



Left: Jiang Daming, governor of Shandong, hands the Beijing Olympic torch to 1992 Barcelona Olympic sailing silver medalist Zhang Xiaodong. Right: Fireworks mark the launching ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Sailing Competition at the Olympic Sailing Center in Qingdao.

ISAF: Sailing venue 'the best'

► Petersson gives thumbs-up to Olympic sailing organizing work

By ZHANG YING

"The Olympic sailing competition held in Qingdao is the best prepared among all the eight Olympic sailing events I have participated in," said Goran Petersson, president of the International Sailing Federation (ISAF), after a recent inspection of the Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center.

All Qingdao's facilities and technological systems needed for sailing competitions at both the Olympics and Paralympics have been well prepared, he said.

I firmly believe that this sailing competition will leave unforgettable memories.

GORAN PETERSSON
ISAF president

It is the result of more than five years of meticulous preparation. The city has also accumulated valuable experience by organizing several

international regattas over the past few years.

Prior to the opening of the Games, about 50 national teams arrived in Qingdao for about three months of pre-Olympic training. They said they are very satisfied with services provided by organizers.

"I really appreciate what the local people have done for this grand event," said Petersson. "I firmly believe that this sailing competition will leave unforgettable memories."

The Qingdao Olympic Village has been fully operational since its opening on July 27, presenting athletes with quality services in food, living, leisure and cultural exchanges.

David Kellett, vice-president of the ISAF, also gives high marks to Qingdao's work.

"I am very satisfied with everything I have seen here. It's no doubt that the facilities of Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center are among the best we've ever had in history."

"I believe that all the athletes, coaches and officials will be satisfied with the facilities and services here. They will have a wonderful and joyful Olympic journey in Qingdao," Kellett told China Daily.

He said he is also impressed by the volunteers in Qingdao, giving them high praise for their passionate and considerate services. "I feel so proud of these wonderful volunteers," he said.



Goran Petersson (second right), president of International Sailing Federation and Zang Aimin (third right), the mayor of the Qingdao Olympic Village, appreciate pottery arts in the Folk Customs Culture Display at the Olympic Village.

China hopes to grab a gold

By ZHAO RUIXUE AND GUO XIN

"We look for at least one gold medal in the sailing events in Qingdao," said Yao Xinpei, the deputy head of the Chinese sailing team before the opening of the Olympics.

"Competition will be fierce but we will do our best," Yao added.

As the host, China is directly qualified to enter all 11 sailing events. Sailors competing in Yngling, 49er and Finn events were selected from Qingdao.

The Chinese team also has gold medal chances in men's and women's windsurfing and the Laser Radial sailing class.

Women's windsurfer Yin Jian won a silver medal at the Athens 2004 Olympic Games.

Determined to give her best performance at home, Yin has been training hard.

Laser Radial competitor Xu

Lijia, currently ranked second in the world by the International Sailing Federation, is another one leading China's bid for a sailing gold.

Young and talented, Xu won the 2006 Laser Radial World Championships and took a silver medal at the 2008 Worlds. World No 1 Anna Tunnicliffe of the United States and Tania Elias Calles Wolf of Mexico are Xu's strongest rivals.

Tiantai is a local Qingdao team that is representing China in the Yngling event. It won third and sixth place respectively in the 2006 and 2007 Qingdao International Sailing Regatta.

To prepare for the Games Wang Yong, coach of the team, invited foreign coaches to help the athletes improve their skills and strategy.

Experts also gave psychological guidance to bring out a top-notch performance.

"We undertook physical training and studied competition rules in the morning, and went out on the water in the afternoons to familiarize ourselves with the venue," said Song Xiaqun, a competitor with the Tiantai team.

Although there is still a long way to go for China's 470 and Tornado-class sailors to catch other world-class teams, the Olympics provides the Chinese athletes a great opportunity to learn.

Sailing as a sport began in China in 1978 and developed rapidly. More than 20 provinces, cities and regions now plan to start sailing competitions.

China has taken first place many times in the Asian Games. The women's windsurfing team has won five world titles.

China won two silver medals in Barcelona in 1992 and the same in Athens four years ago - but never a gold.

'Hi-tech Olympics' underway

By HUANG YANHONG

With one of the prime missions of the Beijing 2008 Games a hi-tech Olympics, the ongoing sailing competition in Qingdao has become a showcase of new technologies.

"New and high technologies used in construction, meteorological forecasting, intelligent transportation, wind and solar

power generation, food safety and medical services are in use for the event," Wang Wei, deputy chairman of the Qingdao Olympic Sailing Committee, told China Daily.

The nation's first anemography laser radar now at work at the sailing event provides high-precision information on wind speed and direction at sea.

The Olympic sub-village boasts 25 new technological achievements including the application of new materials and solar power.

Hi-tech medical treatment is also offered for the event.

A long-distance Telemedi-

cine Consultation Center is connected with 35 hospitals in Beijing, Shanghai and Jinan and an international clinic will provide treatment.

The Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center also generates tidal energy, solar and wind power, and uses recycled water. Using renewable energy reduces electricity-grid demand at the center by 913,000 kWh annually. Qingdao is also honoring its commitment to host a green Olympics.

Organizers say the sky is bluer and water clearer, while the city is much more attractive and living conditions are more comfortable.



Setting sail for victory Sweden's Jonas Lindberg and Karl Torlen compete during the 49er class at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in Qingdao yesterday. The Olympic sailing competition comes into its third day today.

This special supplement is co-published by the Information Office of Qingdao municipal government and China Daily