

# Men's hockey has a gold target

Khan confident promising crop of youngsters can turn the sport around by 2009

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JUST last month, Singapore were beaten 8-0 by Malaysia in the 11th Asian Hockey Cup. The team were also blitzed by Pakistan and Japan by the same scoreline.



**Malaysia are far too good at the moment but we're getting a lot closer to them and I believe we have a real shot at gold in 2009.**

— Khan's goal is to beat the Malaysian men in two years time

While the Singapore men will do battle in the SEA Games in Korat, Thailand, from Dec 6-15, no one is expecting them to do better than silver with the Malaysians around.

But national coach Terry Khan plans to turn the tables on the Causeway rivals by the next edition of the Games in two years' time.

"Malaysia are far too good at the moment but we're getting a lot closer to them and I believe we have a real shot at gold in 2009," said the Australian, who has been coaching the national side for two years.

"We've been playing Malaysia regularly in friendly matches and it has been a good learning experience for the boys.

"From next year, the senior side will take part in the Malaysia Hockey Federation league and will play against their state teams as well."

Singapore last won gold at the regional Games in 1973, when they beat Malaysia 2-0 in the final at the National Stadium.

By the time the next SEA Games rolls around, it would be 36 years since that gold, but Khan is confident the drought will end because of a promising crop of young players coming through the ranks.

"At the moment, half of the national



WEE TECK HIAN

**PLAYING CATCH UP:** Singapore (in red) will compete in the Malaysian Hockey League next year.

team are below 21 and they will form the bulk of the side that we hope will play at the Junior World Cup and SEA Games in 2009," said Khan. "The rest of the will come from our current under-18 and under-16 youth development sides."

Singapore and Malaysia have joined forces and submitted a joint-bid to co-host the men's Junior World Cup in 2009.

While Singapore Hockey Federation president Annabel Pennefather will furnish more details on the bid for the under-21 tournament today, it is the first time there has been a joint-bid for a major world event under the International Hockey Federation (FIH) calendar.

In light of the bid, the SHF are working hard to push Singapore hockey to a higher level.

Said Khan: "The youth team needs to play at least 20 high-level international games a year, which is why the junior squads will be touring with the senior team next year and in 2009. Events like the Tun Razak Cup next month and the AHF (Asian Hockey Federation) Cup are important to us.

"Our long-term plan is to develop the youth team to take over the current senior side. By 2010, the juniors will have 40 to 50 caps and would have gained enough exposure."

"The current under-16 side will be groomed for the 2010 Youth Olympics and our target for the senior side will be qualification for the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

"Singapore are currently ranked world No 38, we want to be ranked from 25-30 within the next two years," he added.

## Triathlon meet gets safety boost

ORGANISERS of the OSIM Singapore Corporate Triathlon, which will be held on Nov 3 at the East Coast Park, will take extra measures to make the event as safe as possible for participants.

To allay concerns after the recent deaths of triathlete Thaddeus Cheong and endurance runner Captain Ho Si Qiu, Triathlon Association of Singapore (TAS) senior executive Jerry Seah (picture) said yesterday: "Some companies are concerned (about safety) and haven't been so involved this year.

"But we've increased our spending by up to 30 per cent and are adding more safety measures for events this year."

An ambulance equipped with defibrillators will also be on standby during clinics for the triathlon.

TAS will also increase the number of kayaks, safety bike marshals and lifeguards

by 20 to 30 per cent for the Osim event.

Those interested to sign up for the race are advised to go for a medical check-up before putting pen to paper.

Seah's advice is to train well and "listen to your body".

"It's important to have a good training plan," said Seah, a certified trainer and International Triathlon Union coach.

"Participants in the sprint category (750m swim, 20km cycle, 5km run) should be clocking weekly training distances of

3km, 50km and 8km for the swim, cycle and run segments, respectively."

— **LOW LIN FHOONG**



*Registration for the OSIM Singapore Corporate Triathlon closes this Friday and those interested can visit [www.corporatetrisg.com](http://www.corporatetrisg.com) for more details*

### SOME TIPS ON TRIATHLON PREPARATION

MAKING the switch from one leg to the other in a triathlon can be tough even for a seasoned triathlete.

Participants often find themselves struggling to make the transition, especially from cycling to running, as different muscles are utilised for the two segments.

In order to be fully prepared, participants in the OSIM Singapore Corporate Triathlon should take Seah's advice and introduce "brick sessions" into their training schedule.

"During these sessions, you can do two

consecutive sets of 10km cycle and 1km run," he said.

"Alternatively, those doing shorter distances can try three sets of 5km cycle and 1km run.

"This training will help the muscles to get used to switching from a bike workout to a run workout without getting cramps."

Avoid common training mistakes such as starting your running season by running too fast, increasing your mileage too quickly and not allowing your body enough time to rest.

## Uh oh, quick finish your soup before they sub it with the main course

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