

Norwegian cyclist rolls back to China

By TANG YUE
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Emil Unaas did not win a medal in the men's road race. He didn't even finish.

But that did not matter as his dream had already come true.



CYCLING

Four years ago he raced on the same track and this time he made it back to Shenzhen for the Universiade.

Back then, the Norwegian was learning Chinese at Xiamen University in neighboring Fujian province and had just started competitive cycling. A friend dragged him to a race in Shenzhen.

"I can't remember what exactly the event was but it was the very first cycling race I ever competed in," Unaas said.

"At that time I heard that the Universiade cycling would also be held on the same course. So I was really inspired and was looking forward to competing in the Games.

"It is really amazing that I've come back after four years. It (the track) was harder than I

remembered, but it is a perfect course.

"I always dreamed of competing with the best cyclists from all over the world. It's very hard to get that chance normally. So I'm very happy to have the opportunity here."

The Norwegian's first visit to China dates back eight years when the then 13-year-old competed in an orienteering competition in southwest Yunnan province.

"I was very young but I was invited to compete here," he said. "I learned how to use chopsticks and had a lot of nice experiences. Also Yunnan was very beautiful. I was so impressed.

"At that time, there were not many foreigners coming to the places we went to. But wherever we went, people made us feel welcome."

That visit led to further trips.

In 2005, Unaas, then in his second year of senior high school, came to study in Hefei, the capital city of Anhui province in Central China, on a one-year exchange program.

After he finished high school

in Norway, he came back again to study the language and the Chinese economy for a year at Xiamen University.

Then Unaas returned to Norway for a couple of months. A Swedish sports event company called him and asked him whether he would like to work for it in the city of Changchun in China's northeast. He agreed.

"We organized events like skiing, cycling, running, swimming and table tennis," he said. "We even had an event in which more than 20,000 people skied. It was a lot of fun.

"We had events in Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Shanghai and Yunnan — almost everywhere.

"There was also a lot of travel. I went to different places in China and it was all very exciting. I used to travel a lot around the world but now I travel just in China if I have the time."

After working for two years, Unaas returned to Norway and now is a marketing major at the Aalesund University College. Two years ago, Unaas also started a business selling bicycles in Nor-



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Emil Unaas during the race.



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EMIL UNAAS
CYCLIST FROM NORWAY

way, which gives him an extra reason to make frequent trips to China besides tourism and competition.

"It's very difficult to be No 1 in cycling and if you are not No 1 you won't earn much money," he said. "So you need some backup. I just try to have balance between a secure life and some adventures with cycling," Unaas said.

"I import bikes to China, some

from Canada. I use my Chinese language to get good prices compared to those companies who have no good connections in China.

"Maybe I will try next year to start a branch in China. I want to sell more here because there are always bigger opportunities here. The market here is growing every year and it'd be stupid not to try to set up a business in China."



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Poland's Michal Kadziola spikes during the final against Russia.

Poland's odd couple come up with gold at the beach

FRIENDSHIP THE KEY FOR KADZIOLA AND SZALANKIEWICZ

By TANG YUE
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SHENZHEN — It's a highly successful marriage, other than the fact it's not really a marriage.

Poland's Michal Kadziola and Jakub Szalankiewicz won the men's beach volleyball gold medal on Thursday at the Universiade, thanks at least in part to a rock-solid friendship.

"We have been married for six years," Kadziola said with a big smile after defeating Russia 2-1 in the final on Thursday.

"It is a joke. But it is really a long time we have been playing together. We know each other quite well, we encourage each other and try our

best to help each other in this way, just like a couple, like a marriage."

Kadziola believes their friendship is the key to their success.

"I know there are a few exceptions. Some players hate each other very much off the court, but they play really well in the game," he said.

"But it's always better if you are really good friends and get along with each other. At least that is how it works for us."

They're a bit of an odd couple. Kadziola is taller and more aggressive, boasting a strong spike.

Off the court, he is also more talkative, while Szalankiewicz is the more silent partner.

Kadziola likes going to the pub for a drink, meeting strangers and making new friends.

Szalankiewicz prefers to stay home and play on his computer.

"I'm more loud, and he is shy. I think it also helps. If both are very loud and want to talk, there might be a problem," Kadziola said. "And if we have different opinions, we have a discussion and we will work out a solution that is best for our play."

The pair fought back after losing the first set, then again from a 12-11 deficit in the decisive third set to upset Sergey Prokopyev and Yuri Bogatov 15-21, 21-10, 15-12 at the Dameisha Beach Volleyball Court.

"I think there was no favorite team before the match. If you stand on the court, you just fight to the end," Kadziola said after the 50-minute clash.

"They could win today. They won the first set. But in the second we fought every single ball to the end and very much concentrated on the game. That is how we fought back."



BEACH VOLLEYBALL