



BIRTHDAYS

Born on Nov 18

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Rugby

Liu Zhuan
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An Iranian athlete enjoys simulated boxing in the video games room at the Athletes' Village.

SUN XIAOCHEN / CHINA DAILY

Playing games at the games

By SUN XIAOCHEN
CHINA DAILY

GUANGZHOU — After the dining hall, the video games room is proving to be the most popular spot in the Athletes' Village, as it provides a release valve for athletes between their competitions and training sessions.

Stepping into the 60-square-meter room inside the service center, your ears are soon bombarded with the sound of playful banter as diminutive gymnasts race pumped-up weightlifters on driving simulators, while Thai boxers outshoot ballroom

dancers at the hoops machines nearby.

"There's a lot of fun here. All the young guys like playing video games to relax," said Aiman Al Katheri, a Yemeni beach volleyball player who was testing his driving skills on a racing simulator.

"I enjoy the racing games because they're more exciting and exhilarating. I can't imagine ever driving a Ferrari in real life, let alone crashing it at high speed, but I can do it on these machines," he said.

Located in the central area of the residential zone, the service center includes a free Internet bar, a TV area

and small meeting rooms. While the games room has the highest occupancy rate of all the facilities here, the TV area is also in hot demand because the athletes' apartments lack TVs and the Internet.

"It's always crowded here," said Feng Mucong, who manages the service center, which is open from 8 am to midnight daily.

"We experience our 'rush hour' from 6 pm to 10 pm, and the athletes often have to wait outside because we get flooded."

Shooting hoops is also a perennial favorite.

"I usually shoot very high points

on this game, which is the best one here," said Hossein Senkaei Nasera-bad, an Iranian athlete.

"Although I'm not a basketball player, I'm good at this game. Sometimes I'll have a little contest with my teammates. Whoever scores the highest has to buy drinks for the rest of us. It's great fun here, like paradise."

The games room also allows for cross-gender battles.

"I enjoy the video games here like the men. I like to play with the guys from different countries. It's a good place to make new friends," said Susila Adhixari, a Nepalese judoka.

Q & A >> Girish Jagdish Phadnis, team official from India



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Girish Jagdish Phadnis (left) poses with a volunteer in the shuttle bus at the Athletes' Village.

How is the shuttle bus service in the Athletes' Village? How long did you wait here to catch a bus?

I didn't wait too long. The scheduling is perfect, and the bus always comes on time. Every time I walk out of the dining hall, there is a bus waiting. It's very convenient. And the golf cart inside the residential zone is good, too. Any time you wave, they stop and take you wherever you want to go.

Where are you heading now? And how was lunch?

I am going to the international

zone, to go to the bank. The lunch was good. There are different kinds of food here, so people can find their favorites. We Indians like curry and chicken, and the curry dish was prepared very well.

Have you visited the Chinese study center in the international zone, and can you speak any Chinese?

I know the center, but I haven't visited it yet. Foreigners can learn Chinese and calligraphy there. I have been to China before, so I can say a few words, like "ni hao" and "xie xie".

Do you know about Asiad Daily, the official publication of the Asian Games? Have you read it?

Yes, I know the paper. Every day they send the paper to our delegation office, and, of course, I read it.

What do you think of the paper?

I like it! The news is always updated and the stories are interesting. We don't have TVs or Internet in every room, so the paper is important for us. It keeps us informed about the games, the medal tally ... everything I want to know is in the paper. And it's fun.