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Singapore 2010

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA  
Yamuna

THE CORNER  
THE CHAIN

Vivian  
Singapore 2010  
The Olympic Games

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# Foreword

The Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games was a milestone in our journey as a nation.

The Youth Olympic Games presented a historic opportunity for all Singaporeans to experience an Olympic event on home ground and to make history together as we hosted the first ever YOG. Some 20,000 volunteers from all walks of life came forward to be part of history in the making.

Many young people from schools and various organisations took part in the Friends@YOG NOC-School Twinning Programme, Singapore 2010 Create Action Now! Festivals and many other youth-initiated activities. They were athletes representing Singapore, performers and spectators welcoming the world, and volunteers helping to organise the Games. These stories show how some of our young people participated in the YOG and made a difference in their own lives and that of others.

Along with many others, they embodied the Singapore Spirit. They were all quietly proud of Singapore. Our young athletes have shown that we can compete against the best in the world, with confidence and self-belief. Our volunteers worked selflessly, tirelessly and efficiently, with grace and warmth, without forgetting to smile and to constantly do their best for themselves, their families and Singapore.

These are the same attributes we need in all our endeavours as a nation. We have to enable and empower Singaporeans to compete on a global stage with confidence, to work together cohesively and to welcome the world with open hearts. We have emerged from the YOG with greater confidence for our collective future and of our place in the world.

**Dr Vivian Balakrishnan**

Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports



JOURNEY OF YOUTH

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JOURNEY OF YOUTH

JOURNEY OF YOUTH

JOURNEY OF YOUTH

JOURNEY OF YOUTH

# Foreword

This generation of school children were given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity when Singapore won the bid in 2008 to host the Youth Olympic Games in 2010 – and we made the most of it.

Over the two years of preparation preceding the Games and through the two-week climax of the YOG proper, 110,000 students, 6,800 teachers and MOE staff were in the heart of the action that produced a successful and memorable YOG. It called for sustained effort and often sacrifices beyond mere participation and duty, and our students and their teachers did us proud. They gave of themselves spontaneously, appreciating the importance of this unique moment that Singapore youth stood on centre stage of the world. As a result, students gained valuable lessons and precious memories that will remain deeply etched.

We made the most of teachable moments that the YOG offered. The Olympic Education Resource Package launched in December 2008 enabled students to embrace the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect. These were not mere incantations but put to practice as they welcomed and played host to youths from around the globe. The Singapore 2010 Friendship Camp created life-long friendships of disparate young people. Through Friends@YOG, schools were twinned to 204 National Olympic Committees that enabled them to understand diverse cultures across the world. The World Culture Village hosted by the Singapore twinned schools at the Youth Olympic Village was a unique window for our students to the world and became a platform for youths from all over the world to connect with each other.

Students from across the system - primary schools, secondary schools, junior colleges and centralised institute, and Institutes of Higher Learning – were touched by the values that embody the YOG. I heard countless accounts and praise from overseas guests of how well our students showcased their talents and hospitality to the world.

The YOG has left an indelible impression on an entire generation of our youths in schools. Most of all, it has opened their minds and hearts to what their Singapore can be. That surely is a priceless achievement.

The stories in this book record and celebrate the igniting of these transformations. I hope this commemorative work will serve as an inspiration to future cohorts of students. It chronicles what we are and can become if we believe in ourselves and work together for the common good.

**Dr Ng Eng Hen**  
Minister for Education





A VISION IGNITED



# A VISION IGNITED

**“Tomorrow, the Youth Olympic Games will officially begin.”**

These words on 13 August 2010 from Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew marked the end of the voyage of the Youth Olympic Flame, as it arrived at Promontory@Marina Bay Promenade, after journeying thousands of kilometres across five continents, through Berlin, Dakar, Mexico City, Auckland, Seoul, and the city-state of Singapore. Singapore made history as the host of the first-ever Youth Olympic Games (YOG), lasting 12 days from 14 to 26 August 2010. It all began on 5 July 2007, when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Guatemala City created the Youth Olympic Games. Singapore bid for, and was awarded the honour of hosting the Games on 21 February 2008. With an unprecedented timeline of only two and a half years, Singapore swung into action and many initiatives were launched which connected young people in Singapore to the YOG and the Olympic spirit.



# The Journey of the Youth Olympic Flame



Olympia

The Youth Olympic Flame symbolises the Olympic values. Lit at Ancient Olympia, it journeyed over 15 days across five continents: Europe, Africa, the Americas, Oceania and Asia, before it was brought to Singapore by Mr Ng Ser Miang, Chairman of the Singapore Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee (SYOGOC) in a safety lantern on 5 August 2010.

At each Celebration City, youths participated in a torch pass ceremony. It signified the youth of the continent coming together to exemplify the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect.



Berlin (Europe)



Dakar (Africa)

Mexico City (the Americas)



Auckland (Oceania)



Seoul (Asia)



SINGAPORE



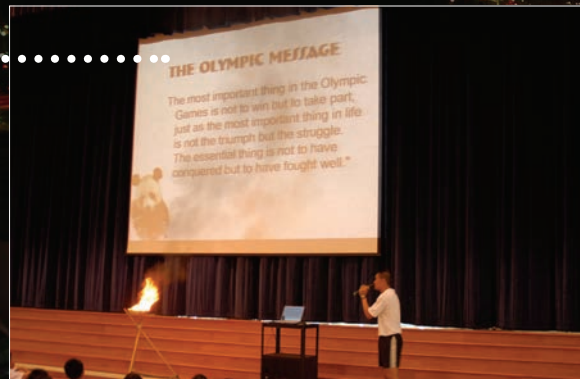
# Embracing the Olympic Values

The YOG integrates sports, culture and education to inspire young athletes and youth of the world to embrace, embody and express the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect. To promote the Olympic values to local youths even before the Games, many initiatives were developed as part of the Culture and Education Programme (CEP). Programmes such as the Friends@YOG NOC-School Twinning Programme, the Singapore 2010 CAN! (Create Action Now!) Festivals, the Singapore 2010 Youth Sports Conference and the Olympic Education Programme were developed to engage young people in celebration of the Singapore 2010 YOG. Students from Singapore schools initiated many YOG-themed events to celebrate YOG in their own communities.

A Singapore 2010 Friendship Camp was also organised in December 2009 for 400 local and visiting athletes to promote the Olympic values and to engender friendships among youths across the world.

During Games-time, YOG athletes and Singapore youth had the opportunity to participate in over 50 CEP activities. They were involved in dialogues with Olympians, community projects, workshops, exhibitions, evening concerts, environmental activities at HortPark and Marina Barrage and even a 1-day adventure at Pulau Ubin. Additionally, more than 2,400 Singapore students hosted booths showcasing the cultures represented by their twinned NOCs at the Youth Olympic Village.

As part of the Olympic Education Programme, youths learnt the importance of pursuing excellence in all that they do, respecting others and making friends across boundaries.



Students of Hong Kah Secondary School at the Youth Olympic Village with their showcase of Cameroon culture.

Young athletes and youths were involved in many activities in the Youth Olympic Village including visiting the Olympic Gallery and taking part in workshops that explored issues on the environment and the importance of sportsmanship.



## Going Digital

New media was also a highlight of the YOG, reaching out to youths across the world through innovative digital applications. The online platforms allowed users everywhere to learn about the first ever YOG, the Olympic movement, and to interact with one another.

The official Singapore 2010 website ([www.singapore2010.sg](http://www.singapore2010.sg)) was the one-stop repository for information on the Games. It featured a Newsroom with the latest information and a multimedia archive full of videos and images.



The WhyOhGee microsite ([www.whyohgee.sg](http://www.whyohgee.sg)) was also designed to educate and engage youth.

The Singapore 2010 Odyssey, a 3D virtual world, encouraged users to immerse themselves in an environment modelled after actual Games venues where they could learn about the Olympic movement, try out YOG sports and chat with other users.



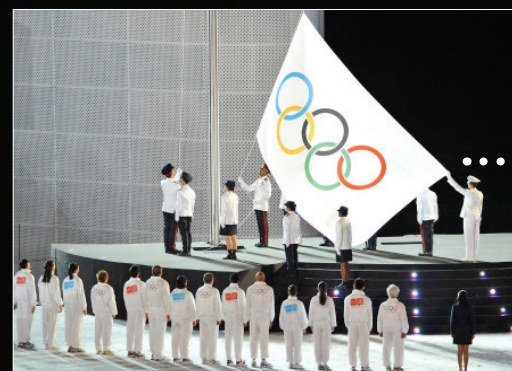
## Celebrating Singapore style

A new chapter in the Olympic movement was introduced with the Opening Ceremony of the inaugural YOG. It was a moment of Singapore's sporting history that will not be forgotten.



President Nathan declared the YOG open.

Spectators cheered as the YOG commenced. With their interactive party kits, the audience generated lots of buzz and excitement.



The Olympic flag was raised, as YOG athletes stood at attention.

Singapore athlete, Caroline Chew, representing all the athletes, took the Olympic athletes' oath.

“*In the name of all the competitors I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honour of our teams.*”

As the Opening Ceremony reached its climax, Singapore's national sailor and gold medallist at the Asian Youth Games, 16-year-old Darren Choy lit the cauldron as the last torchbearer. Cheered on by a crowd of over 300,000 spectators, the spark had finally been ignited and the YOG vision was turned into reality.



BLAZING THE TRAIL





# The Relief Brigade

It's precious to learn how to share and care for others, to appreciate what you've got in life.





Jun Hao and Alastair are members of their school's Boys' Brigade company. The organisation's motto is 'Sure and Steadfast', and its mission is to nurture youth to lead and serve.

For the Youth Olympic Games, their twinned country was Haiti. When the boys saw the devastation caused by the earthquake, they were determined to do their bit to help the victims.

Source: Marco Dormino/ The United Nations; United Nations Development Programme



## The Relief Brigade

Canberra Secondary School was twinned with the Caribbean island of Haiti when news broke of the devastating earthquake that had demolished its buildings and killed hundreds of thousands of people. Though moved by the images of death and suffering, what could the boys do to help, as inexperienced teenagers?

On Tuesday 12 January 2010, Haiti was hit by a catastrophic 7.0 magnitude earthquake. Its capital Port-au-Prince was badly damaged and an estimated 230,000 people died, with 300,000 more injured and 1,000,000 made homeless.

15-year-old Danial was struck by the sight of dirt-ridden corpses in the street broadcast on television. His friend Alastair, a fellow 14-year-old Boys' Brigade member, had read about it in the newspapers and been taken aback by the pictures of collapsed buildings and people trapped in the rubble. Other boys at school were also moved by the shocking turn of events.

So when their principal Mr Tan announced during the morning assembly that something should be done to help, the thought that ran through their heads was: "Let's do it!" Already, a few rounds of donations had been initiated, but with the help of their teachers, the boys sprang into action to do more: a plan was put together to raise funds, through a charity sports carnival.

Before this, the boys had known little of Haiti, but now as they went about raising funds, they learnt that it was small, like Singapore, but plagued by natural calamities such as typhoons all year round. The earthquake left the country in a critical situation, with even basic necessities – water, food, medicine – being unavailable for its people.

Name	Year of Birth	Role
Fahrul Razy Bin Noordin	1995	Volunteer Aid Coordinators
Ahmad Danial Zahirulhaq Bin Ahmad Lootfy	1995	
Quek Jun Hao	1995	
Alastair Ng Kwan Tuck	1996	



Razy, with other boys from his company, organised activities to raise funds.

Sepak Takraw was one of the activities at the charity sports carnival where participants donated \$2 each to play.



“As the Company Sergeant Major of the Boys’ Brigade,” remembers Danial, “I was tasked with rallying everyone, to discuss plans with our teachers, Mr Simon Chew and Mr Nigel Ong. Under their supervision, the school students would participate in games and activities, contributing a few dollars per person, that very Wednesday afternoon. The idea was to render help as quickly as possible to the Haitians, without dragging out our response with complicated preparations or too huge an event.”

The students took charge of organising everything, from the arrangement of furniture to registration and collection of donations. There were engaging activities like frisbee, sepak takraw, and plane-flying contests.

Razy, who was trained in magic card tricks, charged \$1 for every trick he performed for schoolmates. While Jun Hao volunteered as a time-keeper for the frisbee matches, Alastair sold ice cream, the most popular of various food offerings. “It was everyone’s favourite and everyone was rushing to get in front,” he recalls.

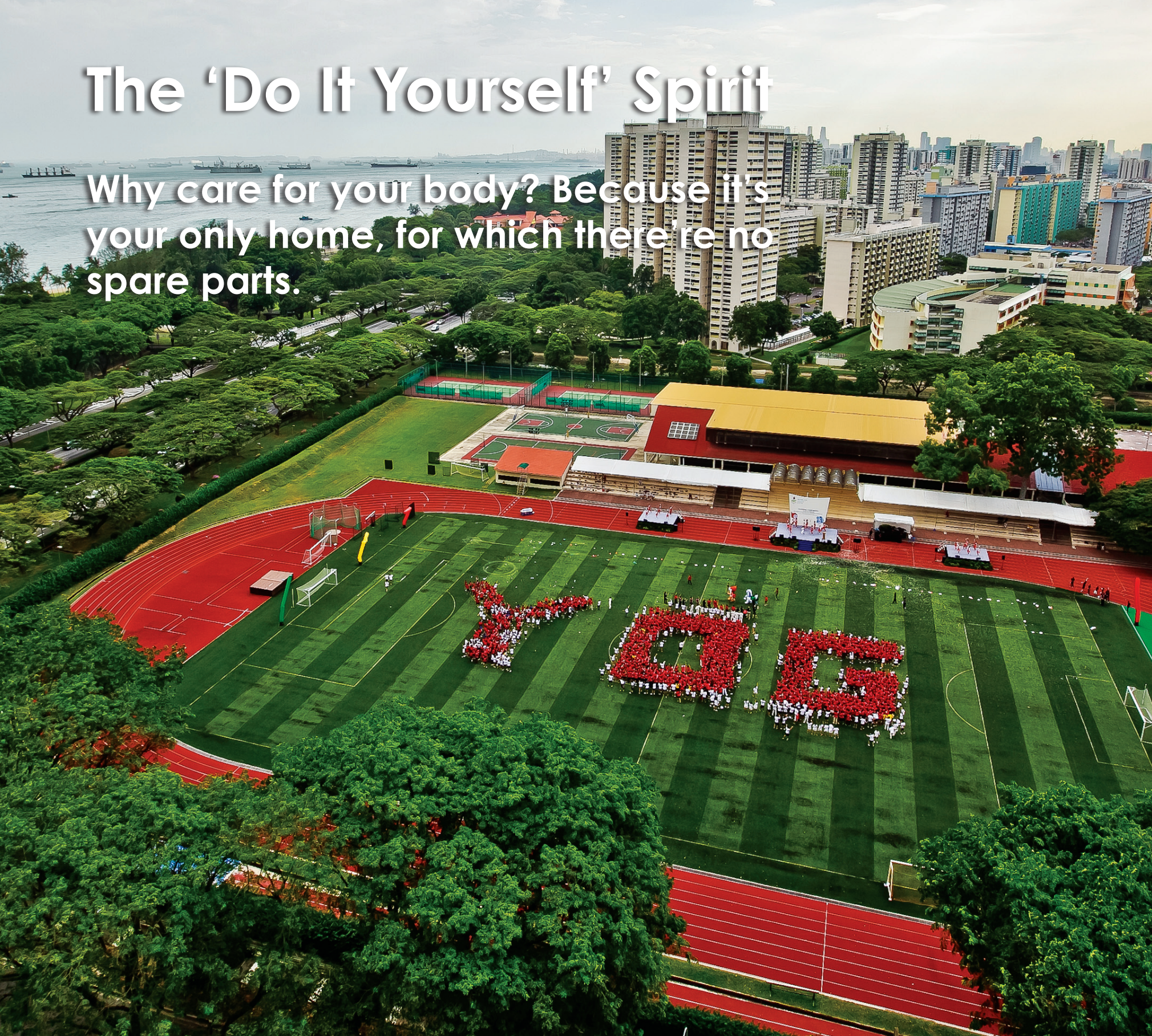
The boys raised nearly a thousand dollars. Because of the Youth Olympic Games, their teacher Mr Chew could see the boys had learnt to serve the wider community outside Singapore. “It was all they wanted, to be a part of Haiti’s rebuilding,” said Mr Chew.

One of the boys shared, “It’s precious, to learn how to share and care for others, to appreciate what you’ve got in life. I just wish I could see – when they get this – the smiles on their faces.”



# The 'Do It Yourself' Spirit

Why care for your body? Because it's your only home, for which there're no spare parts.





The facilitators were all sporting enthusiasts. The Youth Sports Conference they organised served to reinforce their passion for sports and their understanding of the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect.

Youths had the opportunity to try out new sports such as mountain-biking or horse-riding.



## The ‘Do It Yourself’ Spirit

There were only 12 Executive Committee (exco) facilitators to organise the conference for 1500 students over three days. It was all they had expected: hectic delegation, a flurry of emergencies and last-minute problem-solving. None of them, as part of the planning committee, thought that they would gain knowledge that would prove invaluable for the rest of their lives.

By April 2010, the invitations had been sent out. Youths aged between 14 and 18 years old from Singapore schools were invited to attend the Singapore 2010 Youth Sports Conference at Victoria Junior College, from 25 to 27 May 2010. Its aim was to promote sportsmanship, sports education and the Olympic values amongst the student population.

The exco facilitators had an immense job. Apart from contacting the schools to start off the selection process as well as planning the logistics and programme, a host of other nitty-gritty details had to be taken care of.

“Conference activities ranged from lectures by reputed speakers to unusual sports such as roller-blading and horse-riding.” explains Amanda. “You could choose to try something you had not done before.” To handle the complex operations, the exco facilitators, guided by their teacher Ms Evelyn Teoh, implemented a ‘pyramid’ system, with each of them heading a group of assistant facilitators from the college, who then each managed another group of students and so on. By assuming different roles, they made sure the event could run without a hitch.

### Name

Kurdan Reddy  
Amanda Lim  
Michelle Sim  
Joanne Lee  
Hannah Lee

### Year of Birth

1992  
1992  
1992  
1992  
1992

### Role

Facilitators  
(Singapore 2010 Youth Sports Conference)



Prominent sportspersons conducted dialogue sessions where participants could discover the sporting secrets of champions. One of the favourite chats was that with C Kunalan, the veteran Singapore sprinter.



Kurdan remembers, “There were keynote sessions with famous speakers covering all kinds of topics, and smaller-sized workshops as well as chats with champion athletes. There were four themes: Sports Science, Sports and Character Building, Sports and the World, Sports Excellence.”

As most of them were athletes themselves, the exco facilitators were inspired by the diverse goings-on. Not only did they learn useful information, they were moved by what they could see of the participants’ transformation. “Most of them found it very new,” Joanne notes. “The different sports encouraged them to develop new skills, and some even got to pick up tips on physiotherapy or dancing!”

“For me,” recalls Michelle, a cross-country athlete, “the interactive sessions with the champions were the best. To understand how they persevered and overcame barriers, how they faced daunting competition. It was all extremely relevant to me as a sportsperson.”

Their most precious take away were the professional insights on how successful athletes took care of their bodies. “There were lectures on special diets, effective exercises you could do without an apparatus, and how to deal with injuries,” continues Hannah who was the emcee. “We learnt about how the body worked, and how to strengthen different muscles with a range of exercises. The main point that was made, was that champions did not disregard their bodies.” The exco facilitators are now – more than ever – passionate advocates for sport, thanks to their ‘Do It Yourself’ spirit.



# Pride of a Nation

One's heart... at where our children play,  
One's love... our forefathers' land of toil,  
One's spirit of unquenchable courage and honour,  
Are pledged to our country's soil.



Near the F1 pit, the flag bearers strove to perfect their drill. For months they practised under the hot sun with occasional 'water breaks'. After all the hard work, they weren't going to let any errors tarnish their important task.



The flag bearers group, to which Benson belonged, was made up of about 30 uniformed group cadets.



Benson was photographed with admirers in his No.1 ceremonial uniform, before the Opening Ceremony. Grooming was essential for flag bearers. Apart from a short haircut, he had to ensure that his attire was a neat fit, with badges properly aligned and boots well-polished. Ironing his pants could sometimes take over an hour!



## Pride of a Nation

The national anthem played and all eyes were centred on them at the Float@Marina. Step by step, they marched up to the podium, gigantic Singapore flag in hand. It was carefully hoisted up the pole, and as its red-white glory unfurled in the sea-breeze, Benson's heart heaved with a sense of pride that words could not describe.

They were the flag bearers, specially selected from the nine uniformed groups active in Singapore schools. Only two male youth leaders, cadet inspectors who had graduated from their training courses, would be chosen to represent the National Police Cadet Corps (NPCC) at the YOG and he, Benson Koh Chee How, was one of them!

For the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, the flags had been borne by military personnel, but since the YOG involved youths, it was an opportunity for Singapore to showcase young cadets of excellence.

There were stringent height and weight specifications. Benson's height was 1.75 metres and his Body Mass Index (BMI) could not exceed 25. The selection process took place on 28 April 2010 and within a fortnight, he had received news of his selection and that preparations for the immense task would soon start.

As there was no previous flag-bearing 'protocol', everyone in the flag party had to brainstorm and discuss how everything could be flawlessly executed. Because they came from different uniformed groups, the final choreography was a product of different groups' cultures and their varied styles of flag-raising procedures.

On the first day at the floating platform, they were briefed that their job was to carry and raise Singapore's flag during the Opening Ceremony. Most people would ask, "How difficult could it be to carry a flag?" "Not as easy as you might think!" is Benson's reply. "There were eight of us bearing the huge flag," Benson explains. "I was one of the 'timers' and held the corner on the right side. Lyana, the NPCC girl who was my partner, held the other corner."

### Name

Benson Koh Chee How

### Year of Birth

1991

### Role

Flag Bearer



Benson reflects, "This team I'm in – it's not about winning or losing a match. It's about how you learn from the process, and as long as the YOG is successful, everyone's a winner!"

Currently pursuing his studies at the Institute of Technical Education, Benson hopes one day to join the Singapore Police Force.

The flag party bonded through the experience and formed lifelong connections. Here, Benson (leftmost) and other flag bearers were photographed with a guest athlete.



From once-a-week training sessions to three times a week as the YOG drew near, the teams practised tirelessly under the hot sun at Amoy Quee military camp. During the dress rehearsals at the Float@Marina, the drill had to be adjusted to match conditions at the floating platform where details such as the podium, the height of the flag-poles, the characteristics of the actual flag, were all different. Mistakes involving the national flag would be unthinkable.

On the day of the Opening Ceremony, Benson and the rest of his party were excited and anxious. Dressed in their spotless white No.1 ceremonial uniforms at the nearby F1 pit, they practised components of their march repeatedly as other performers were checking on their make-up or chatting with enthusiasm.

The skies had been grey, threatening to dampen their spirits with a downpour. If the wind was strong and erratic, it would be difficult to keep the flag taut and neat-looking. If things got a little wet, the flag's fabric might slip from their gloves or their uniforms might end up crinkled.

Thankfully, the weather held up, and when Benson's turn came, his arm swing was identical to his team-mates', as was his posture and rhythm. As the flag made its turn at the podium and moved up the steps, the wind direction was favourable and every action went as planned.

As Singapore's anthem played and the flag was hoisted up, more than ever before, his heart rose with the awe-inspiring atmosphere. More than when he had previously marched at the National Stadium. More than when he was part of the National Day contingent. For here, he was not just standing in front of his nation but the world, representing his country before an international audience.

He was bearing his country's flag. The moment moved him deeply. He realised that, whatever the future held, he would always treasure this experience of having held a symbol of his nation's pride in his hands.





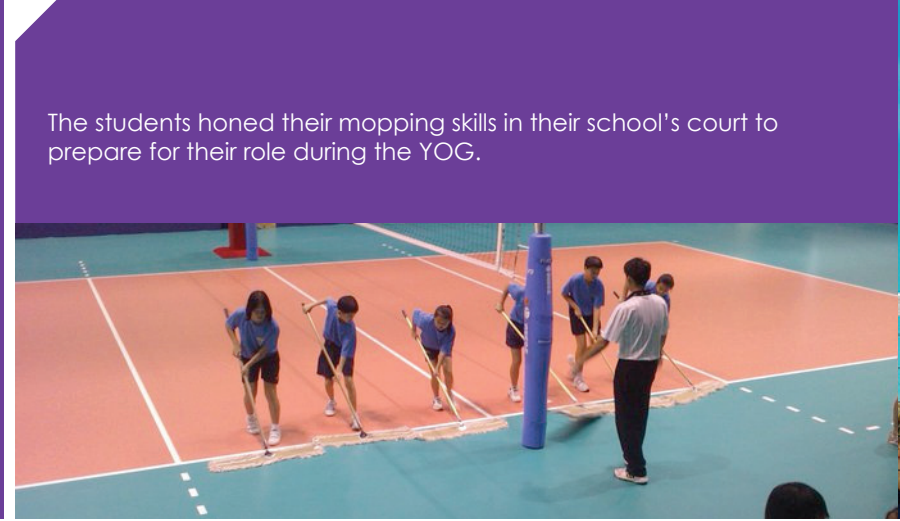


# The Fledglings

Every task is special,  
no matter how small it may seem.



The 19 YOG volunteers from the sports class P5G of Pei Chun Public School go down in history as the youngest court officials ever to serve at an Olympic event.



The students honed their mopping skills in their school's court to prepare for their role during the YOG.

## The Fledglings

Alert, energetic and fast, they stood out in the volleyball courts where they worked tirelessly, never missing their cues.

On 21 and 22 August 2010, 19 students from Primary 5G of Pei Chun Public School were at the Toa Payoh Sports Hall serving as volleyball court officials. These 11-year-olds were the youngest volunteers of the Games.

When asked about their roles, Ray sings out brightly, "I was a ball retriever." "Me too," chimes in Desmond. "I was a ball retriever, but sometimes also a quick mopper," Bryan chips in. "Quick mopper!" Kai Yun echoes, grinning. Wan Ting and Sabrina chorus, "We were moppers!"

The ball retrievers were kept especially busy during the warm up sessions when the players would hit the balls just to work up their energy level. Balls flew all over the place and the students had to chase after them.

But when the game was on, the pace quickened, the energy of the players gathered momentum and it was a completely different ball game. Desmond confesses, "Sometimes, it was quite scary when the ball came crashing towards me! The players were so strong. It was so fast and powerful and I didn't feel strong enough to catch it." Ray, slightly bigger built, found it easier to stand his ground instead of ducking the balls. Even so, he never tried to catch them; it was safer to retrieve them when they landed.

Name	Year of Birth	Role
Ray Chan	1999	Court Officials
Desmond Fong Wai Mun	1999	
Sabrina Ham	1999	
Bryan Hong	1999	
Lau Kai Yun	1999	
Ng Wan Ting	1999	



A tight game in Belgium vs USA kept the moppers very busy with the many time-outs. USA finally won with a score of 3-2.

Bryan makes friends with an athlete who gladly signs his autograph even after a gruelling match.



It gets a bit tricky when a player tries to save the ball and crashes into the quick moppers waiting on the sideline for their cues. Kai Yun is sitting at the far right.



Moppers and quick moppers were responsible for keeping the court dry so that the players didn't slip. Kai Yun, says, "I had only eight seconds to run in, mop up the wet spot and be out of there for the action to continue! Sometimes, if the athlete perspired a lot, they gave me an extra 4 seconds."

The school had carefully selected the volunteers, and prepared them well for the work - they were given the exact mops to practise on the school's court, and were also at validation exercises for live training sessions.

Performing these tasks under the spotlight was not easy. They had to follow the game and know when to go into action. Sabrina explains, "We go in and mop during the technical time-outs when the score hits 8, 16, and 25 or when the teams call for a time-out. Three moppers are in charge of half the court. A full court is 18 metres in length."

"On the second day, the games were very exciting. There were so many time-outs. We had to work very hard! It was very tiring!" exclaims Wan Ting, recalling how tired she was then.

Mr Salleh Bajrai, the PE teacher who was with them throughout, adds, "During a very tight game, each side can call for 2 time-outs. Plus the 4 technical time-outs, they actually had to mop 8 times." It was no mean task for the two girls, who did not have to help with housework at home.

As these young volunteers picked up balls and mopped the court, they were impressed by the sporting spirit of the foreign teams. "Great sportsmanship!" quick and observant Bryan eagerly shares. "In Serbia vs Congo, the Congans when they scored a point, they hugged. When they lost, they also hugged. They didn't blame each other!"

"When they lost the game, they were dancing on the volleyball court! And everyone was clapping for them!" adds Ray. Such is the true spirit of the Olympic Games - it is not about winning, but about playing the sport.

The group shared that the YOG experience taught them the importance of teamwork and encouragement. Even if a team is losing, it is still able to fight back to win the game if all the players stay focused and receive encouragement from one another.

These fledglings have gained a precious experience on humility - every task is special to those willing to serve.

The Congo players demonstrating sportsmanship as they hug each other to encourage one another whether they have scored or lost a point.





# Movers and Shakers

Make more friends in a day  
by becoming really interested in  
others, than in a year trying  
to interest others in you.



One of the most popular haka is 'Ka Mate'. This is what the Maori lyrics mean:

*I die, I die, I live, I live,  
This is the fierce, powerful man,  
Who caused the sun to  
shine again for me,  
Up the ladder, up the ladder,  
Up to the top,  
The sun shines! Rise!*

The haka is performed not only as a war dance, but also to express welcome, to congratulate or honour achievements.

The haka warriors from Bukit Panjang Government High performed at the World Culture Village.



## Movers and Shakers

They were scholars, hand-picked from across Asia to study in Singapore. They called countries like China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam home, but now were tasked with learning a New Zealand tradition that had to be danced wearing revealing skirts, shouting strange-sounding words and gesturing curious movements.

First, they had to memorise the words. Then they had to practise the unfamiliar postures. But most nerve-wracking of all, they had to put on make-up, strip down and march onto the stage half-naked. It made the haka warriors blush.

When their New Zealander teacher Mr Umbers charged into class at the beginning of the year spouting Maori words that nobody understood, everybody burst into laughter. Afterward, he explained that their school was twinned with New Zealand for the Youth Olympic Games and the haka (that he was spouting) was a traditional dance that the Maori tribes performed. The

boys who were selected for the dance felt inspired, initially... until they were greeted, on the day, by the wild reception of teenage female spectators.

It was during a ceremony for the Journey of the Youth Olympic Flame at the Singapore Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee's headquarters that the boys first performed. Besides students from other schools, there were dignitaries present. It was enough to make anyone jittery. "We relied on Mr Umbers' instructions," recalls Vincentius. "As warriors, you must look angry," he said, "There's nothing to be afraid of!" But it wasn't just stage fright that was a hindrance. The warriors were constantly assailed by the desire to laugh. "If we the performers laughed, everyone else would laugh and the performance would be a joke. But the haka was a war cry, a respected tradition. It wasn't something funny, we had to be serious. Keep the joy in, and let the fury out!"

### Name

Yohanes Wiranata  
Vincentius Henry  
Zhong Cheng  
Chen Yan Kun  
Le Thanh Triet

### Year of Birth

1994  
1994  
1994  
1994  
1993

### Role

World Culture Village Performers

Athletes such as the New Zealand basketball team would sometimes join in the haka too!



The haka boys made friends from all over the world: (bottom) Zhong Cheng and Vincentius, (right top) Triet, (right bottom) Yohanes.



Looking grim, the warriors went about their thigh-hitting, lap-slapping routine. “But our classmates pointed out that our dance had neither enthusiasm nor power,” relates Yan Kun. ‘The New Zealand group that came after presented a super-powerful war cry, making so much noise the floor shook. And that was when the boys decided: they had to improve.

Yohanes the leader headed the drive to re-choreograph the dance. Researching haka dance videos from the internet, movements such as elbow-smacking and tongues sticking out were added. “Our ‘bloodlust’ to intimidate enemies had to be magnified,” Yohanes explains. “In ancient times, the haka was used to scare away the men but attract the women. Loudness, energy, power – those were a must.”

They rehearsed till their voices were hoarse, and their limbs turned red and purple after repeated slapping! After months, they'd increased their repertoire to four short but invigorating hakas.

Their efforts to prepare costumes and accessories were no less painstaking. Their costumes were made up of over 100 drinking straws threaded together. Many of them spent days working till midnight to finish the costumes.

“At the World Culture Village, lots of the athletes popped by to request for the dance,” remembers Zhong Cheng. “Everybody wanted photographs with our painted faces, and we exchanged emails and facebook contacts. An Australian badminton player even sought me out to have dinner together!”

Those lively YOG moments felt as if they happened yesterday, but these warriors know, they were no longer the boys they were at the start of the year. Their heightened sensitivity to others' feelings, their capacity for passion, the patience to learn, understand and create - these were treasures that they had gained.

“Now, we really miss the dance, because after the Games, there's no longer a reason to perform it,” says Triet. The haka has become an indelible memory that bonds them forever.



# Rapping Reformers



Does it make sense, how adults worry about what children might become tomorrow, yet lose sight of who they are today



Dashedni and Syarifah were student leaders at Teck Whye Secondary School.

The Million Deeds Challenge was about how small acts could add up to big changes, and how simple, everyday deeds of Excellence, Friendship and Respect could make a difference.

The TW Rappers were invited to perform at its launch because of their music videos on Respect for library etiquette.



## Rapping Reformers

It was many months before the Youth Olympic Games but for two teenage girls, Dashedni and Syarifah, the thrill had already started. Just as their music video rapped, “We’re taking over,” the YOG effect was escalating and, bit by bit, transforming their lives.

They were garbed in casual hip-hop attire and sported the cool swagger. Hesitantly at first, then fully into the groove, these two 14-year-olds rapped their way across the auditorium, ushering the Guest-of-Honour to her seat.

It was the launch of the Million Deeds Challenge, a Singapore 2010 YOG initiative inviting Singaporeans to celebrate the spirit of Olympism through deeds of Excellence, Friendship and Respect.

For the TW Rappers Dashedni and Syarifah, it was indeed a seed of the YOG experience being planted. Never in their wildest dreams did they expect to be performing for the YOG. The opportunity came about because of short music videos they had submitted to a National Library Board contest a few months ago which wove the message of Respect into stylish lyrics and a hard-hitting beat.

“It was a last-minute project,” Dashedni explains. “There were only two weeks left before the deadline, so we decided to take what we enjoyed most, which was hip-hop music, and turn it into our contest entry.”

Syarifah was an MTV fan, therefore song lyrics were second nature to her. “The rappers from the US - they are the best,” she shares. “The important thing is to write from the bottom of your heart and convey a strong message. We thought rapping about library etiquette would be lively and cool, so I just had to insert the right words, use the lingo of youths, and double-up with upbeat music.”

### Name

Dashedni Shanmugam  
Syarifah Syafiqah Syed H H

### Year of Birth

1994  
1994

### Role

Rappers (Million Deeds Challenge)





cos we're takin over, one rule at a time



make me throw my hands in the

The TW Rappers' music videos are about simple acts of being considerate and treating other library users with respect, by returning books on time and not disturbing others with disruptive noises.

To persuade and motivate their peers, the messages are packaged with cool lyrics and catchy, vibrant rhythms:

*Put your hands up,  
Put your hands up, oh yeah maám,  
Put your hands up to the sky!*

Inspired by DJ Khaled's raps, the music videos (*We're taking over* and *In the library*) helped Dasheni and Syarifah gain confidence and experience.

Their raps can be viewed on Youtube.



chorus: if you want to we can teach you



said we're takin over, one rule at a time

Mr Mus Effendi, their IT teacher, was roped in to help with the recording, filming and video editing. They spent long sessions in the school's music studio refining the soundtracks, before fitting in the choreography – which had to be 'just right, not too big' or 'over-the-top'.

"The library had to be closed for the shoot," Dasheni recalled excitedly. "The crowd was watching from outside and I felt embarrassed, but we told ourselves we just had to do it. Thank goodness I was wearing a hood!"

When, a few weeks later, news arrived that they had won first prize, it was the first of many unexpected rewards. They were invited to perform for the YOG Million Deeds Challenge launch. My initial reaction was, "Oh my, really? For the Youth Olympic Games? And through it all, we were treated like stars!" exclaimed Syarifah in delight. They were cheered by responsive spectators swaying their upraised arms, and also interviewed by the media.

"I love to sing," Syarifah confides softly. "At home, I would frequently look into the mirror, miming the song. For us, to be able to bring our sing-in-the-shower talent to the public... it's a wonderful feeling."

"When people saw our videos, there were those who liked it, those who laughed, those who were shocked," admits Dasheni. "Especially at school, since we were student leaders, most of them just couldn't quite believe their eyes!"

It gave them a glimpse of how the world could be different, how the young could make a difference! The Youth Olympic Games experience has strengthened Dasheni and Syarifah's resolve to contribute and change the world through music.





## More than Words

Reaching out beyond the verbal...  
When you're open, others are open as well.

HELLO! BONJOUR! HOLA! Привет! مرحبا!  
 Czeai! OEI! HALLO! 안녕하세요! こんにちは!  
**VOLUNTEERS WANTED!**  
 Language Volunteers will play a crucial role in minimizing language barriers and ensuring the success of the first ever Youth Olympic Games Singapore 2010. As a language volunteer, you will be engaged in many exciting and thrilling activities acting as an interpreter, facilitator, sports announcer and motivator for athletes from all over the globe!

**REQUIREMENTS:**  
 Proficient in English and a good command of one or more of the following languages: French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Italian, Portuguese, German, Korean, and/or Japanese.  
 Good communication skills, passion, teamwork and positive attitude!

**AVAILABILITY:**  
 10 to 28 of August 2010

**ACCOMMODATION:**  
 Accommodation may be provided on a case-by-case basis to Youth Interpreters travelling to Singapore for this opportunity.

**ABOUT SINGAPORE 2010:**  
 The Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games, to be held August 14-26, 2010, will receive some 5,000 athletes (aged between 14-18 years) competing in 26 sports, and officials from 205 National Olympic Committees (NOCs), along with estimated 800 media representatives, 20,000 local & international volunteers, and over 500,000 spectators.

**ARE YOU READY FOR THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUR LIFE?**  
 IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT  
 SINGAPORE2010\_TRANSLATION@SINGAPORE2010.SG  
 HTTP://WWW.SINGAPORE2010.SG

On 5 Jan 2010, the invitation opened for volunteers to register as Language Volunteers, which included interpreters, facilitators, sports announcers and motivators.

Training was conducted for youth interpreters at venues such as the Singapore Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic and the Institute of Technical Education (East).

Gilberto Orozco Lezama was Esther's Language Services Coordinator. One of his many responsibilities was to plan for rotations and shifts to ensure that there was at least one interpreter to provide support for every competition.



## More than Words

Persuaded by her vice-principal from ACS (International) to play a part, Esther Song enrolled as an interpreter for the YOG. At first worried that her level of Korean was inadequate, she soon discovered the joys of interacting with those of another culture and language.

There were workshops, seminars, tours, rehearsals – all kinds of training – that youth interpreters had to undergo. It was more challenging than her vice-principal had described, but the excitement drove Esther forward.

She was one of 700 language specialists, which included German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish interpreters. Her task was to translate for the Koreans from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

The prospect intrigued her. What would it be like? Gilberto, the Language Services Coordinator, advised, "You're assigned to all Korean-speaking nationals. You must remember: the athletes in the delegation are also teenagers. You're not just an interpreter, but also a facilitator, an educator and a motivator."

Day One saw Esther's mobile phone flooded with calls. As youths venturing out of their homeland for the first time, the athletes got lost within their residential halls and Esther had to patiently talk them through on how to get back. A few developed injuries, such as the swimmers who strained their muscles or the handball players who hurt their knees. For such emergencies, she had to rush down to the clinic. It calmed the delegates, to have someone that spoke their language, and her presence added to their sense of security and comfort.

### Name

Esther Song Eun Joo

### Year of Birth

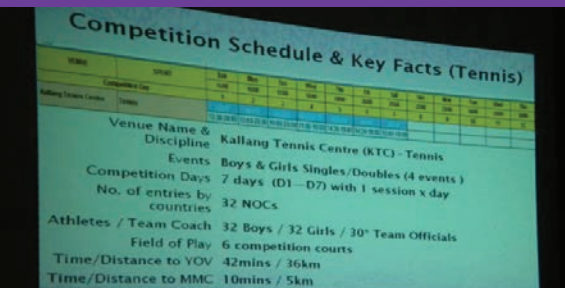
1995

### Role

Language Service Volunteer (Interpreter)

Not only did these volunteers learn about interpretation techniques, they also familiarised themselves with YOG-wide schedules and information.

Esther formed international and worldwide friendships through the YOG which brought together athletes of many different nationalities.



Competition Schedule & Key Facts (Tennis)	
Venue Name & Discipline	Kallang Tennis Centre (KTC) - Tennis
Events	Boys & Girls Singles/Doubles (4 events)
Competition Days	7 days (D1-D7) with 1 session x day
No. of entries by countries	32 NOCs
Athletes / Team Coach	32 Boys / 32 Girls / 30+ Team Officials
Field of Play	6 competition courts
Time/Distance to YOV	42mins / 36km
Time/Distance to MMC	10mins / 5km



The role grew on her, as she saw how simple interpreting could bridge an expansive divide. “One of the hockey players came across African athletes dancing to the beat of drums but was too shy to join in,” she remembers with a smile. “I communicated this to the African athletes for him and helped him out of his shyness. A basketball athlete was interviewed by the media, and I had to interpret her life story for the reporters.”

There were challenges too. “Like when the parents of athletes wanted to purchase tickets for a match where the tickets were sold-out. I was stuck between them and the ticketing booth, and it was all I could do to manage the situation.”

The pleasant memories, though, outweighed the bad. “The city tour with the athletes was very fun and at the Marina Barrage and HortPark, the environmental message had to be explained to the athletes: global warming, nature and the decomposition of leaves, the three Rs of Recycle, Re-use and Reduce... and also delightful projects such as putting together a terrarium or racing with a solar boat. Everyone admired the flora and greenery.”

It was refreshing also, to see how the Koreans took to cuisine in Singapore. “Laksa and Bak Ku-Teh tasted like certain dishes back home, so they enjoyed those. Tropical fruits such as mangos, starfruit and rambutans were certainly an eye-opener for them.”

Their openness moved Esther to face the other athletes with equal candour. “When you’re open, others are open as well,” she explains. That insight helped her befriend athletes from all over the world. When one of the Korean handball athletes got injured and was hospitalised, her group of interpreters popped by to cheer him up.

The YOG, she adds, has not only given her many heart-warming memories, but enabled her to transcend geographical boundaries and reach out to people from diverse cultures.



# The Show Must Go On

Get over the mistake, the show must go on!





Fiona with some of her fellow sports presenters.

Fiona and her YOG colleagues at a pre-Games event.



## The Show Must Go On

She loves public performance. She plays in her school's Chinese Orchestra, and regularly hosts school events. She was also in the English Drama group which won a Singapore Youth Festival Silver Award. Yet this lively student felt unsure about where her life was taking her, until the YOG.

“Don't give up. Just get over the mistake and laugh about it afterwards! Smile! The show must go on!”

Fiona considers this as one of the most important lessons she has learnt in her YOG experience. The 16-year-old student from Fuhua Secondary School was one of the 100 volunteer sports presenters at the inaugural YOG. Her job was to keep the spectators informed, entertained and engaged, never allowing any delay to spoil their experience.

Fiona said, trying to contain her excitement, “I jumped at the chance to be a YOG sports presenter because I like public performance. 500 applied, and after the audition, only 120 were chosen.”

Mark Richmond, a professional sports presenter, DJ and actor, trained and groomed the selected youths. The enthusiastic Fiona was at every training session. She learnt firsthand the hard work that goes into preparing for a sports presentation: collecting statistics for the script, amending it so that it's perfect, and memorizing and practising the delivery so that it would be smooth and accurate.

“A sports presenter gives life to the game. Instead of just watching the athletes compete with each other, it is more interesting if someone names the athletes and shares information on them.”

During the live presentation, things do not always go according to the script. “Once, there was a delay in the programme: we quickly used our contingency plan to keep the spectators entertained. We played *The Price is Right* and gave away YOG merchandise. It kept everyone happy.”



(left) Keeping audiences entertained.

(below) Fiona making an announcement during a YOG wrestling match at the International Convention Centre.



Fiona taking a break amidst her presenter duties.



Even mistakes were to be forgotten quickly when doing a live presentation. The reflection can come when the show is over. Understanding this has given Fiona deeper insights and she has gained fresh confidence.

"I've made mistakes and felt like a failure. But I've had to quickly move on to the next announcement. If I were to feel down, it would show in the delivery. I tell myself 'Don't give up!' The trick is to just get over the mistake and laugh about it afterwards. The show must go on. "

The joy of winners touched her deeply. "When I announced the first gold medal of Greco-Roman Wrestling, the athlete was very emotional, and was running around the hall with his country's flag. I had to stop myself from crying but my voice cracked a little during my announcement."

There were fun moments too, as she recounts, "Some people thought we were celebrities because we were on TV and wanted to take photos with us!"

What impact did the YOG have on her life? "I'm definitely transformed. In the past I wasn't so motivated. I had no goals in my life. The team got very close and I was inspired by the older presenters who are in JC and university, and I want to be like them. So now I'm motivated. I have a dream to become a theatre actress. Now I'm working on my studies to do well in my exams, and if possible go to university to study mass communications," she says, a ring of confidence in her voice.

Her family, teachers and friends have noticed her increased confidence and sense of responsibility. She is helping her younger brother, who is doing his PSLE, with his studies. She has also motivated her friends by her new attitude. Even her mother is now doing her O-levels so she can do her diploma.

Fiona can see her dreams becoming a reality if she works hard at it. Seeing is believing.



# Match Point

Even if you don't know what might happen next,  
what's important is not to let it scare you.







"Before going in, think and decide if you're passionate about it. If so, then go all the way!"

Outside the court, she continually reminds herself, that what's important is to 'stop competing and start excelling'; that it isn't her opponents she has to triumph over, but herself.



## Match Point

Winning and losing with grace is an integral part of growing up for Isabelle.

Being predictable ran against her nature. As a child, she had always been one for surprises, whether it was taking up a hobby her mother did not expect, or jumping out from behind doors to give her sister a scare. When she discovered table tennis at the age of nine, her penchant for catching others unawares was put to good use.

Of the many styles used in the sport, she told her coach she wanted to be a 'chopper' – a rare specimen these days. Primarily defensive, choppers put a spin on their balls to throw their opponents off guard, as opposed to the attacker style which would demand more strength and speed.

It pleased her, to be different from the rest. Even on the court, when

confronting fiercely aggressive players, she would carry herself with calm and quiet, unlike others who might shriek or shout. "I don't like to be... normal," she says, with a mischievous glint in her eyes.

Perhaps it came from a reluctance to give in. In the face of adversity, or others' expectations, it was her instinct to centre herself, resist obstacles and return the ultimate 'curve-ball'.

It was like how she had to manage her preparations for the YOG. "It was challenging, in terms of balancing my schoolwork and training," she reflects. "When I didn't do as well in competitions right before the YOG, I still had to remain confident and focused." She emerged as one of the top 16 in the Asian Youth Games, among the top eight at the Hong Kong Junior Competition, and third at the Korean Junior Games. Still, she pushed herself further - at the YOG, she clinched a silver medal in the girls' singles competition.



**Name**  
Isabelle Li

**Year of Birth**  
1994

**Role**  
Table tennis athlete

Isabelle refuses to pursue sporting excellence at the expense of her studies. She realises how important learning is and intends to achieve well both academically and as an athlete.



The logo of the Singapore Sports School, which Isabelle attends, is a pair of orange and red wings. Symbolising flight and the soaring of students' aspirations, the dual wings depict the balance between academic and sporting excellence. Red signifies the passion and pride, while orange represents youthfulness and vigour. Between the pair of wings is the outline of a trophy. Outlined amidst the pair of wings is a trophy, denoting the School's commitment to provide the environment and opportunity for students to fulfil their sporting potential.



SINGAPORE  
SPORTS SCHOOL



Success came with its own set of challenges. "There would always be someone consoling you when you lose, and giving you encouragement," Isabelle says, amused. "However, when you win, people start looking up to you, and it's a whole new responsibility." Her method of handling it was to remind herself that there would always be losers and winners. "Don't judge what you've achieved; just check that through it all, you've given your best!"

To Isabelle, it doesn't matter whether she's the sure bet or the dark horse in a tournament. Life has its different seasons and she focuses on different things at different times, such as her studies or her sport. It was always one or the other, which she had to give 100 percent attention. And yet, how pleasurable it was, to return to the sport she had missed. "When you come back, you really treasure it more," she says thoughtfully.

The same sentiment infuses her personal friendships. It was the memories of precious moments spent with her fellow trainees that came to mind, more than the thrilling wins during the YOG. "There were around eight of us," she remembers. "We travelled to Hebei in China, and in a cramped, tiny room, we would watch movies over the weekends, or just chat. I looked at the photos a few days back and it was lots of fun."

Asked to sum up her aspirations, she says "I guess it's my character, to want to do well in everything, but as I grow and mature, I find that one has to leave room for grace..." She adds that to her, the YOG silver medal was, really, just as good as gold, as she had given it her all.



# The Right Stuff

Teamwork and determination are fundamental in the pursuit of excellence.





For Jonathan (centre, standing), the YOG journey was one of reflection and realisation. "I've learnt a lot, about Olympic values and many things... definitely feeling stronger!"

(below) On 13 August 2010, the Cubs beat Zimbabwe, lighting a glimmer of hope for a YOG football medal.



(below) On winning the bronze medal football match against Montenegro on 19 August 2010, the Cubs took off their jerseys and threw them to enthusiastic fans in the stands.



## The Right Stuff

In his quest for an Olympic medal, Jonathan discovers that teamwork and determination are fundamental in the pursuit of excellence.

No one expected the Cubs, during their YOG football preliminaries, to take off with a flying start. Zimbabwe had scored a formidable 39 goals in five warm-up matches before arriving in Singapore. The Zimbabwe team had even declared they would win by a minimum 5-0 margin! The Cubs however, gave it their best, and won the match.

Jonathan Tan, left winger for the Cubs, knew his closely-knit team was as good as any. Having played together since 2008, the boys' teamwork was exceptional and each player knew the other's strengths and weaknesses.

Recently they had toured various countries such as Australia, England, Thailand and Vietnam to gain precious experience. In London, they had challenged the renowned academy team of Tottenham Hotspur and won 3-2. Their opponents were taller and stronger, but the Cubs had surpassed them with a blistering pace and pin-point passes.

Now that the Singapore hopefuls seemed to be heading for Olympic medals, everyone – the home crowd, the federation, the media – had raised their expectations. Even when they beat Montenegro to reach the semi-finals, Cubs coach Kadir Yahya announced, "We're not going to rest just because we've reached the semis. I'll be telling the boys to go out and make Singapore football history."

Their next match was against Central America's Haitians who were the underdogs, having lost 0-9 to Bolivia. The captain of the Cubs, Jeffrey Lightfoot, warned his team-mates, "We've not won a medal yet; there's still a semi-final to be played. We cannot start getting complacent now." Jonathan realized he mustn't let the pressure of winning medals get to him. Instead, he focused on blocking out the hype and playing as best as he could.

**Name**

Jonathan Tan

**Year of Birth**

1995

**Role**

Football athlete

Singapore's 18-member under-15 Cubs consists of Chinese, Eurasians, Indians and Malays from various schools. Jonathan, from Tanjong Katong Secondary School, reflects that respect is a core value for their group, which is made up of such a myriad of cultures!



That night, backed by cheers of 6000-spectators at the Jalan Besar stadium, the Cubs were just one win away from a YOG medal. However, right from the kick-off, their game was but a shadow of previous matches and fatal mistakes were repeated. Opportunities to score were missed and, after the first unchallenged goal by Haiti, a second was converted by a spot-kick from Haiti's team captain, Daniel Gedeon.

Jonathan felt devastated. "The whole nation was watching," he remembers. "We thought they'd be pushovers, but it just wasn't our day." "The YOG is about respect," Jonathan shares of his reflections. "You need to respect your opponents and play fairly. There were frustrating moments, like when Jeffrey was hospitalized with a 15cm cut on his head, but then we would play harder. That motivated us... and always, we would perform better."

This sheer determination to keep giving of their best brought its reward. As the competition drew to a close, the Cubs went on to play Montenegro for the final bronze medal... and won.



They inspired a wave of excitement from Singapore supporters for the first time ever in under-15 football matches.

# Budding

To grow, you always need to explore beyond what you're familiar with.



One of Kai Lin's favourite books is *No One's Perfect* (2003) by Hirofumi Otake. Born in 1976 without arms or legs, 'Oto' has been raised to live life to the absolute fullest, supported by unconventional parents and extremely innovative teachers. Kai Lin learns from his incredible example and hopes to motivate others.

Kai Lin's father encouraged her to be courageous in her attitude to life. Her disability never stopped her from trying out elephant-riding, parasailing, scuba-diving, and mastering the air rifle.



## Budding

As a baby, Kai Lin was diagnosed with profound hearing loss and had hearing devices attached to both her ears. She went through many years of intensive speech therapy to help her make sense of sounds and to learn how to speak. As she entered secondary school, these hurdles were not enough to keep her from her passion: dance.

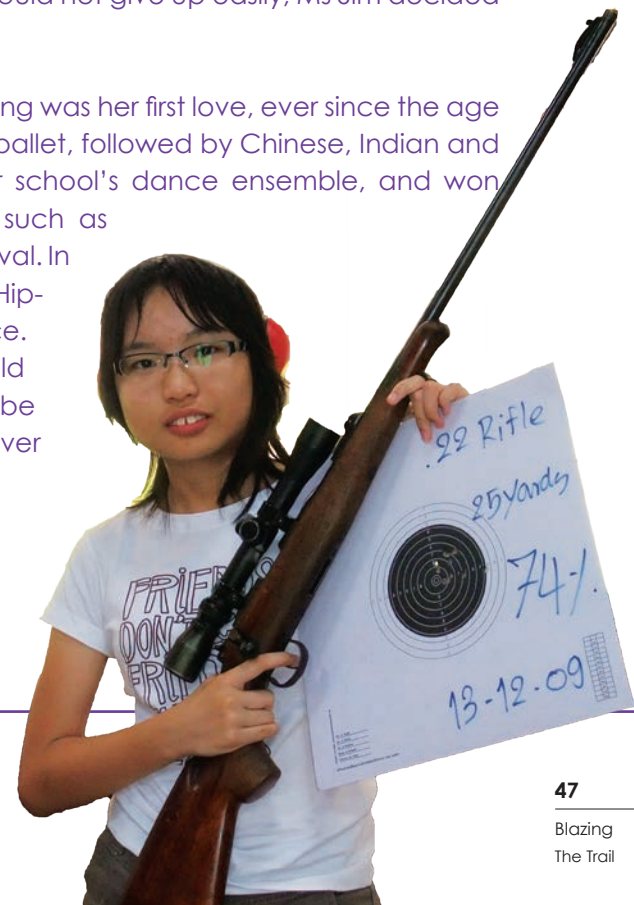
Mrs Khor watched anxiously from afar as the girls swarmed onto the water-filled platform for the first time. "Don't fall!" Her heart cried out silently. "Be careful, don't run!" But run they must, for it was part of the choreography, and it took every ounce of control for her to keep still, worried they might slip, or trip and break a leg.

It was more precarious for her daughter, Kai Lin, who had to perform with the hearing device at her ear. What if the splashing water damaged it and kept her from sensing the music? What if the device snagged or dropped off and she had to start looking for it all over the stage? The very thought made Mrs Khor shudder, but it was her daughter's aspiration to dance for the Youth Olympic Games - an opportunity that would not come again.

That was why she approached Ms Magdalene Sim, the teacher-in-charge of the Dance Club, on the first day of school, requesting for Kai Lin to be involved in the YOG. "The preliminary plans indicated that part of the stage would be filled with water," said Ms Sim, "I'm not sure if it might affect the hearing device." After assurance that Kai Lin's parents would work very closely with the school and that Kai Lin would not give up easily, Ms Sim decided to let her join in.

Kai Lin was elated. Dancing was her first love, ever since the age of three. She had learnt ballet, followed by Chinese, Indian and Modern dance with her school's dance ensemble, and won gold medals at events such as the Singapore Youth Festival. In Primary 5, she tried out Hip-hop and Bollywood dance. This time, the dance would involve hundreds and be watched by millions all over the world.

It didn't faze her one bit.



**Name**  
Khor Kai Lin

**Year of Birth**  
1997

**Role**  
Dancer (Opening Ceremony)



Supported by love and faith, Kai Lin has the freedom to make choices about what she enjoys doing. Her passion comes from the 'belief you have in yourself, and the belief that others have in you.'

The dancers in their costumes with Ms Sim.



Her outgoing father had always made his children try what was beyond their everyday lives, from jet-skiing and wushu, to martial arts and scuba-diving. She had gained that stamina to dance from martial arts classes throughout her childhood. She also learnt how to play the clarinet, flute, guitar and piano.

If the family had a special motto, it would be "Go for it!" Still, that didn't mean precautions and preparations were ignored. Long sessions took place over the phone between her parents and teacher to discuss Kai Lin's needs.

"One of the biggest challenges was coordinating with the other dancers. The dance was a massive event, so to work together you had to listen. I had to make sure my device worked properly, otherwise I would miss what the others were saying!" she confides frankly.

"Luckily, my friends Valerie and Jia Wei taught me how to do silent counting, to be in touch with the rhythm. After counting the beats, we could do the dance steps together, even when the music wasn't playing."

"Some of the steps were difficult to master, such as the backward bend. To get it right, the instructor kept bending us against the

mattress, until our hands and feet were flat on the ground. It was like teaching us to fall down!" Kai Lin explains with a laugh. "It took me two to three weeks to master it. Practice from Indian dance helped."

The props that their costumes were accessorised with also made the performance tricky. "We had this string of tiny light-bulbs round our necks called the 'comets'. During the YOG ceremony, mine dropped when I was running, and I almost missed a step to recover it. It was a miracle that it lit up in spite of getting wet."

Although a thousand and one things could have gone wrong, Kai Lin's attitude was always to do it first, then talk about it. "The other dancers also faced problems. If they could dance, so could I!"

The experience left her feeling exhilarated. The exhausting full-day rehearsals, months of preparations: it was all worth it.

Now, unlike at the beginning of the year, she no longer feels like a stranger in school. She has many friends from the Dance Club, and classmates who help one another out. She said with pride and conviction, "Disability should not stop a person from striving to be the best. Just try and go for everything you can do!"







# The Gentle Way

Our greatest glory is not in never falling but in rising each time we fall.



Programmes like Island Adventure enabled all the athletes to bond in spite of their differences. Those memories have transformed Chin Jie's view of the world and life.



After getting to know the international athletes really well at the Friendship Camp, it was sad to have to say goodbye, for everyone might never meet again for the rest of their lives. To his surprise and delight, he saw two friends return for the YOG in August 2010.



## The Gentle Way

Though injured, he didn't want to let the YOG experience pass him by. Different from past competitions, athletes from over 200 nations would stay together at the Youth Olympic Village and interact. The best judokas would be present. It was a unique chance to learn.

Judo, translated from Japanese, means 'the way of gentleness'. It's a sport that enables one to improve physically, mentally, emotionally and morally. Its tradition forms the basis of how Chin Jie deals with the ups and downs in his life.

"When I first saw a demonstration in Secondary One," remembers Chin Jie, "its fluidity and grace caught my attention." Training for three to four hours daily, he joined inter-school tournaments to diligently practise and better his skills. When the YOG arrived, he was thrilled to discover that he had been selected to represent Singapore. "Wow, I'm going to be a teenage Olympian!" he thought.

Chin Jie refused to compromise on his studies at Catholic High School. Sleeping only four to five hours everyday, he juggled his workload at school with the tough training that was now intensified. There were times he didn't get enough rest and

failed to perform up to par, but he hesitated to let up. It was the judoka's way, to consistently keep at it.

What also energised him was the Singapore 2010 Friendship Camp conducted a few months before, in December 2009. There, athletes from around the world had gathered. At first, he had been apprehensive, for there was nobody he knew. However, after taking the time and effort to listen and interact, he soon came to appreciate how, even though they came from foreign lands, these sportsmen strove hard to surpass their limits. Their never-say-die spirit touched him.

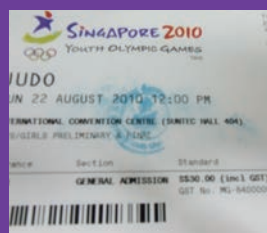
In his group, there were seven others from distant countries such as Barbados, Ecuador, Fiji and Rwanda. Everyone shared accommodation and activities, forming bonds of friendship in the process. In between programmes, they chatted about their lives at home which were a great contrast from Chin Jie's. His view of life broadened.

Everyone had a tearful farewell when the Friendship Camp ended and it was time to go. Chin Jie accepted the fact that his new-found friends had to return home. He might never see them again, but that was the nature of life.

Though unable to compete at full potential, Chin Jie gave his very best at the YOG. His choice, though difficult, allowed him to gain experience and learn valuable lessons in life.



(right) Chin Jie (seated bottom left) acquires insight into people and events by quiet observation. Keeping an open mind, he's continually impressed by those who exceed their limits, seeming to be 'superhuman'.



(left) Chin Jie does not know what the future holds for him, but he strives to face it with humility and courage. His recollections, like the YOG ticket stubs to his matches, are little souvenirs along his journey as a student and athlete.



He went back to training hard. In June 2010, the Judo Federation sent him to Chengdu, China, for a short stint with the Chinese national team. However, two weeks before the YOG started, he injured the middle finger on his left hand, tearing its tendon during practice. The doctor advised him to withdraw from competition, but after all the hard work, must he give up? A few days later, Chin Jie hurt himself again, to the point he could hardly lift his right arm. He was at a crossroads, forced to make a hard decision.

Quietly, he made up his mind: "Just go out there and do my best."

At the YOG, despite his frustration in the early bouts of the tournament where he lost both his matches, Chin Jie nevertheless stayed on to observe. There would be no medals now, but it was a chance to improve by watching other world-class judokas. He saw that they were really skilful and knew it would take years for him to beat them. He just had to be patient, and keep learning.

"There were many lessons from the YOG," reflects Chin Jie. "Winning prizes used to be this huge thing, but now that I've

seen how others have achieved so much more, I feel humbled and understand it's not everything. It's inspiring to hear how great athletes have overcome themselves and their limits, but at the same time I know it's a lifelong journey, that it's not just a matter of short-term victories. I hope that those who come after me will not be too proud to work hard for what they want or wish to achieve," says Chin Jie, "It's important not to be deterred by a small setback or injury."

Yet as he contemplates, he takes a step back to take stock of what has been part-and-parcel of his experience, the good moments as well as the bad. "I have no regrets," he confesses, "Even if this tendon injury might force me to give up judo, that's after all what life is about. Come what may, one has to take it in one's stride."

As long as he's willing, life will be – till the end – the judoka's sensei.





# Chasing the Flame

The race is not always won  
by the swift, but by those who  
keep on running.



A simple flame passed hand to hand,  
Not by the fastest or the strongest,  
But by people whose greatest gift is what they give of  
themselves.

Because, it's not just what you do for the record books,  
It's what you do for others.

(above) Those who saw the  
boy running were impressed  
by his refusal to give up, and  
by his spirit of courage and  
commitment.

(below) These were the  
humble flip-flops that Wei  
Jie wore on the day of his  
15-kilometre run.



## Chasing the Flame

The newspapers reported it first on Tuesday, 10th August 2010, a few days before the opening ceremony of the inaugural YOG. A mystery boy had appeared on the third day of the torch relay in Singapore, running for over two hours to keep pace with more than 120 official torchbearers along the route. In all, he had covered a distance of almost 15 kilometres – in his flip-flop slippers.

The 12-year-old was Low Wei Jie from Compassvale Primary School. Nobody had expected the little boy to brave the heavy rain and scorching heat to keep up with the Youth Olympic Flame as it travelled past schools and through housing estates towards Hougang Stadium.

It was a cameraman who first noticed the same child running alongside the entourage for some distance. When it came to the attention of the YOG cheerleaders and officials, everyone began to encourage him and offer drinks along the way.

Headlines such as '12-YEAR-OLD BOY RUNS 15KM WITH YOG TORCHBEARERS' greeted Singaporeans over the next few days. Wei Jie's determination moved many across the island, who felt the youngster had displayed extraordinary grit and character.

"I wasn't planning to run for so long," Wei Jie recalls. "But when I saw the torch, I decided to follow it." This was despite his feet already hurting, and his digital camera being drenched in the downpour. "But if you give up now, it's like you are giving up on the whole journey," he says.

### Name

Low Wei Jie

### Year of Birth

1998

### Role

Honorary Torchbearer



When his story became known, everyone at school was inspired. 'Go Wei Jie Go,' they cheered in support.

It was an experience Wei Jie would never forget, running 100 metres while bearing the flaming Olympic torch.



It was decided that Wei Jie should take his turn at being torchbearer on the final day of the relay. He would carry the flame for 100 metres and at the end of the morning's journey, light the cauldron alongside the Singapore Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee's Chief Executive Officer.

"I never expected I would get to do that," Wei Jie says of his experience. "And all I wanted at first was to take photographs of the flame relay for my scrapbook, so that my family could see!"

His experience would be remembered as part of the Youth Olympic Games legacy... the story of torchbearer #6237, the modest child runner who became a national sensation.





# Winning with Heart and Mind

Half of knowing what you want is knowing what you must sacrifice in order to get it.



Hanurdeen with his friends and supporters.

"I wanted to face world-ranking athletes and improve," said Hanurdeen, about participating in the YOG.



## Winning with Heart and Mind

"If your mind is strong, then you can do it." Those were his brother's words when 14-year-old Hanurdeen was first introduced to boxing at the Farrer Park gym. A quiet boy, he was surprised to discover that he enjoyed sparring in the boxing ring.

Initially, he would sustain regular nose bleeds and injuries from getting punched, but he grew stronger day by day and now worries less about them. "When I bleed, I'm no longer afraid because I'm used to it," explains Hanurdeen.

Training has never been easy, for not only does he have to dedicate many hours to practise, he also has to leave his family to undergo specialised training at overseas boxing camps. One such camp was Pakchong in Thailand, where many boxers from around the world trained. The living quarters were basic and for amenities like internet use, he had to travel 20 kilometres into town.

"Some of the boxers were from Papua New Guinea and Vietnam, and many of the others spoke Thai," says Hanurdeen. "It was hard, but eventually I learnt to speak and understand a little Thai." Loneliness was an ordeal, where the endurance required was no longer just physical, but also emotional.

Focused on becoming a world-class boxer, he would run seven to eight kilometres everyday and, to control his weight, survive on low-calorie bars or a little rice. With his coach's repeated warnings, "Watch your weight! Watch your weight!" he had to avoid thinking about food. To qualify for the Light Fly 48kg division during the YOG, he lost weight by wearing a sauna suit.



Apart from his coach Mr Bala, his two pillars of support were his form teacher, Miss Sim and his mother Jarina.



Although the examinations were round the corner, Hanurdeen's classmates from Serangoon Garden Secondary School cheered him on at his matches. When they did not have enough tickets to his fights, they swapped tickets with students from other schools!



That was one aspect of boxing his mother, Jarina Begum, found difficult to accept, for she sold delicious Indian rojak at Tekka food centre and always felt her son was too thin. A gentle and soft-spoken woman, she was ever fearful he would get hurt, and could never bring herself to watch him compete.

When Hanurdeen was up against the world's No. 3 boxer, Uzbekistan's Zohidjon Hoorboyev during the YOG, she relented, deciding she should see with her own eyes, the path her son had chosen for himself.

She saw how valiantly Hanurdeen gave his very best and knew, in his commitment to boxing, he was fighting for her. His passion and drive made her realise that her son would one day achieve his dream of bringing glory to Singapore.

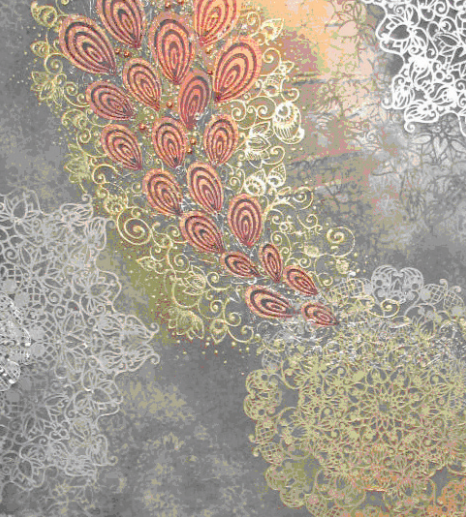
For Hanurdeen, that match strengthened his relationship with his mother and he resolved to keep on giving his best, as he set his sights on the London 2012 Olympic Games.





## The Fabric

Who are you going to be today in order to create the tomorrow you yearn for?



"The shades of emotion projected by the drab greyish colours," shares Wahidah, "embody what I see in my past, and what I see in the future. It's filled with longing, longing for a certainty which is beyond our reach. In that way, this artwork is representative of my search... for my self which, like the YOG, is a crossroad of different cultures."

*Dream a Little Dream of India*, produced for the Singapore 2010 Friendship Fabric, contains Indian ornamental motifs, Chinese paper cuts, and even Arabian iconography.

Friends like Jiaying (second from left, next to Wahidah) contributed technical suggestions as to how her thoughts and feelings could be expressed.



## The Fabric

Wahidah was at a loss. What was India, a country she had never been to, like? Though she was Indian by ethnicity, who was she to define its essence when – more than anything else – she was Singaporean?

"One metre by one metre," announced Mr Heng, her art teacher. "It must be related to India, the country we're twinned with as part of the Friends@YOG NOC-School twinning programme."

The assignment left her in a quandary. Wahidah had never been to India – though she had relatives there, from her father's side of the family. Her Indian 'heritage' consisted of, possibly, a photo of the wondrous Taj Mahal, Hindi movies she watched, as well as curry and chapatti cooked by Grandfather. Art, for Wahidah, was a quest for the self. "Are you who you are back in the past when you were young, or are you the new you, in this modern world with a different set of thoughts?"

"How about starting off with what was beautiful? Let's see..." She liked fine details, intricate designs with lines that twirl and exquisite patterns. It occurred to her then, "Why not infuse the artwork with ornamental motifs found in saris and ethnic embroidery?"

Wahidah was reminded about how diverse influences shaped her, how even something as plain as rust – if you let it – could grow and become unexpectedly lovely. She also enjoyed drab tones, conveying the raw honesty of black-and-white photography. After experimenting a little with colours, what emerged was an atmospheric golden-grey spray-painted over a piece of fabric.



**Name**  
Nurul Wahidah

**Year of Birth**  
1991

**Role**  
Artist



"Who I am changes over time," says Wahidah, "And akin to a flickering flame, my identity is elusive, dream-like." The above composition is a continuation of the artist's search. It was during her interview that the idea popped up for her to create another piece to show how her identity had evolved and changed since the YOG. This piece is entitled *Chrysalis*.

Wahidah is presently pursuing a degree in Psychology and hopes to extend her studies to Art Therapy.

The paper-cuttings came next. These required care and concentration, as she delicately sliced through layers of paper before unfolding the whole sheet to reveal a final, complete picture. That revelation was what she enjoyed most. "You always see one point of view, unless you take a step back, let things fall into place. Then, a different view emerges."

A spark of inspiration... and she added chiffon fabric, a little lace and unusual prints of peacock feathers. And there it was, that sense of longing for India. It looked surreal, as if realities intermingled. 'Dream a little dream of India...' floated the title into her head.

Her friends were part of this jigsaw that was her identity. "Lee Jiaying was the one who saw the Taj Mahal first-hand, and she said it was most beautiful. Others, part of the Chinese orchestra, introduced me to instruments like the ruan xian (阮咸), an ancient Chinese 'guitar' with distinctive, lilting notes. And we all loved Indian vegetarian food!" The various bits started to merge.

She realised, these made up what she saw of herself as a Singaporean. "I'm mixed, and I'm glad that I'm mixed, because it adds another dimension to who I am and what I see in life!"





# Counterstrike!

In life, as in handball,  
you can't score unless  
you know where the  
goal is.



Handball is a fast-paced contact sport requiring agility, concentration and close teamwork.

To motivate the boys, Coach Gabriel raised funds to purchase every boy a set of branded jerseys. "In school, no one wears this brand except you," he said.



## Counterstrike!

Inspired by the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, Coach Gabriel Rao decided in January 2009 to start a special programme for students to 'channel their energy into something useful'. This was especially for the students who were gang members, or rebels who fought with the teachers and got into all sorts of mischief.

Of the lot, Mr Gabriel selected, for a start, 26 candidates for conversion from 'naughty' to 'sporty'. The Olympic sport of handball would be the catalyst and Julian Low, the teacher who was a veteran player, would impart the knowledge of rules and game play.

The sport was an instant hit with the boys. Their passion for the sport gave the coach leverage. "If you keep up with the nonsense," he told them, "I'll shut this programme down. It's up to you." His approach was to be firm but honest, talking straight to them about the pitfalls of life and how they were wasting their potential.

It worked. Just so they could play, the new handball team attended remedial classes and focused on their schoolwork. They were taught life-skills such as time management and bonded closely together. The boys kept tabs on each other to train and behave. The strength of their camaraderie became the motivating force that transformed them into achievers of excellence.

Among them were Pritpal Singh and Oscar Ooi, two handball enthusiasts who used to fail their examinations. Their talent for the game caught the attention of Mr Low, who suggested they try out for a tournament organised by the National Institute of Education. When their team came in second, it thrilled them and increased their self-esteem. Oscar was even voted 'Most Valuable Player' of the tournament.



### Name

Oscar Ooi (left)  
Pritpal Singh (right)

### Year of Birth

1993  
1992

### Role

Handball athletes



The facility at the Youth Olympic Village was also where the boys won their first handball tournament. Here, the national team engaged in a friendly match with players from South Korea.



'The secret to winning is a positive mindset,' explains Oscar Ooi, photographed here (second from left) with the rest of the national handball team. 'Even when you fail to score, you must keep your morale high and shoot harder the next time.'



Then on, their interest grew by leaps and bounds and, after beating Raffles Junior College in the national finals, the handball team from Regent Secondary became national champions in 2010. The Youth Olympic Games was the grand prize that was now open to them – the opportunity for a medal, and once-in-a-lifetime honour.

“When we represented our school,” confesses Pritpal, “It was already a great boost. When we were sent to the YOG, it boosted us even more, because now we were representing Singapore for the Youth Olympic Games. At the Youth Olympic Village, wearing the Singapore flag on our T-shirts, we beamed with pride as student hosts at the booths kept asking for our signatures and autographs!”

There were challenges. They had to train hard daily and injuries were not uncommon. Competitors from countries such as Egypt were also larger in size – practically six-footers – and dwarfed them. “But we refused to be disheartened,” says Oscar. “Just play our game, continue fighting... that’s our fighting spirit, no fear!”

The boys' mischievous nature was a plus. “Naughtiness gave us an edge. We used to block people out – which, in handball, is called ‘screening’ – by creating tactics to interfere with our opponent’s actions to shoot.” The team also used hand signals to coordinate their strategy, as opposed to code words used by other teams. One popular tactic was the ‘Flying Fish’, where a decoy ran up and pretended to take aim, drawing in the defenders. In truth he would be passing the ball to a partner who leaps up in the air and shoots!

In the end, out of the four games they played, Singapore lost two and won two. They narrowly missed the medal by two places but still, it was satisfying.

“Our decision-making is more mature now. As Singapore’s representatives at the YOG, we must put on good behaviour,” quips Pritpal jokingly. “Nutrition too,” adds Oscar, “Now we watch what we eat, and read the labels when we shop, for details on calories, sugar and such.” When Pritpal comes across other at-risk kids, he shares what he’s been through, “If you have the chance, always choose the right path.”





**Touche! It's a Hit!**

**A cool head is half the battle won.**





Modern fencing evolved from the ancient form which dates back to 1200BC, in Egypt. A light on the opponent's uniform lights up when a fencer hits the target and he is awarded the point.

Rania takes a hit from her opponent!



## Touche! It's a Hit!

At the Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games Opening Ceremony, Rania, the woman epeeist in the Singapore Fencing Squad, was one of the Olympic flag bearers. But unknown to many, she had a heart condition for which she had been exempted from PE classes throughout her school life. This finally changed when she decided to take up fencing.

"The fencing scene in the movie *The Parent Trap* got me interested in the sport because it looked really fun. Then 3 years ago, when I went for my English tuition at United Square, I walked past the Z Fencing club. There were even little kids as young as five learning to fence and having fun. I decided to enroll, strictly for recreation." Rania reminisced.

At her first lesson, her Filipino coach was quick to spot her raw talent and offered to train her for the Youth Olympic Games. She was so shocked that she declined. When she went for the grading a year later, the head coach James Wong made the offer with a club scholarship. This time she was ready for the challenge, taking private lessons two or three times a week.

"Unfortunately, just after a month of serious training, I sprained my ankle during ice-skating and I was off my feet for about four months. But the coach didn't waste time, and we worked at my handwork while I was seated."

"When I could finally walk, I was fatter and physically out of condition. To get back into shape I decided to go to school half an hour earlier to jog. I was determined to do it because I wanted to be in the Youth Olympic Games. I was lucky too that I had a friend to jog with me. That really helped a lot."

**Name**  
Rania Herlina Rahardja

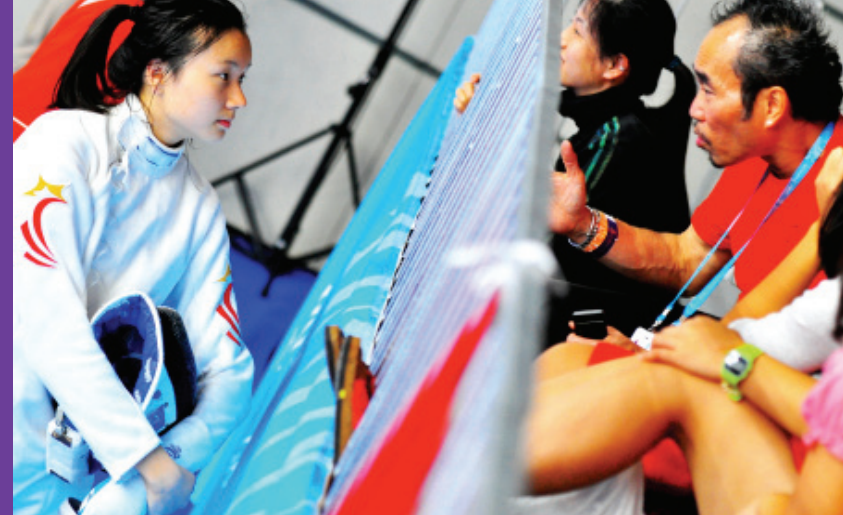
**Year of Birth**  
1993

**Role**  
Fencing athlete



Rania's agility gives her an edge when launching an attack, forcing her opponent to parry on the defence.

Coach James Wong gives his star pupil some tips and encouragement. "In fencing, whether winning or losing, it is important to stay calm." says Rania. And she is the picture of composure.



"Touche! It's a hit!"

In a bout, these words were music to Rania's ears. It meant she had hit her opponent and won a point. When she won her first gold medal at a local inter-club competition in 2009, it motivated her and she went on to become the gold medallist at her first international competition, the Asian Junior Cadets 2009. "That sense of satisfaction is just incredible... nothing can replace it!" she beamed with pure satisfaction, reliving her golden moments.

What accounts for her success? According to Collin Cheong, the fencing coach at her school, Hwa Chong Institution, it is her make up, physically and mentally which gives her an edge in fencing. Her 1.73 m height gives her the reach which is a tremendous advantage in fencing. Her ability to think on her feet makes her a formidable opponent in this sport where tactics are crucial in winning a bout. Setting traps is part of the game. Above all, when confronted by unforeseen difficulties, she keeps a cool head on her shoulders. That is half the battle won.

Reflecting on her lacklustre performance at the YOG, she plans to build up her stamina and strength to get ready for the 2020 Olympic Games.

"The training for the YOG has made me stronger, and in the process, my heart condition – mitral valve prolapse -- is no longer a hindrance. Now I believe anything is possible if you're willing to work hard at it".





# Earth Day

Humanity is so diverse. There is much we can learn from one another.



Ros (in blue T-shirt) and her schoolmates visited Nepal in March 2009 as part of the Friends@YOG NOC-School Twinning Programme. She continues to keep in touch with her Nepali friends through email and Facebook.

Ros and her schoolmates were drawn by the intricately designed places of worship in Nepal.



## Earth Day

The moment she stepped off the plane, Ros' first impression was that Nepal was a different world. 'Wow,' she thought, 'This is how some people live outside of Singapore!'

"Earth Day! Earth Day!" The students yelled, as the lights went out again and the hotel was enveloped in darkness.

When they asked the Nepalese hotel clerk about the blackouts, they were informed that utilities had to be rationed and there was a daily schedule as to when electricity would be available. "A method to consider, perhaps, for Singapore in its quest to go green. Small, inexpensive steps can make a strong impact," thought the student ambassadors from Yuying Secondary School.

'Earth Day'- the practice of switching off electrical appliances to commemorate energy conservation – happened everyday there.

Despite the slight inconveniences, Ros enthused that Nepal had an alluring beauty that fascinated her. As one of the school's ambassadors reaching out to connect with Nepal, Ros wanted to understand and appreciate the country's unique qualities so they could showcase it at the World Culture Village set up for the Youth Olympic Games.

"Nepal is divided into three ecological regions; mountain, hill and terrain. We have 6,500 species of trees, bushes and flowers. There are eleven world heritage sites well known for their rich history," shared the tour guide proudly. "What a difference from the cosmopolitan city I come from," thought Ros.



Enjoying a game of basketball with their friends at the Ananda Bhumi High School.

Exchanging gifts at Ananda Bhumi High School.



“Take only pictures, leave only footprints,” came the reminder as they started on the first leg of their journey to the High School. Ros shared that their counterparts at Ananda Bhumi High School were such a welcoming people. They clicked instantly. Everybody had a fantastic time playing basketball. The ice was broken and both sides exchanged names.

The village school at Bokhara was no less warm and friendly. It was a highlight of their tour, to trek three kilometres up over the rough pebbly track, to reach the compound in the mountains. The breathtaking view erased all traces of lethargy. To their surprise, what greeted them upon arrival were two rows of villagers with wild flowers in their hands. It was as if they were dignitaries from Singapore. It touched Ros deeply.

“They were so close,” she reflects quietly. “Living together, they worked together and supported one another. Even the neighbours came together to cook, and we never felt left out, for they would always come and talk to us.”

The natural beauty of the mountains also moved her. “We watched the sunrise at around six in the morning. It was cool and the view of the sky set against Mount Everest was breath-taking!”

The contrast between their countries made her ponder, long after her return. She began to cherish the comforts of home, like a constant electricity supply and, at the same time, sought to preserve her surroundings which were both fragile and precious. “When I see litter now, I pick it up,” says Ros. “I will make an effort to forge a change.”



# A Friend in Need

Satisfaction is...  
someone saying thank you.





Tabitha with her parents and younger brother. Her parents are her role models who have exemplified the spirit of caring and excellence.

The 3-day training course for the paramedics and assistants in preparation for the YOG forged strong bonds of friendship among the participants.



## A Friend in Need

Tabitha Yong was a final year nursing student at Ngee Ann Polytechnic when she responded to the school's call for paramedic assistants to provide medical support during the YOG. She was so eager for a chance to be a part of the historic Olympic event as well as to practise nursing that she signed up first (and even accepted the job) before informing her father about it. Getting his approval was a bigger hurdle than she had expected.

"My dad thought I should concentrate on doing well for my final year exams. Not only that, the Youth Olympic Village was in NTU and we live in Bedok. It would mean commuting from the East all the way to West. And also, I was rostered to do the 3-11pm shift! I would miss the last bus home, which meant a 10 minute walk to get home every night. My one good reason to still be involved was how much it meant to me to have this once in a lifetime opportunity to be a part of the YOG, where the youth of the whole world would be here. He finally gave in."

Training was short and intensive. There was a three-day refresher course for paramedic assistants to brush up on skills such as bandaging, stretcher bearing and how to administer the intravenous drip. But there was no training on how to handle the unplanned, the language barriers and the cultural needs.

"There was this Russian athlete gesticulating desperately. Before I could help him, I had to understand his need. Thankfully, I got the message - his hand was hurting and he was in pain!"



### Name

Tabitha Yong Pei Hua

### Year of Birth

1991

### Role

Paramedic assistant



Responding to a call for help: the victim's bleeding hand is bandaged.

Passion runs in the Yong clan. Her cousin is none other than Audrey Yong, the sailing Bronze medallist of Team Singapore!



"In another case, a Pakistani official suffering from deep-vein thrombosis kept asking for my number which I found a bit strange. Still, not wanting to hurt his feelings, I gave it to him. Later, I got a call from his team doctor who asked if I could give him a cup of water and a sweet or a biscuit because he was breaking fast. That's why he wanted my number! As I was outside the centre, I called someone in the clinic to give him what he needed. The team doctor was so grateful that he kept thanking me! That gave me a lot of satisfaction - not the monetary form, but someone saying thank you and appreciating what you have done."

While Tabitha was attending to the needs of the YOG participants, and accompanying injured athletes to hospitals, her dad would wait up each night until she got safely home. It was always well past midnight. Her night shift also made it impossible for her and her mum to see each other for that stretch of 5 days, for which she felt rather guilty. Still, in following her passion, she was demonstrating a trait she inherited from them.

"My dad is so passionate about his hobbies, fixing motor bikes and cars – he used to fix airplanes in the Singapore Armed Forces. He even studied at Trinity Theological College because he wanted to do mission work in Thailand! He has put that on hold until my younger brother finishes school. My mum, she works such long hours and she still keeps the house spic and span! They are my role models."

She brought this attitude to her work. It was not always like an emergency ward at the YOV clinic. Sometimes, it was slow-going. During the lull periods, she would wash towels for another unit although this was not in her job scope. When there was a long wait to see the doctor, she would chat with the foreign athletes under her care to learn more about their cultures; and in turn she would tell them about Singapore. Naturally she made many friends.

"If we take the trouble to look for things to do, we will not be bored," said Tabitha, reflecting on why she found her 5-day stint too short.

When she first started, she was unsure about handling emergencies. She received a lot of help from the paramedics serving their National Service at the YOG. The doctors at the clinic were also very approachable, never throwing their weight around. In that atmosphere of encouragement and guidance, she quickly learnt on the job.

In the five days, she gained a lot of confidence. "I've discovered what I want to do after my nursing diploma - become a paramedic, to be on the go, administering first aid on the spot, being deployed when the call comes in." She is enthusiastic about the future. "I want to help as many people as I can through nursing, and perhaps one day, I can save enough to go overseas to do medical relief work in disaster-hit areas."





# World@Peace

It's a soft heart, rather than a hard head,  
that helps you make the best of friends.





Using mannequins, the booth showcased aspects of Palestinian culture such as their traditional costumes.

Artifacts for their exhibition were borrowed from the Palestine embassy in Kuala Lumpur. There were items such as rare table cloths, exquisite lace and ancient coins.



## World@Peace

War, war, war! The little that Wan Yi knew of the region in the Middle East which her school was twinned with involved conflict and casualties. From her research, Palestine had been in conflict throughout the centuries. Where could her school get exhibition items from?

Luckily, there was a Palestine embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where the ambassador was delighted to contribute to the Youth Olympic Games. So, just two months before the event, they managed to gain access to special photos, exquisite artworks and historical objects.

As a booth host, Wan Yi had to put together short, explanatory speeches for the different displays, while respecting political sensitivities. First, there was the map of Palestine which couldn't be too detailed, so as to avoid any controversy over its political boundaries. It indicated the locations of a few mosques and, when members of the Palestine National Olympic Committee (NOC) dropped by, they were very pleased to be able to spot familiar landmarks.

One of the athletes queried why there weren't any photos of churches. Wan Yi remembers replying diplomatically, "Oh I'm so sorry! Perhaps if you have any, you could loan some photos to us?" The athlete had happily agreed and they continued with their conversation.

In fact, the Palestinian athletes and other delegates were so proud of the booth that they practically adopted it as their 'second home'. Over the next four days, they dropped by everyday, bringing gifts or extra objects to add to the exhibits, from NOC flags to articles of traditional clothing, to ensure everything was perfect.



Souvenirs were exchanged with the Palestinian contingent.

For the students of Yuhua Secondary School, their World Culture Village booth was a gateway to diverse world cultures and friendships.



“They were surprisingly relaxed and friendly,” explains Wan Yi, laughing. “Though they spoke little English and Arabic-speaking interpreters were in short supply, we had great fun communicating via hand gestures and finger-pointing.” The Palestinians would offer tips on improving the exhibits, such as the proper way to don the cultural costumes or how their countrymen said ‘hello’. In return, the Singaporeans gave suggestions on delicious halal dishes to try or interesting places to sight-see in Singapore.

The dialogue – even if imperfect – allowed Wan Yi a peek into another world and lifestyle. “True, I was careful with words and kept away from discussing war or religion,” she confesses. “But they were very open and told us about their lives, how early they woke up and how many hours they spent at school, what their houses were like and how they survived daily.”

She learnt that they had fascinating festivals to celebrate the harvest of lettuce, grapes, apricots and other produce. Palestinian names, interestingly, were also extremely long, of which some were formal and official, while others were just casual pet names.

The Palestinians’ easy-going warmth was contagious. By the end of the YOG, after exchanging contacts details, everyone was practically one ‘family’! It opened her eyes to how easily friendships could be forged with the right attitude. “If others could be this friendly,” says Wan Yi thoughtfully, “so could we.” By making the effort to better understand one another, boundaries could be transcended and harmony among different groups promoted.

The long hours and hard work for YOG had been worthwhile, for Wan Yi now appreciates the world’s diversity. The World Culture Village also introduced her to people from Greece, Netherlands, Nigeria, Spain, among many others.

Wan Yi reflects that however politically or culturally distant another man is, there is always a chance for friendships to be made.



# Uncharted Waters

There's a thrill of  
being in the air and  
hitting water!





Timothy posing for a photograph with a young fan.

An ex-gymnast, Timothy takes to diving like a duck to water. Here he is executing a somersault.



## Uncharted Waters

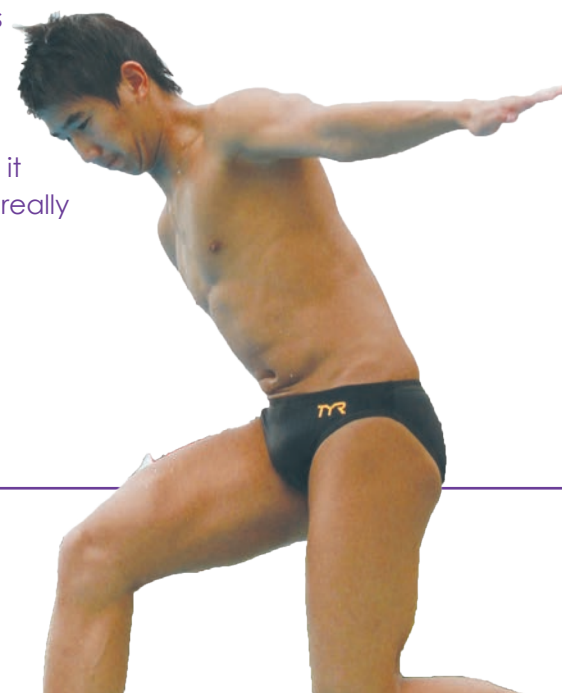
In September 2009, Singapore Team held a trial for divers. Timothy Lee went for it and was selected. For the SJI school gymnast, it was a leap into uncharted waters.

On the first day of his training, he did not know what to expect. He only knew that he would not have any difficulty with the somersault as it is a common move in gymnastics. He took to it like a duck to water. "I found the sport really fun. It's great to have fun while training!"

The excitement sustained him throughout the gruelling period of intensive training to get him ready for the YOG. He trained 6 times a week; during holidays there were 4-hr sessions twice daily. "Strangely I didn't mind it. There is a thrill of being in the air and hitting water! Whenever I dive, I feel very good. Every time after training I would come back very happy and high."

Divers, like gymnasts, are judged on the difficulty of their routine, the execution and most critically, the finishing. As a diver, his focus is on making the perfect entry with his head perpendicular to the water, making as little splash as possible. If not, it will hurt.

"I was ok doing somersaulting in the air but then adapting it to hit the water with the head needed some getting used to. When I didn't make a good entry and hit the bottom flat, it hurt a lot! Doing rotation when you somersault and landing flat on your back, that was really painful."



**Name**  
Timothy Lee Han Kuan

**Year of Birth**  
1994

**Role**  
Diver



Timothy enjoying a light moment with China diver, Liu Jiao (left) and Malaysia diver, Pandelega Rinong Pamg (right).

Timothy waves to the crowd at the Toa Payoh Swimming Complex.



He represented Team Singapore in the 3-metre Springboard event. Being scheduled after a world champion diver, Great Britain's Tom Daley, placed him at a tremendous disadvantage. But Timothy listened to his coach Orla Gilmore and just focused on his own dive. He gave it all he had with a forward 1½ somersault to obtain a personal best score.

His ability to stay calm and keep his focus helped him through the stress of competition. "Before my turn, I practice the dive in my mind. I practice what I'm going to do on the board, on the floor. I rehearse it mentally before getting on the spring board."

Ever optimistic, he stayed buoyant although finishing last at the YOG preliminaries, "Hey, it was good experience diving with the best! I'll be training hard as I've a long way to go!"

His fondest memories of the Games were the times in the Youth Olympic Village hanging around the pool with the other athletes after training. They will probably meet at other competitions in the future. Outside the pool, bonds were forged as passion for the sport connected them.

Timothy feels more confident and more mature now, after the sacrifices he has made for the YOG. "My dad said I'll get it all back in the end after the YOG and after the exams I can go out and have fun with my friends again. I've learnt to set priorities and put things on hold."

His courage to give up the familiar world of gymnastics and adapt successfully to diving has shown him that there is much to be gained from stepping into the unknown.









THE LEGACY CONTINUES





# The Legacy Continues

“Our mission for the Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games was to create an inspiring and memorable experience, while establishing an enduring legacy for Singapore and Singaporeans. This was successfully achieved. This YOG was also able to feature many firsts in the history of the Olympic movement. These included new sport formats such as three-on-three basketball games and competitions featuring mixed gender and teams of athletes from different National Olympic Committees; and the world’s first integrated sports, culture and education programme. Through the Culture and Education Programme (CEP), youths and young athletes had a chance to see the Olympic values in action and be inspired to live out the values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect in their lives.

Through high-level sports competitions and CEP activities during Games time, the young Olympians got to better themselves by embracing a deeper understanding of respect for others and making new friends around the world. Besides the YOG athletes, the youth of Singapore were similarly transformed as they pursued excellence as performers, event organisers and venue assistants, and proactively reached out to our international visitors, offering hospitality and friendship.

This is just the beginning. This YOG will be an inspiration for generations to come. Connected through sports and by bonds of friendship, these young people will help to build a more peaceful and harmonious world. This book features a small portion of the transformative experiences our youth have gained which exemplified the Olympic spirit and the Olympic values.

We can be part of this legacy too, by living out the Olympic values in our lives.”

**Mr Ng Ser Miang**  
Chairman, SYOGOC

# Transcending Boundaries

Friendships were formed as part of the YOG even before the Games were held through initiatives such as the Friends@YOG NOC-school twinning programme and Singapore 2010 Friendship Camp.



To celebrate diverse cultures at the first night of the Singapore 2010 Friendship Camp (December 2009) some of the 400 athletes from over 100 NOCs wore traditional costumes.



On the last day of the Friendship Camp, everyone was exchanging email and facebook contacts, signing autographs on one another's T-shirts, exchanging T-shirts, and snapping farewell photos.

Youths from Evergreen Secondary School taught students from Mongolia's Shine Uye Secondary School to make Kueh Dada as part of Friends@YOG. Over lots of stirring, shaking, frying and rolling, they got to know one another better.



As part of Friends@YOG, these seven-year-olds from South View Primary School designed animation clips with their newly-acquired Kazakh vocabulary to welcome athletes from Kazakhstan.



During Games-time, YOG athletes transcended boundaries and formed lasting friendships by participating in the various sports events and CEP activities.

Athletes and Singapore youth interacted with one another at the World Culture Village at the Youth Olympic Village (YOYV)...



... and made music together in Community Drumming!



"I am very happy with the performances tonight!"  
Lourdes Villasenor, 17,  
Mexico



At Pulau Ubin, athletes worked together in teams to build rafts and paddled on them. In doing so, they quickly got to know their new-found friends better!

"We managed to communicate well and work together. I enjoyed every minute of it."  
Heshan Unamboowe, 18, Sri Lanka



Athletes transcended national boundaries and competed together in mixed teams.

For example, athletes from different NOCs played in the same teams for Archery and Judo Mixed Team competitions.



# Inspiring Youth

Inspiring young people to participate in the Youth Olympic journey was a key aim of the Culture and Education Programme. This began pre-Games through initiatives such as the Singapore 2010 CAN! Festivals, the Singapore 2010 CEP Seminar and the Singapore 2010 Friendship Camp.



Celebrating the YOG via digital media at the CAN! Click Festival.



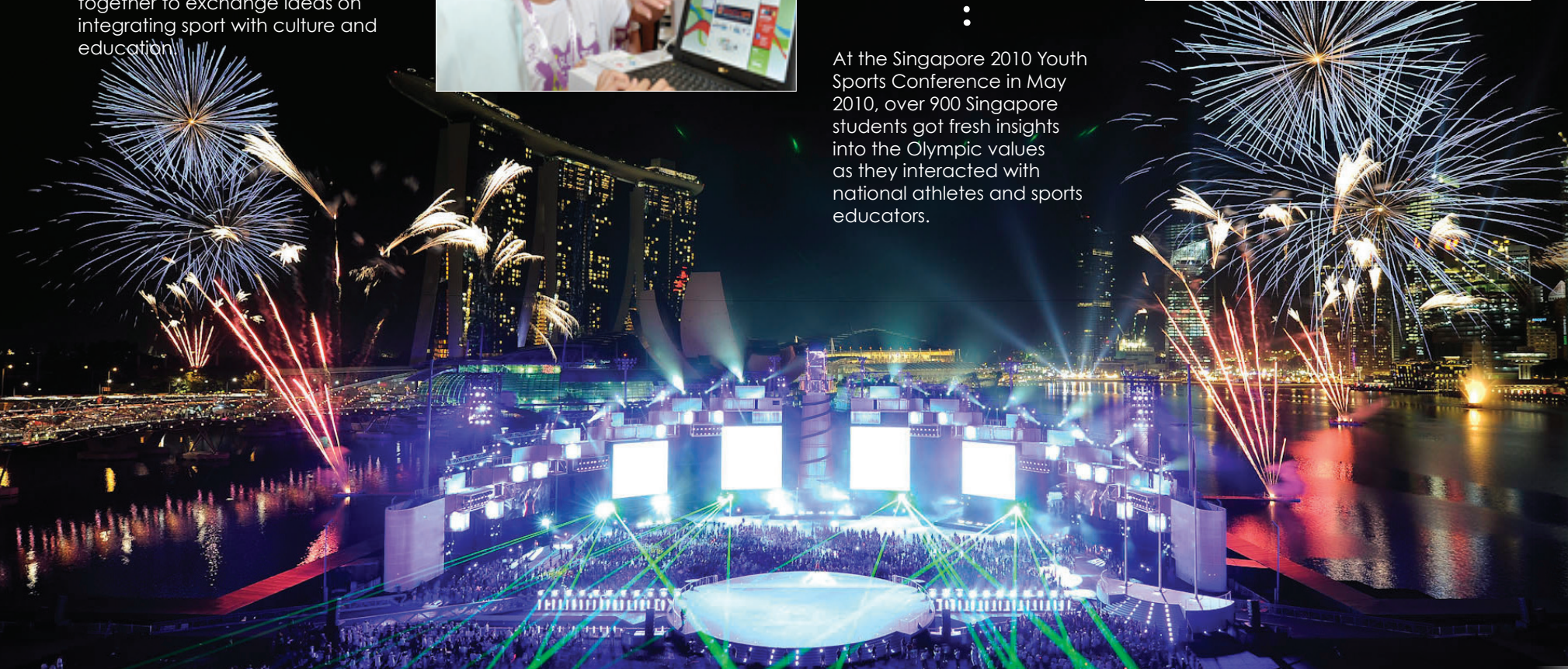
At the Singapore 2010 CEP Seminar in March 2010, 30 Young Ambassadors and 60 CEP Champions came together to exchange ideas on integrating sport with culture and education.



At the CAN! Discover Festival, youths learnt about food dishes from different cultures.



At the Singapore 2010 Youth Sports Conference in May 2010, over 900 Singapore students got fresh insights into the Olympic values as they interacted with national athletes and sports educators.



**During Games-time, athletes were inspired through more than 50 CEP activities.**

Through workshops, athletes explored topics relevant for their journeys towards becoming champions in life such as health and nutrition matters, networking skills to build their careers and finding the right balance between sport competitions and studies.



Getting hands-on with environmental issues and our ecosystem, athletes built their own terrariums at HortPark.



The IOC Youth Session on 25 August 2010 gave youths an opportunity to share views with Jacques Rogge, the IOC President.



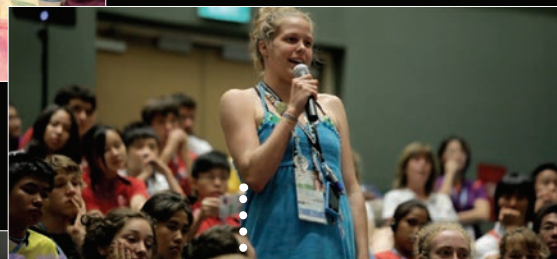
Discovering the roots of the Olympic movement at the Olympic Gallery.



Reflecting on the Olympic values through origami, athletes created stars symbolising the pursuit of Excellence, cranes for Friendship, or hearts representing Respect for self, others and the environment.



During Games-time, CEP activities at the YOY continued to provide youth enrichment activities. These included workshops, exhibitions, community projects, and interactions with Athlete Role Models.



At the Chat with Champions sessions, athletes got the opportunity to get up close with Athlete Role Models - Alexandar Popov and Sergey Bubka in this instance - and hear their personal experiences on living the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect.



# Reflections

'The feeling that I got when the spectators acknowledged my greetings with a nod and smile was strangely addictive. Over the course of those 9 days, I gained the experience of serving spectators, forged friendships with fellow workforce that would last for a long time, and most importantly, created memories that would forever be etched in my mind.'

Tiffany Ang Yen Lyn, Anglo-Chinese Junior College who served as a Spectator Service Officer during the YOG

'I've learnt the importance of the Olympic spirit, not just in the context of sports, but in our everyday lives.'

Yip Yuk Lum Jennifer, Hwa Chong Institution

'The YOG has helped me gain new friendships that can last a lifetime.'

Joelle Lim Shu Yu, Anderson Junior College

'The three Olympic values are Excellence, Friendship and Respect. We must not only remember these values but abide by them as well. ... Such values should also be applied in our daily lives.'

David Zhang, Rulang Primary School

'I gained [more] self-confidence from the YOG. My sense of belonging to and pride in Singapore has also increased.'

Khine Myint Myat Thein, Yuhua Primary School

YOG makes the world shine bright  
telling me to spread my wings out wide  
to laugh till I touch the sky  
to dream till the world gives in  
to try so hard that I am bound to win!!'

Extract from poem, Dare to Dream, by Oh Khee Hoon,  
Ahmad Ibrahim Secondary School



'We'll take on whatever challenges we face. It's [part of] the Olympic Spirit.'

Brian Theng, Martin Marasigan, Lee Pin Yi and Kwan Yi Yan, Montfort Secondary School

'I'm proud that Singapore hosted the YOG and even prouder that I was involved!'

Desmond Ng Qi Wei, Seng Kang Primary School

These were once-in-a-lifetime experiences that could not be found in the textbooks or in the classroom.'

Nicole Ying Smith, Pei Hwa Secondary School

'The YOG was not about winning, but how to be gracious and friendly to visitors...'

Flora Ng, CHIJ St Nicholas Girls' School (Primary)

'I made many new friends and learnt about their different cultures. The YOG has made me [more of] a global citizen.'

Metiwan, Bukit View Secondary School

'I became a part of the history of the first Youth Olympic Torch Relay team. It was the happiest occasion of my life.'

Shannon Wan Jia Min, De La Salle School

'I learnt to abide by the rules of the games, make friends while playing and strive for the best.'

Aloysius Sim, Manjusri Secondary School

'The YOG was a fantastic event where competitors got together not just to compete in the games but to foster ties, build friendships and do their nations proud. YOG will be a significant part of history in creating hopes and dreams.'

Bernice Lim, River Valley Primary School

Youths in different races Unite as one Humanity  
The Olympic Games is filled with enthusiasm

Extracted from poetry by Vanessa Goh, Ang Mo Kio Secondary School

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12. Regent Secondary School
13. Saint Joseph's Institution
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# BLAZING THE TRAIL

Inspiring Youth Through The Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games

