

Tickets going fast as the games loom

SOCCER, BASKETBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, GOLF AND BEACH VOLLEYBALL SEATS STILL AVAILABLE

By GAO CHANGXIN
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — If you want to see Universiade events live, you better get moving. Three days before the sports meet formally opens here, most of the tickets have already been snapped up.

Damai Ticket, the authorized online dealer of tickets for the 26th Universiade, said on Monday that among the first batch of 11 competitions that had started selling tickets, only five — soccer, basketball, track and field, golf and beach volleyball — still had tickets remaining.

And it is already too late if you want to buy courtside tickets to some of the finals.

A Beijing-based college student surnamed Zhuo traveled to Shenzhen especially for the Universiade, but he didn't realize the tickets would be so sought-after.

Zhuo said that his father, after trying all possible ways, managed to get him a ticket for one of the basketball games.

"I want to see a lot of games; it is a pity that I have got only one ticket. If I had known in advance, I would have started buying tickets earlier," said Zhuo.

Li Jing, an office clerk in Shenzhen, was not as lucky. When the swimming fan reached the box office on Sunday, she

was told all the tickets for swimming had been sold out.

"I will try to find other ways to get myself some tickets. If I fail, I will just settle for watching television at home," she said.

In fact the tickets are so popular that some businesses are using them as a way to promote their products.

A car dealership in Shenzhen's Longhua district promises to offer a free Universiade ticket to buyers of its Hunan Dragon Junjie FSV sedan.

And a local sports lottery has also set aside 60 Universiade tickets to award lottery buyers who buy tickets worth more than 38 yuan at any one time.

One of the reasons for the fast sale of tickets is that Shenzhen has set the prices for the Universiade much lower than that of other world-class sports meets.

The most expensive ticket costs only 300 yuan while the lowest is 30 yuan.

For now, tickets are sold at 23 venues around the site of the Universiade and some of China Merchants Bank outlets. Residents in Shenzhen can dial 114 or 95555 for ticket information.

WU JUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

A resident, surnamed Lin, became the first person to buy the Universiade Games tickets on July 21.



Main media center opens to provide top-class service

By GAO CHANGXIN
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SHENZHEN — The main media center of the 26th Summer Universiade started operations on Tuesday and will provide service to more than 3,000 journalists during the sports meet in Shenzhen.

The 16,000 square meter center, consisting of a main press center and an international broadcast

center, has 258 work stations for reporters and 84 for photographers. It will be in service round the clock during the 13-day meet, which starts on Aug 12.

The center also has two press conference rooms, with a total of 460 seats. Meanwhile, a 484 sq m area is reserved for 18 official media partners, including the China Daily, and two specially-invited news agencies.

"With high-standard hardware and software facilities, we aim to provide the journalists with the best service to help them cover the Universiade," said Bai Wanli, vice-director of the broadcasting and media service department of the Universiade.

Shuttle buses connect the center in Longgang district with designated hotels downtown. Starting on Aug 13, the buses will set out every 20 minutes from 5:00 am

to 22:00 pm and every hour from 22:00 pm to 5:00 am.

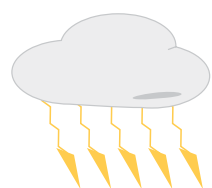
The center, which is manned by 500 staff and 500 volunteers, also has a variety of help desks aimed at assisting with interview requests, translation, transportation and accommodation.

The business service area has a coffee bar, a post office, bank outlets and ATMs, a China Telecom booth and a licensed products store.

The catering is also top notch. The center has a Chinese food restaurant, a Muslim food restaurant and a western-style buffet, which costs only 10 yuan, or less than \$2. The restaurants offer food four times a day.

"Most of the services are free or offered at a discount. Under the instructions of the city government, we are service-oriented, not profit-oriented," said Bai.

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Today's forecast
Scattered T-Storms
Max **32°C**
Min **28°C**
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