



Daniela Macias serves to Doha Toufic of Egypt in a women's Group G badminton match on Tuesday at the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games. Macias won 21-15, 21-9. PHOTO PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Tennis venue set to breed new talent

By GAO CHANGXIN
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The China Tennis Institute, the tennis venue for the Nanjing Youth Olympics, will become a leading training facility for the Chinese national tennis team and an incubator for local talent.

With a total investment of 135 million yuan, the venue has more than 40 courts, covering the four main surfaces: clay, hard, grass and carpet. The competition courts there meet the highest international standards and can host the highest level of competition. The venue also fills the country's void of top level grass courts.

The institute is jointly sponsored by the Tennis Administrative Center of the General Administration of Sport of China, the Sports Bureau of Jiangsu Province and the Nanjing Sports Institute.

The venue was officially unveiled on Aug 10, but national team members, including Olympic medalist Peng Shuai and Zheng Jie, have been training there since 2012.

After the Youth Olympics, the venue will be a base to train young athletes, coaches and researchers. The institute is in talks with the ASC Sánchez-Casal Tennis Academy, a world-renowned institute that trained Andy Murray, Rafael Nadal and Fernando Verdasco, to create a program to import and train coaches.

"The institute will be a cradle for young athletes. We will learn from the world's tennis institutes and strive to produce world-class athletes such as Li Na," said Zhang Jian, head of the institute.

Peruvian has big shoes to fill

By GAO CHANGXIN
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When Daniela Macias first stepped into a stadium in Peru seven years ago, there was something about the sport of badminton that appealed to her instantly.

It could have been the shuttlecock flying elegantly in the air or the suppleness of the players, she was not sure. "I was in a club, there were a lot of sports, I went to the badminton court and I liked it. And then I told my mom that I wanted to start. That's how it

started," said Macias.

What she is sure of today is that she wants to follow in the footsteps of her mother and compete at the Olympics.

She is well on track.

After beating Egyptian player Doha Toufic 2-0 on Monday, her prospects of advancing out of Group G of the women's singles at the Youth Olympic Games improved markedly. A solid result in Nanjing would significantly boost her current world junior ranking of 42 and improve her chances of competing in the qual-

ifiers for the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Macias is a multiple junior national champion at home. Her hero is Thai Ratchanok Intanon, the women's singles world champion and the youngest singles world champion ever.

Macias was raised in a sporting family. Her mother was a swimmer and competed at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles in the 200 meter butterfly, 200m individual medley and 400m individual medley. Her two brothers also play badminton.

As much as she wants to win in

Nanjing, the overall experience is equally as important to her.

"I want to try my best, try to win as much as I can, but I also want to enjoy the experience," she said. She has not found the time to tour Nanjing yet, but her experience in the Athletes Village has already been an eye-opener.

"The village was amazing, the buildings and the lights; I made many friends there playing those games in the pavilions. All over it was a wonderful experience," she said.

Lone fencer from Syria keeps smiling in Nanjing

By XINHUA

Mohammad Shaheen of Syria has heard bombs exploding outside when he practiced his fencing skills. One day, a bomb fell through the roof of his gymnasium. He saw the wreckage the next day.

The diminutive 17-year-old, just one of three professional fencers in Syria, appears unshaken by these experiences and always has a smile on his face, whether he is talking about his passion for fencing or recalling

what the war took from him.

"I mustn't be angry," he said. "I don't care about anything that makes me angry. I love to be a happy man. I don't care about anything else."

Shaheen started fencing when he was 12 years old while his friends were playing soccer and basketball. He calls himself one of the first fencers in Syria.

Because the Syrian delegation only has nine athletes at the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games, Shaheen is here alone without a coach.

The young fencer is used to this. He has been going to competitions alone for two years now.

"For two years, I am like this, alone, no coach coming with me," he said. "Nanjing, no coach. Kuwait championships, no coach. World championships, also no coach."

"I had a coach from Tunisia. He made me a good fencer but he left because of the war," Shaheen said. "Because of the war, it's not safe for him. But I am Syrian. I think I should be there because that is my country."

There was no one to cheer for Shaheen or give him advice as he faced stronger opponents in the men's epee. Shaheen lost all bouts in the pool round and was eliminated 15-4 in the round of 16 by Linus Islas Flygare of Sweden, who went on to capture the silver.

Shaheen was not discouraged by his early elimination.

"The medals don't matter to me, but I want to be a champion. It's not easy for good fencers to beat me," he said. "Right now I'm losing, but I think that maybe, I hope, I'll be better after a few years."



The China Tennis Institute is expected to be an incubator for Chinese tennis talent.