the last team to qualify for the Women's Juniors WCH in Korea: Greenland took the chance to gain international experience, even as they hadn't been qualified directly as a representative of the Pan American continental federation. Normally the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico had been the qualified teams after the Pan American Junior's Championship in Buenos Aires, but they withdrew their teams from the participation in Korea. Mexico took the chance and Greenland later-on, too after ranking seventh in the continental qualification. The history of handball in Greenland (officially a part of Denmark) has improved in the last years: For the Women's Junior teams it's the first participation ever, but in 2001 the women

from Greenland had qualified for the WCH in Italy, the men's juniors had participated at the WCH in Egypt and the men's national team already took part in three WCH tournament. Most of the current players of the women's junior team play for Danish clubs – in contrast to those who still play on the arctic island at the club of GSS. The best players are Nivi Wille and Mia Rasmussen, playing for the Danish top club Silkeborg, coach of the team is Preben Clausen.

Group B:

Korea

For the second time after 1985 Korea's hosting a Women's Juniors World Championship – and the hopes are very high that those Korean girls win the WCH title for the first time. The Asian champion, who was directly qualified for this tournament as the organizer, was very close to the title, as they had reached the finals three times before: But on home soil in 1985, in 1989 and in 1991 the Soviet team beat them in the finals and Korea took the Silver medal. But Korea is the record winner in Bronze medals at Women's Junior WCHs, as they won the Bronze final four times – in 1983, 1993, 2005 and 2008 in Macedonia. Despite the fact that Korea's first appearance at a Junior's WCH was in 1981 they currently rank third in the eternal table of Junior WCH, close below Denmark. If Korea reach the semi final on home soil they overtake the Danish team and would be second in the eternal ranking. Korea aside is the only nations with took part in the last 15 consecutive Junior's WCH tournaments since 1981. In 2008 the Asian top handball nation was close to the finals again, but lost the semi against Denmark 28:32, in the Bronze final in Ohrid they beat Spain very clearly 29:22 and took their seventh medal at Juniors WCH. Now it's time for gold – as in 1985 when hosting the WCH for the first time the team was so close to the title after leading 16:9 at the break against the Soviets, but in the end they lost 24:27. In whole women's handball Korea is the clear number one in Asia and is part of the absolute world class since 1984, when the women won the first medal at Olympics, four years later the colour of the medal was Gold, the same as at the Women's WCH 1995. Thanks to their brilliant and successful youth programme the future is clearly focused on more medals in all age categories.

Netherlands

It was in 2005 when the Dutch women's handball celebrated their biggest success ever: In St. Petersburg they beat Germany in the placement match of the Women's WCH and reached the fifth place, the best ever ranking at IHF tournaments ever. The women's juniors hadn't been so successful, as their best place was rank 8 in 1979, but they're constantly participants of Juniors WCH – currently for the ninth time. And in 2010 they have good chances to increase their current ranking in the eternal Junior's WCH table (place 15): Since some years the Dutch junior programme is improving, a lot of players went to the German first league very early to gain international experience – the same will three of the current players do in the next season. The objective of the Netherlands isn't only a rank among the ten best teams, but to build up a strong (and young) team for the European Championships 2012, hosted by the Netherlands. The team of head coach Monique Tijstermann played a highly strong role in the qualification tournament – and won the competition with three victories, including one against WCH title holder Germany. At the last Juniors EURO in 2009 they ranked eight in the end very unlucky: Being equal in points with Russia after the Main Round they missed the semi finals by the weaker goal difference. All players are currently at Dutch clubs, but as before they'll be launched to Germany or Denmark to improve. This will be the same for the current generation. Top player is Laura van der Heijden, who scored 333 goals in 99 international matches in the younger age teams.

Argentina

It's the third participation at a Women's Junior WCH for Argentina, but this time they start with a lot of self assurance. On home soil they won the traditional top duel of Pan American continental championships against their old enemy Brazil clearly 30:26 (16:9), which didn't only mean the continental title but a lot of prestige. Argentina is the top ranked Pan American team in Korea and they have good chances to reach the Main Round of the each three best ranked teams. Against Netherlands and Korea they're the clear outsiders, but against China and Croatia they can be the lucky winners – but it will be hard struggle. But if Argentina would qualify for the Main Round of the 12 best teams it would already be their best ranking – as they did the same (place 12) in 2008 in Macedonia. The South Americans lost all matches in the Main Round, but then were close to beat Angola in the placement match 11/12. Coach of the team is Miguel Interligge, and he can count on a fast match play. Most experienced player is Luciana Mendoza with 78 international matches, one of the girls – Lucia Giambernardino - is already playing abroad for the Spanish club Lleida.

China

It's a long and winding way to implement handball in China, but the last two years meant a great progress thanks to the Olympics in Beijing and the Women's WCH in the Jiangsu region. Now the improvement in women's handball is going on and on. China is one of the constant participants at Women's Junior WCH as they now play for the 14th time as they missed only the first two tournaments in 1977 and 1979 and the last one 2008 in Macedonia. In Korea they start as the third best ranked team from Asia, below host Korea and Japan. Despite their steady participation the best rank ever at a Junior WCH was the sixth place, but this three times in 1981, 1985 and 1989. The new generation of Chinese women's handball is imprinted by typical Asian fast match play with strong wing players, as they can't count on physical strong players, even as they have some tall back court players with more than 180 cm in their team. Head coach Li Lirong can count on "blocks" from the three big clubs, as 12 of his 18 nominated players come the clubs Shanghai, Beijing and Anhui – so the team is well-rehearsed for the WCH.

Democratic Republic of Congo

By beating Cameroon 20:17 in the Bronze final of the African Juniors Championship DR Congo qualified for the first time in history for a Women's Juniors World Championship after their neighbour country Congo had been playing at WCH tournaments twice. But Kinshasa-Congo has improved in sports, specially in handball, as they ranked second in the U21 girls continental IHF Challenge Trophy below Congo-Brazzaville. For the DR Congo handball federation it's the first ever qualification for an IHF World Championship in all categories – but in August the women's youth team will play at the Youth WCH in the Dominican Republic, too. In the semi finals of the African qualification DR Congo Juniors lost against Angola clearly. Coach Bozi Banze Matombwa is highly focussed on Korea with his teams, including very young player who still can play for the youth team. It will be a tough challenge for the Central Africans to reach the Main Round, but DR Congo comes to Korea to learn and improve.

Croatia

In contrast to the men's younger age teams the Croatian women's juniors couldn't win a medal at World Championships up to now. Their best place was rank four in 2003, as they lost their last two decisive matches very clearly – 27:37 in the semi against Hungary and 30:35 against Norway in the Bronze final. Two years ago the Croats ranked sixth at the WCH in Macedonia, when they set a signal with a draw against Korea (again their opponent now) in

the Main Round. In the placement match 5/6 the Balcan team again lost against Hungary. Even as they didn't qualify for the Junior's EURO 2009 Croatia got the chance to compete in Korea now – as they ranked second in the qualification tournament after a surprising victory against former World Champion Romania and despite the defeat against France. In Korea Croatia starts with good chances to again reach the Main Round. Head coach Mato Matijevic can build on professionally educated players with physical strengths. The best Junior players are concentrated at the domestic top clubs Podravka Koprivnica and Lokomotiva Zagreb. So they can international experience not only in the national team, but in European Cups, too. Most experienced player is goalkeeper Marta Zderic from Koprivnica with 54 international matches.

Group C:

Hungary

Hungary is one of the world's leading nations in all age categories in women's handball nowadays. That they only ranked seventh in the eternal ranking of Women's Juniors WCH's is a consequence of the fact that they missed all tournaments from 1981 until 1995. But since then on the Hungarian juniors were always top ranked at all seven consecutive participations. Twice they won the Silver medal (2001 and 2003), as they only lost against Russia in both finals. In 1979, 1999 and 2005 they missed a medal very closely by being fourth ranked after losing the semis and the Bronze finals. Two years ago they finished the WCH in Macedonia as fifth best team by beating Croatia in the 5/6 placement match. But currently in Korea this team belongs to the favourites for a medal, as those players became runner-up at the EURO 2009 on home soil, after losing the final very narrow 27:29 against title holder Norway – but they showed their strength with the clear 30:23 victory against the Russians in the semi final. Head coach Kalman Roth, former head coach of the men's and women's teams in Hungary, nominated seven players of the dominating Hungarian club Audi ETO Győr, Champions League finalist in 2009 and CL semi finalist in 2010. Top star is Aniko Kovacsics, a current player of the women's national team and participant of the Women's WCH in China, who scored 145 goals in the younger age teams. Aside Dora Deaki (Győr, too) will set her footprints on the WCH in Korea.

Spain

The Iberians are the strongest “newcomer” in the last years in international women's handball. After ranking fifth at the Women's WCH in 2003 (including the Olympics qualification ahead of teams like Norway and Russia) the Spaniards won their first international medal at the EURO 2008, when they totally surprisingly reached the final by beating Germany in the semi, but then were really overran by Norway. Later-on Spain reached the semis at the Women's WCH in China 2009. Aside on Women's Junior level they high successfully build the base for the women's team. In 2008 at the WCH in Macedonia they played for the medals, but lost the semi against Germany and the Bronze final against Korea – in the end it was rank four, the same as in 2001, as they were stopped by Hungary in the semi and lost the Bronze final against Germany. Thanks to those results Spain is currently ranked 13th in the eternal Juniors WCH table of the IHF. Sagrario Santana Alberdi is the head coach of the team that is a clear candidate for the Main Round in Korea. The heart of the Spanish women's handball beats in Valencia and Itxako, but the players come from clubs all over the country. Beatriz Sanchez from Mar Valencia, who played for the women's team, too, is the top scorer of the team. In defence Elisabeth Chavez will stand like a wall with her size of 192 cm.

Japan

As most of the participants of the WCH in Korea have a long trip, for the Japanese team the competition is nearly a home match. They became second in the Asian Juniors Championship below Korea, but ahead of China – and the Japanese have slight hopes to go to the Main Round in group C, as they're supposed to be stronger than Thailand and Australia. So Japan will have to struggle with Brazil for the third place. Japan plays for the 15th time at a Juniors WCH and only missed the tournaments in 1977 and 1981, so it's their 14th consecutive WCH participation. In Asia only Korea is stronger than the Japanese women mostly in all age categories, but in contest with the rest of the world the Japanese couldn't win a medal at WCHs up to now, the best rank at Junior WCH was the eighth place in 1997, in Macedonia 2008 they finished the WCH as 14th nation. All the current players play for university clubs in their home country, coach Masamichi Kuriyama nominated a small but fast squad, as usual for Japanese handball. By looking at the women's national team some of those will dare the jump and want to compete at the Women's WCH in Brazil 2011.

Brazil

It's always a big struggle for the number one in Pan American handball in all age categories, and mostly the teams from Brazil are the winners against their old rival Argentina. But this time Brazil lost the final of the Juniors Continental Championship in Buenos Aires against the host. A bitter taste, but not that worse as Brazil had been qualified before for the WCH in Korea. Now they try to overcome Argentina in the final ranking of the WCH again – and they have good chances to qualify for the Main Round of the 12 best teams. The decisive match will mostly be the duel with Japan. For Brazil it's the tenth consecutive participation at a Women's Juniors World Championship since 1991. The best final ranking was place 8 in 2008. In Macedonia they surprisingly won the placement match 8/9 against the favoured team from Romania, in 2005 they finished on ninth place. Before they didn't reach the Main Round at a Junior WCH. Three players of the current squad of head coach Sergio Luiz Graciano scored more than 90 goals in their international matches: Samara da Silva Vieira (113), Karoline Helena de Souza (92) and Dayana Priscilla de Oliveira Rodriguez (91). Vieira is the only player earning her money abroad, as she plays for the Spanish club Leon Balomano.

Thailand

It was the first ever appearance of a team from Thailand at a Women's WCH, but in China they earned a lot of respect: The newcomer with players from universities showed some strong performances and didn't finish last as some experts had expected: By beating Australia in the President's Cup and Kazakhstan in the placement match Thailand ranked 21st in the end and left three nations behind. This participation and final result meant a great step and progress for all handball enthusiasts in Thailand – as it had been the second ever qualification for an IHF after the women's youth team had played at the first ever Youth WCH in Canada 2006 and surprisingly finished eight. As Asia had an additional place for this Juniors WCH - Korea was directly qualified as the organizer - Thailand took the chance and qualified as the fourth ranked team – and again left behind more experienced nations like Kazakhstan. Head coach Van Wannaphan builds his team on blocks from two clubs: Eight players come from Khon Kaen, five from Nontaburi. The problem is the lack of international experience, as no player has more than six international matches on her account. But like in China they will compensate this and the missing physical strengths with an enormous will and fighting spirit.

Australia

It was their first ever appearance at Women's Junior World Championships and as expected Australia didn't have a glimpse of a chance in 2008 in Macedonia. But they went there to learn, to compete and to improve – those were the objectives of the Australian Federation.

And despite the fact that they lost all matches the “Aussies” returned home with a smile on their faces. Now the team from down under again is participant at the Juniors WCH after qualifying against New Zealand and Cook Islands. And the objectives are still the same: learning, learning, learning. Maybe this time they hope for their first WCH victory in all women’s categories (as they still have to wait in the women’s competitions, too, despite five WCH participations). Maybe they have the chance to beat newcomer Thailand in an Asian/Oceanian duel. All players come from school or university clubs, as there’s no real league handball in Australia, only regional tournaments are played, where the national teams are selected. Coach Janne Lilleeng is typical for Australian handball, as it’s mostly played and coached by European immigrants from Northern or Balcan countries. So it’s no surprise that players like Sonja Miskovic, Ana Medjed or Monica Najdovski are nominated for the WCH in Korea.

Group D:

Russia

It’s the outstanding and extra-ordinary nation in Women’s Juniors World Championships: 16 times Russia or the Sovjet Union participated at Junior’s WCH competitions, eleven times (!) they became Juniors World Champion, twice they won the Silver medal (1977 and 1997). Without a doubt Russia is the clear leader of the eternal junior ranking, 50 (!) points ahead of runner-up Denmark. From 1979 until 1993 Sowjet Union/Russia won eight consecutive titles, followed by three more from 2001 until 2005. Concerning those results it was a real surprise, as Russia failed from qualifying for the WCH 2008 – the first ever WCH they missed. Now they want to take a late revenge for this elimination by winning a medal (maybe Gold) in Korea. In 2009 the current Russian team won the Bronze medal at the EURO in Hungary by beating current World Champion Germany in the Bronze final and after losing the semi against host Hungary 23:30. And coach Alexej Gumyanow, the former coach of Russian top club Lada Togliatti, has a real strong squad for Korea. Led by Tatiana Kmyrova from Russian champion Dinamo Wolgograd, who was among the top scorer of last season’s EHF Champions League. In 58 international matches for younger age teams she scored the impressive number of 278 goals. Aside a lot of players from the top clubs Togliatti, Wolgograd or Zvenigorod – all known for their excellent youth programmes - play for the “Sbornaja” in Korea. But despite all the success and the medals Russia had to go through the qualification tournaments, but won their group sovereign.

Sweden

As the men’s youth and junior teams belong to the top of the world since decades the women’s younger age teams from Sweden needed more time to climb – and they’re still waiting for a medal at Junior WCHs. Even as Sweden is qualified for a Junior WCH for the ninth time, the best ranking ever was place 4 in 1991, as there had been no semi finals and Sweden ranked second in the Main Round below Sovjet Union and lost the placement match 3-4 against Denmark 18:25. In the eternal IHF ranking they take the tenth place after rank six at the WCH in 1983 and 2003. But since then they lack success: In 2005 Sweden only reached the 18th rank and then they missed the qualification for the WCH 2008 in Macedonia. But currently the hopes of head coach Anna Rapp and her players are higher: In 2009 they ranked seventh at the EURO in Hungary and now they qualified again for the WCH thanks to the second rank in the qualification tournament below Russia – an opponent they’ll meet in Korea again. The top Swedish players are used to exchange the country to Denmark, as the Swedish league isn’t that strong. So most of the players want to use the WCH in Korea as a launching ramp for her career. In group D they have quite good chances to qualify for the Main Round –

but they have to be aware of teams like Angola and Montenegro, as Russia seems to be out of reach.

Angola

Angola's currently the leading country in African women's handball. Even the Youth and Junior teams showed their dominant role on the continent by winning both titles at the continental Championships, played in Abidjan (Ivory coast) - the 16th Junior Championships and the 4th Youth Championships of African Nations. The Angolan Junior team of coach Nelson Damiao beat their opponents very clearly in the group matches and didn't give a chance to Ivory Coast (29:17) and Tunisia (29:21) in the semi and the final. Angola played on constantly high technical level. Coach Damiao was highly satisfied with the triumph of his girls: "We are working with them for ten years. We train the players from an early age. This is the result of the work that we have started a long time ago. I am proud of my players." On continental level Angola is nearly unbeatable in all women's categories thanks to their professional youth and junior programs, but on WCH level they weren't as successful up to now: Despite seven participations the best rank was place 11 in 2008. And even in Korea the team of the new coach Joao de Fatima will have to struggle hard to reach the Main Round against opponents like Russia, Sweden or Montenegro. As it's the politics of the Federation that all top players should remain in Angola to guarantee a better preparation for the national teams no one from the junior's squad is playing abroad.

Montenegro

It's the youngest participating country – but they have a great handball tradition: As a part of Ex-Yugoslavia Montenegro is the home country of a lot of famous handball players like current world star Bojana Popovic. And in Montenegro they have one of the best women's clubs of Ex-Yugoslavia: Buducnost T-Mobile from the capital Podgorica. The history of Montenegro as a nation is short, so it's the handball history. But 2010 is the most successful year in Montenegrin women's handball: Buducnost won the European Cup, the Women's team qualified for the EURO in December ahead of World Champion Russia in their qualification group and the women's juniors are qualified for the second time for a WCH. In 2008 in Macedonia they ranked eight in the end – as newcomers and only one point below semi finalist Germany in the Main Round. In 2009 they finished the EURO on rank nine, but then didn't have any problems in qualifying for Korea by winning their qualification group clearly against Finland, Belarus and Slovakia. Thanks to the great youth program of Buducnost – 16 of the 24 nominated players come from the Montenegrin champion - the junior's national team, coached by Dragan Adzic, is a candidate for the Main Round – and even more.

Mexico

It's the first time ever that a handball team from Mexico has qualified for any IHF World Championships in history. The women's juniors from the Aztec nation had ranked sixth in the Pan American qualification tournament in Buenos Aires, but as the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Uruguay withdrew their participation in Korea, Mexico was the substitute nation – like Greenland in group A. Handball doesn't have this great tradition in Mexico, but the Juniors are willing to show they're able to stand the international concurrence. Despite the fact that this is their first appearance in a non-continental tournament, players like Yesenia Salinas (50 international matches) or Jennifer Iglesias (45) have a great international experience thanks to Pan American matches. Salinas is the top scorer of the team with 167 goals, followed by Iglesias (120). As they don't have the tallest players, the Mexicans have to play speedful with wing players and counter attacks – but the group D is hard to stand, as the newcomers meet teams record World Champion Russia. So the trip to Korea will be a part of

the learning process of the team – and to future improvement that the Mexican women will qualify for a WCH in some time.

Hongkong

Thanks to the fact that Korea is the organizer of this 17th Women's Juniors World Championship the Asian continental federation received one more place for this tournament. Five of the 24 participating teams come from Asia, and Hongkong took the fifth place due to their ranking at the Asian Juniors Championship. In contrast to opponent Mexico it's not the first ever participation at an IHF World Championship, but the first at Junior's WCH: In 2008 the Hongkong team took part at the Women's Youth World Championship in Slovakia and ranked 17th in the end. Now those girls start in the older age category – and want to increase their skills and improve final ranking. They know that they don't have a chance to reach the Main Round due to the strong opponents, but by winning against newcomer Mexico they can take two important points for the President's Cup. Coach Lee Ching Ngan can start with a well-rehearsed team, as all 14 nominated players are from the same club, HAHKC.