

Striving Towards a Modern Coastal Metropolis

Ningbo Earns 'City of Olympic Champions' Title

By Jin Lu

On Sept 16, Ningbo was awarded the "City of Olympic Champions" trophy by the Chinese Olympic Committee.

Other recipients of the honor, which recognizes a city's outstanding contributions to China's sports development, include Hebei Province's Baoding, Liaoning Province's Anshan, and Heilongjiang Province's Harbin and Qitaihe.

Ningbo's Sports Development

To date, Ningbo athletes have won 20 world titles, 24 Asian titles and 172 national titles.

The Ningbo Sports School has been named a "national high-level sports talent reserve base" for four consecutive years. Over the past decade, the school's students have claimed 140 titles nationally and internationally, breaking national records on nine occasions.

Ningbo's athletes returned home from the Tokyo Olympics with five gold medals in August 2021. A month later, the city hauled in 20 golds, 11 silvers, and 11 bronzes at China's 14th National Games, ranking fourth in the medal table.

The city's sporting prowess is inseparable from its sustained efforts to promote fitness among the public.

The proportion of citizens who regularly participate in physical exercise in Ningbo reached 30.62% in 2021, the highest in Zhejiang, according to one survey.

In addition, Ningbo is renowned for its dedication to cultivating sports talents. Local authorities have announced a plan to produce 100 top athletes, 1,000 outstanding athletes, and 10,000 backup athletes by 2025.

Ningbo's World Champions

Two-time Olympic weightlifting champion Shi Zhiyong



Ningbo's World Champions.



[Photo designed by Ren Zheng]

has one of Ningbo's best-known success stories.

The 28-year-old, who won a gold in the 73-kilogram category at the Tokyo Games, has never forgotten his roots. He often returns to Ningbo No. 2 Youth Amateur Sports School, where he spent the early stages of his career.

"I came here for my first training program in 2008. At that time there was just one building on the campus," Shi said.

"Over the years, I witnessed the development of the school, while they witnessed my growth. This is my home and I love coming here to train. Successful veteran athletes can be great motivators when they train alongside their younger counterparts. I always like spending time with the youngsters. If they do something wrong, I will point it out — it's an effective training tactic."

Ningbo born- and bred Wang Shun did the city proud in the Tokyo 2020 pool, powering to gold in the 200m individual medley. A month later, he bagged a whopping six gold medals at the National Games.

"I encountered many difficulties during my preparation for the Tokyo Games, including injuries. But none of it stopped me from chasing my dream of winning the gold medal."

Yang Qian, who shot to overnight fame by winning the first gold of the Tokyo Games in the women's 10m air rifle, spent her formative years at the Ningbo Sports School. After claiming individual medals, Yang won another gold as part of the 10-meter air rifle mixed team.

18-year-old Guan Chenchen won a women's balance beam gold at the Tokyo Olympics. In 2012, Guan was sent to the

Zhejiang provincial gymnastics team by the Ningbo Sports School. In 2017, she became a member of the national gymnastics team.

Investing in Athletes' Potential

Wu Chengjun, an official of the Ningbo Municipal Sports Bureau, says the city's sports infrastructure has been crucial to unleashing local athletes' potential.

"We have many preferential policies to support the development of competitive sports and the national fitness campaign," said Wu.

"From 2016 to 2020, we invested heavily in the sector, especially to upgrade sports facilities across our city. For example, ¥470 million (\$73 million) went into sports schools.

"We have also been at-

tracting promising athletes and coaches from other cities through different programs that offer them good healthcare, plus high-quality education and employment opportunities for their family members."

The Ningbo Sports School, established in 1956, has long been a cradle of champions and continues to churn out elite performers.

Wang Shun spent years training and studying at the Ningbo Aquatic Sports School.

"I'm a Ningbo native. I get very excited every time I speak of my hometown. I spent my childhood the same way that kids here now do, training every day. Ningbo's swimmers enjoy such great success today thanks to the collective efforts of generations of athletes and coaches. We have the best coaches, from the elite level to the grassroots level," said Wang Shun.



双语汇 Different Tongues

澥浦船鼓：归航的丰收之舞

By Gou Wen

Xiepu Boat Drum Dance originated in the Qing Dynasty (around 1810) and has a history of more than 200 years. It is a folk dance that integrates percussion instruments, boat-shaped props, and folk music. The Dance reflects the ways of life and customs of fishermen in eastern Zhejiang. When fishing boats return with full loads, fishermen celebrate the harvest with the Boat Drum Dance.

澥浦船鼓起源于清朝(约1810年前后),距今已有200多年历史。这是一种集打击乐、船型道具和民歌小调为一体,反映浙东渔民生产生活习俗的民间舞蹈样式。每逢渔船

满载而归,渔民们就以船鼓表演来庆祝丰收。

Xiepu is the name of the place where the Dance originated. Xiepu town was a great fishing port in the Ming and Qing dynasties. In the Old Yue language, "pu" means "the water's edge" or "where the river meets the sea"; "xie" is a homonym of "蟹" (crab). Together, the two syllables mean "a place near the water's edge with crab".

澥浦其实是个地名,澥浦镇在明清年间是个很大的渔港。澥浦中的“浦”字是古越语,意思为水边或河流入海的地方。“澥”通“蟹”,合起来的意思可以理解为“靠近水边、有螃蟹的地方”。

Today's Xiepu Boat Drum



Xiepu Boat Drum Dance. 澥浦船鼓。

[Photo provided to Ningbo Times]

Dance begins with a performer shouting the words "setting sail!" The five acts—navigating the seas, casting the net, riding the waves, pulling up

the catch, and return to port—depicts the entire fishing journey and eastern Zhejiang's maritime customs.

如今传承下来的澥浦船鼓以“开

船啰——”作为引子,之后按照“出海、作业、搏海、丰收、归航”5个章节,反映渔民捕鱼作业的全过程,体现了原汁原味的浙东渔家风情。

SPOTLIGHT

84-Year-Old Donates ¥1 Million to Help Students In Need

By Dong Na

Recently, Ningbo citizen Mr Lin donated ¥1 million to the Ningbo Charity Federation, to be given as financial aid to impoverished students.

Mr Lin, a 84-year-old retired university instructor, recalls seeing students who were so poor that they struggled to get basic nutrition on campus. As soon as his savings reached ¥1 million, he contacted the Ningbo Charity Federation, which sent two staff members to accompany him to the bank so that he could wire money to the Federation's account.

Mr Lin's pension is modest. After paying monthly nursing home fees, he has very little left. He has always led a simple life. The heat in Ningbo this summer was intense, yet Mr Lin still put off installing an air conditioner, saying "the heat wave will pass, but I have to save some money to help those in need." Throughout his career, Mr Lin was a diligent and hard-working teacher, putting away his earnings bit by bit over the decades to form this incredible sum of ¥1 million.

Mr Lin's philanthropy has a lot to do with his upbringing. He explained to the staff of the Federation that despite their financial hardships and lack of education, his parents were always willing to lend a helping hand to those in the community. Mr Lin's family strongly supports his decision to donate ¥1 million.

After completing the transfer of funds to the Ningbo Charity Federation's account, Mr Lin visited the Federation's offices and took a photo to commemorate the occasion. "This is my way of giving back to society," he said.

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