

# Gymnastics glory? Don't count on it

By TANG ZHE  
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Gymnastic powerhouse China may have to accept fewer medals at the 26th Summer Universiade in Shenzhen due to the absence of world-class performers.

The Chinese gymnastic squad topped the medal table with three gold, six silver and four bronze at the 2009 Belgrade Universiade, with the women's side contributing all the gold.

However, it will be hard for the Chinese to continue their momentum in Shenzhen after the withdrawal of the injured world champion Cheng Fei. Only two inexperienced gymnasts, Guan Wenli and Xiao Kangjun, will take part in the women's competition.

Cheng Fei, who has won nine titles at three World Championships, three World Cups and two Olympic Games, made her Universiade debut in Belgrade, but only finished second after making mistakes in the "Cheng Fei jump", a vault movement named after her.

The 23-year-old, who has been plagued by knee injuries the past two years, was expected to return to the gym at home, but decided to withdraw only days before the opening ceremony.

China's patchy lineup gives the Russians a good chance of repeating this glory of 1999, when they won the team gold at the Palma de Mal-



lorca Universiade in Spain. China has held the team title for the past five University Games.

The Russians also hold advantages in the individual events.

Being the only Russian who has competed in a Universiade, Alena Polyan won the floor title at the 2007 Games at Bangkok. She also came third in the individual all-round at the Russian championships earlier this year.

Yulia Lozhechko, of Russia, was the balance beam champion in the

2007 European Championships, and her compatriot, Anna Myzdrikova, who excels in both the vault and the floor, also performed well at the 2009 London World Championships.

On the men's side, many world-class performers will display their skills in Shenzhen.

Mykola Kuksenkov, of Ukraine, came fourth in the individual all-round at the 2010 World Championships in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, will vie for gold in the vault

and floor. He also has a good chance in the horizontal bar.

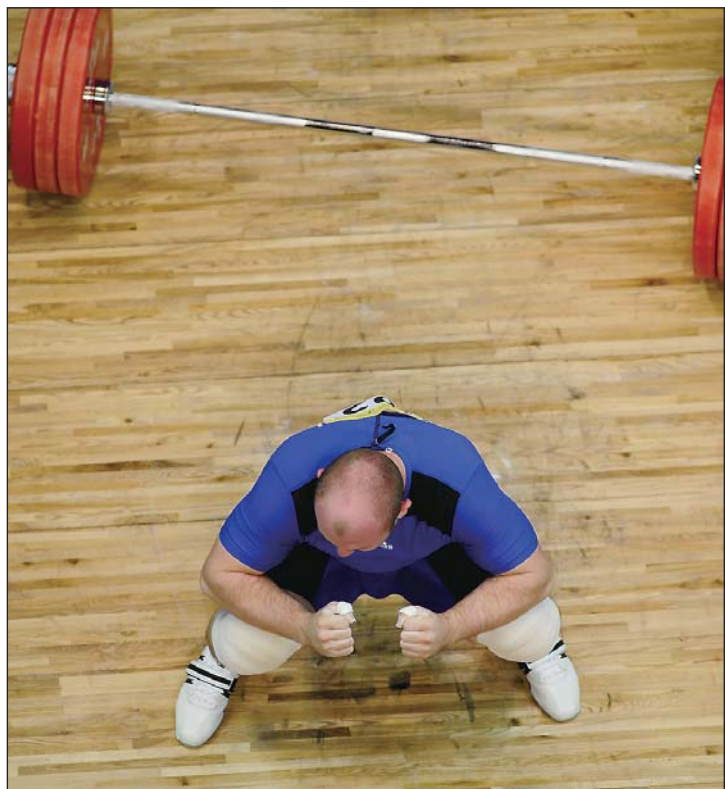
Slovenian Petro Pakhnyuk, who has won one gold and two silver in the horizontal bar at three World Championships from 2005 to 2007, is another contender in this event.

There will be little suspense in the vault, as Australian Prashanth Sellathurai, two-time bronze medalist at the 2009 and 2010 World Championships, holds an obvious advantage against his rivals at the Universiade.

Meanwhile, China's Wang Guanyin, who won the parallel bars at the 2009 World Championships, is thought to be most likely to bag the gold for China.

Wang failed to claim titles in two World Cups and the National Championships this year due to repeated mistakes in a new movement.

The events will be held at Bao'an Gymnasium from Aug 13 to 16 with about 180 gymnasts from 41 countries and regions taking part.



## Weightlifting off to a strong start

By ZHANG CHUNMEI  
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Weightlifting won't wait long to make its first mark on the Universiade.

The women's 48 kilogram and men's 56 kilogram weight classes will both compete for medals today in the event, which is making its Universiade debut.

China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Russia and Turkey will be among the top competitors.

### Women's 48kg

Thailand's Pensiri Laosirikul may have a shot at the gold medal. She finished third in the 48kg weight class at the 2010 Asia Games.

Her fiercest rival could be 19-year-old Xiao Hongyu of China.

She is the gold medalist from the 2010 Asian Youth Championships and generally regarded as one of the most talented young weightlifters in the world.

Lifters from Japan and Moldova will also bid for gold. They performed well at the World Youth Championships early this year.

### Men's 56kg

Li Lizhi, the runner-up at the 2009 National Games in China, is a possible medalist. Li, 23, has maintained a relatively steady record in recent years. He was the bronze winner in the 2007 Asian Championships and gold medalist in the 2007 World Cup. He is one of the most experienced participants in the event.

Yerbolat Zholamanov from the Republic of Kazakhstan has also

been solid. He ranked ninth in the World Youth Championships this year.

### Judo

The judo competition also begins today, with competition in the men's -100/+100kg and women's -78/+78kg weight classes.

Here are some athletes to watch: South Korean Jeong Gyeong-Mi claimed the women's 78kg judo gold medal at the 2010 Asian Games. She is ranked No 9 in the world. Runner-up at the 2010 Asian Championships, Jeong hopes to add Universiade gold.

There are also high expectations for Chinese judoka Qin Qian in the +78kg weigh class. He was the bronze medalist at the 2010 World Championships and the silver medalist at the 2010 Asia Games.