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Editor's Note

Very few people in Hong Kong can recall the glorious history of Hong Kong football – those good old days when our city is still called “Football Kingdom of the Far East”.

Who, in my generation, can still recall Li Hui-tang, who was once named World's Five Best Footballers together with Pele? Who knows the first Chinese player to score in the English League is not Sun Jihai? It was actually Cheung Chi-doy, who played for Blackpool and actually scored a goal in his second game in England. Those who know Canto-pop singer Alan Tam Wing-lun may not know his father Tam Kong-pak (Tai Jiangbai) was actually a renowned footballer who played in the 1936 Berlin Olympics for Republic of China and was praised by Adolf Hitler.

Those were the days. When youngsters today play football only with fingertips and eyeballs on video consoles and bet for their favourite teams online, we can simply declare playing sports is in no way flourishing in Hong Kong.

But actually, when we flip open the history book of Hong Kong sports, we can see pages of poetic glory and excitement - not just football, but the sports field as a whole. And until today, local athletes are still writing their names into the book.

I began my journalism “career” as a local football reporter in my first year of university and I can see there are still a lot of teenagers who are keen on sports, but face discouragement from parents who mainly worry about their future.

It is a pity the society does not regard sportsperson as a respectable occupation and the government just lacks a systematic way to nurture potential sportspersons. Those emerge as elite athletes are solely because of their own talent and persistence. Their dull days in offices and lonely nights of working out in gymnasiums should be recognised and their stories should be told to encourage and promote sports in Hong Kong. I think it is the ultimate goal of having big sports events in Hong Kong. And the medal table and number of audience in the upcoming EAG will serve as the report card for how much the government has been working in these years.

Simpson Cheung Wai-ming
Chief Editor

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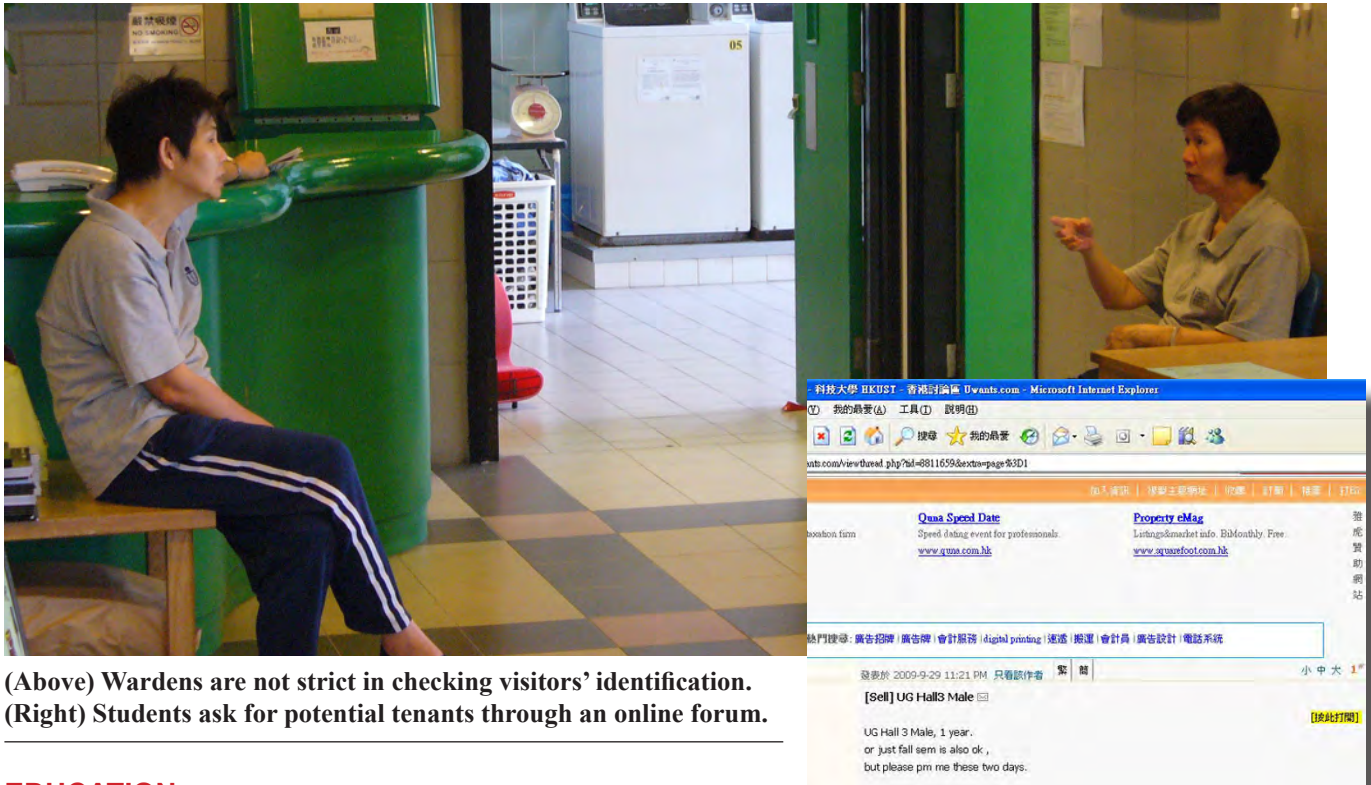
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(Above) Wardens are not strict in checking visitors' identification.
(Right) Students ask for potential tenants through an online forum.

EDUCATION

HKUST fails to solve subsisting hall sublease problem

BY ALAN KWOK

Weak security system and loose implementation of hall rules make it possible for The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) students to carry out hall sublease which takes advantage of government-subsidised university facilities.

"When I entered the university, I have heard about the practice of hall sublease," Mr Chan (pseudonym) said. "I've subleased my triple room to a friend for \$1,500 in addition to the original \$3,800 hall fee."

The HKUST hall rules state clearly that hall accommodation is only for personal residence. Use of the hall premises for any other purpose is prohibited. If a resident fails to obey the rules, his/her hall residency may be suspended or terminated and disciplinary actions may be imposed.

According to Mr Ross Lai, Head of Media and Editorial Unit of Office of University Development and Public Affairs of HKUST, hall sublease has been a long-term practice and the school knows about it.

"A number of students found involved in hall sublease have been penalised," Mr Lai said. "This is an inappropriate practice."

However, hall subleasing is still active es-

pecially during the fall semester when members of club committees are busy for school activities. There are pages of advertisements on Uwants.com, an Internet forum popular for sublessors to put on their ads.

Through Uwants.com, Mr Wong (pseudonym) rented a double room from a successful hall applicant by paying an extra charge of \$2,000 in addition to the hall fee.

He said the most threatening penalty for hall sublease is that students involved can never apply for hall residence again. "We can bear this risk," he added.

Student residential halls are university properties funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) which is responsible for allocating public funds to the UGC-funded institutes. By subleasing hall places, students are making money out of taxpayers.

The UGC has not received any complaint about the matter. Mr Victor Lau, Assistant Secretary-General (Policy) of UGC said they would ask for investigation and follow-up by the institute if they receive complaints about hall sublease.

"The UGC will not tolerate any misuse of public funds. Every UGC-funded institute is autonomous but also responsible for managing and allocating its resources," he said.

Hall subleases are mostly found in UG Hall I to V out of the seven halls in HKUST. The security system of these halls comprises

a password access at the entrance and keys to rooms. However, the password can be easily shared among students while the room keys are manageable for transactions.

Security guards are deployed at the main entrances of these hall premises every day from 10.30 pm to 6.30 am the next day. For the rest of the time, wardens from the Student Affairs Office keep the entrances. But they are not strict in checking the identification of visitors entering the hall premises.

On the other hand, UG Hall VI and VII are equipped with an e-lock system by which residents have to present a door card for both entrances to the hall premises and their own rooms. This makes hall sublease difficult.

The e-lock system is highly employed by halls of other universities such as City University of Hong Kong and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Moreover, security guards go on duty around the clock. These successfully prevent hall sublease.

"Halls of HKUST are mostly constructed in the 1990s while those of HKBU, PolyU, etc. are built in the 2000s. There should be gap between the technologies applied in their security systems," Dr Arthur Lau, Residence Master of UG Hall IV of HKUST said.

"It is feasible to enhance the security system of our halls with new technology. There is always room for improvement," he added.

EDITED BY VANESSA YUNG



Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf, the feature animation co-produced by Hong Kong and mainland, draws a record in animation of 80 million yuan this summer. (Courtesy: Creative Power Entertaining)

BUSINESS

HK-mainland animation: from competitor to partner

BY JESSICA ZHANG

Local animation production houses crave for a slice of the large market on mainland, but not necessarily without challenges.

Recent animation blockbusters *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf* and *McDull Kung Fu Kindergarten* were the brainchild of Hong Kong and mainland's talents.

This summer, the feature film *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf* made about 80 million yuan (about HK\$90.8 million) -- a record box office for a domestic animation -- in theatres nationwide.

It was at first a popular 500-episode TV animation series made by mainland artists and a Hong Kong's creative team made an adaptation and bought it to the silver screen.

"People should not only look up to Japan and Hollywood. Cooperating with mainland China will be a new trend for Hong Kong animation and creative industries," James Choo Sung-pong, the Hong Kong director of the film, said.

This Christmas, McDull will take to the stage in Shanghai after Bliss Concepts Company and Shanghai Media and Enter-

tainment Group decided to produce *McDull classical concert*.

Waking up to the successful story of the two animations in the mainland market, Hong Kong small-medium production houses are trying to take up the opportunity to follow suit.

Mr Peter Ng Sheung-ho, founder of Pai Pai Shou Studio in Hong Kong, saw an enormous cartoon market in China. Rather than getting involved in the production, Hong Kong production houses now tend to take on an advisory role, as how they worked in the making of *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf*.

"The production model is different now," he said, "Hong Kong production houses now focus on pre-production planning. Production and execution is often done by mainland partners because labour is cheaper there."

Faced with fierce competition with rivals from Japan and Hollywood, the road for local animation production to take up a share in mainland's market is still bumpy.

The intense competition is stemmed from the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television's regulation that states that at least 60 per cent of television airtime should be dedicated to domestic animations.

While some Hong Kong companies are eager to collaborate with mainland, others

experience setbacks in their cooperation.

In December last year, Simage Animation and Media Limited matched a production line in Hangzhou for a 52-episode children cartoon series which was set to be exported to foreign broadcasters.

"We thought it would be easier for us to get animation talents in Hangzhou as the animation business over there has been doing well in the past few years," Mr Matthew Chow, the managing director, said.

But when Mr Chow was frustrated in brain drain and poor performance of the staff, he decided to put an end to the short partnership after eight months.

"The workers are not up to scratch. It costs us even more money and time to provide training for them," he said. "Worse still, some well-trained workers then moved to larger corporations."

He also said that censorship by mainland's authorities on their production limited their creativity.

The Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement proposed by China and Hong Kong has relaxed the restrictions for Hong Kong films and TV dramas on the mainland, but animation is not part of the deal.

EDITED BY JAYSON HUI

CAMPUS

Exchange students alienated by teaching language

BY JEMELYN YADAO

As the only Scot in the class, exchange student Ms Lauren Smith could not help but feel isolated. While her lecturer explained something potentially important in Chinese without translation, what was supposed to be an opportunity of a lifetime became just plain annoying.

"He spoke for what felt like a long period of time, it was awkward because whilst he spoke some of the students would look at me," Ms Smith, an International business student, said.

Before coming to Hong Kong Baptist University, she along with 203 other exchange students were expected to face a cultural shock, which refers to the stress and anxiety one might experience while trying to adapt to a new environment, especially in the first few weeks of term.

They are often told that the best way to beat the shock was to keep an open mind and exercise flexibility.

However, whilst some exchange students can master chopsticks and eat their daily dose of cup noodles happily, some others, after over a month, still find it difficult to adapt to the methods of teaching in the classroom.

"The lecturer may think that I am the only exchange student in the class but actually there are two other students from the Philippines," Ms Smith said.

Mr Steve Marcuzzi, an exchange student from Switzerland who studies Japanese, experienced a lesson where the lecturer spoke completely in Chinese. Learning Japanese became more challenging than ever for English-speaker Steve.

"I was not sure whether I would pass or fail this course. The course and exams would be a real challenge for me but on the other hand I would learn more because I have to do work more independently especially when researching the grammar myself," he said.

"It was just strange as the course was opened to exchange students but the books are written in Chinese. I always had to ask locals to help me translate the words," he said.



(Above) Exchange students of HKBU are discussing on academic issues.

(Right) Japanese textbooks sold in Hong Kong mostly contain only Chinese translation.

After having moved to a different Japanese class, Mr Marcuzzi still found the course very hard and said that the course was mainly aimed for the local students.

"They assume that the students know the characters already so I have to study ways more than others do," he added.

Mr Peter Li, Director of International Office at Hong Kong Baptist University confirmed that the university adopted a policy that all lectures must be conducted in English, including language classes.

"It's so easy to assume that if you are carrying an oriental face or Asian face you automatically can speak Cantonese but that is not necessarily the case as we are getting more and more students from different parts of the world," he said.

Ms Jennifer Chan, Programme Officer at Hong Kong Baptist University said that exchange students should understand the teachers' motivation for their occasional use of Chinese.

"It may happen that the teacher is not aware that Chinese occasionally used in classes would affect the learning of exchange students. The teacher may also do it with a good intention of helping the local students understand better," she said.

Despite emerging cases of exchange students finding the way of learning difficult to adjust, Mr Li felt no surprise.

"At this time students realise they have to



keep up with things, all of a sudden they are no longer tourists, they can't go to Lan Kwai Fong every evening and be able to survive the semester," he said, "Any systematic difference would be viewed as negative as they try to adjust."

He said that people tended to do better as time went by and students would learn to be more flexible.

"If things are just the same as their home country then why bother to come?" he said.

"I would imagine that the beauty of coming as an exchange student is to learn new things that way when you go back to your country you can brag about that adjustment you had made and hopefully in a few months time you can say I've made it, I've done it,"

EDITED BY ISA KWOK

ENVIRONMENT

Sustainability of fish needs pushes among public

BY VERA CHEN

High price hinders the popularisation of sustainable seafood among general citizens despite promotion among some of the high-end restaurants recently.

Seafood is deemed sustainable if it is fished from sources that can maintain or increase production in the future without jeopardising the ecosystem.

The concept of sustainable seafood was first promoted by World Wide Fund (WWF) in 2007 when they first published the *Sustainable Seafood Guidebook*.

The guidebook categories 67 kinds of mostly seen fish in Hong Kong into three grades, namely “recommended”, “think twice” and “avoid”.

Bostonian, a restaurant which started serving five fishes in September from sustainable source, received positive feedback from their customers.

“Local people concerned the development of sustainable fish,” Ms Sharon Tong, marketing communications assistant of the restaurant, said.

She added that though the prices of sustainable fish were higher than that of other fish, customers generally thought the taste and the idea of sustainability worth the price.

Dot Cod is another high-end seafood restaurant promoting sustainable seafood. Its executive chef Mr Colin Gouldsbury said an increasing number of customers come to the restaurant for sustainable seafood.

“I first heard about sustainable seafood six years ago from my friends who studied marine biology. Few people knew about this idea at that time. But in these two years, lots of people are talking about it,” he said.

Dot Cod is the first restaurant which serves sustainable seafood listed in the guide in 2007. At present, 78 per cent to 80 per cent of their seafood dishes are made with the recommended species.

“In two years, all the fish on our menu will come from sustainable sources,” Mr Gouldsbury added.

Professor Yvonne Sadovy of The Division of Ecology and Biodiversity of School



Fish sold in markets generally do not come with indication whether they come from sustainable source or not. (Photo: Edith Tsang)

of Biological Science at The University of Hong Kong, said the increase in the number of restaurants providing sustainable seafood was a good sign to show that more people were aware of the concept.

“The guidebook is the first step for its educational purpose,” she said, “I think more people would change their habits if they have more information.”

Although more people visiting high-end restaurants are getting to know the idea of sustainable seafood, the concept is not very well-known among general citizens.

According to a survey by WWF in 2009, only 20 per cent of Hong Kong people have heard about the sustainable fish. “We need more time to convey this message to the public,” Ms Elbe Lam, project officer of the sustainable seafood programme of WWF, said.

“Most of the recommended species are not the cheapest ones. Not everyone can afford it,” Prof Sadovy said.

Mr Gouldsbury agreed that the high price of sustainable seafood was an obstacle to popularise sustainable seafood.

“Only two or three supermarkets in Hong Kong sell sustainable fish, and they are expensive,” he said.

Three Sixty is one of the supermarkets

recommended by WWF for buying sustainable seafood from. However, only frozen stock is provided.

Sustainable seafood has been pulled off the shop’s shelf lately. Ms Jacqueline Ng, marketing manager of the company, explained that the supply of seafood listed in the guide was not stable.

Prof Sadovy said it was more practical to recommend the public to stay away from having seafood in the “avoid” list as there were not many options of seafood in the other two categories at the moment.

Some 90 per cent of fish in Hong Kong are imported from other parts of the world. According to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the import of live marine fish totalled 11,424 tonnes last year. However, all the six mostly consumed species by local people are not the recommended species stated in the seafood guidebook.

“Hong Kong has the responsibility to enhance its pace on sustainable fishery,” Prof Sadovy said.

“The biggest challenge is to let people believe it is really a problem and they could be part of the solution,” she added.

EDITED BY KAREN SHIU



Tak Goh and Siu-lun meet every week in the Lok Wah Training Centre.

Heart-warming present for the givers

BY PEARL LIU

On her birthday, Ms Lisa Lee received a birthday card with some simple drawings, but in her eyes the card was a very special gift.

"My friend Siu-ping drew it by herself," said Ms Lee, a student at Hong Kong Baptist University, "it means more to me than delicate patterns and beautiful words."

Her friend Siu-ping is a girl born mentally handicapped. Ms Lee, one of the 300 participants of the Best Buddies programme, has the chance to make friends with people who are mentally handicapped.

According to the statistics from the Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department in 2008, there are about 80 thousand people in Hong Kong suffering from developmental disabilities. Despite the enormous figures, misunderstanding and isolation is still a major existing problem.

"Many people think the developmental disabled tend to be violent or crazy, and should be placed separately in their own group," Mr Francis Yu Sau-ying, the project manager of Best Buddies Hong Kong, said.

In 2004, Hong Kong launched the Best

Buddies Programme, which aims to let people know more about those having mental handicap and improve their lives by building one-on-one friendships.

Based on the concept "friendship", the programme puts more emphasis on building relationship, comparing to other one-off visiting activities.

"To understand and care about them is a slow and gradual process," Mr Chan Wai-tak, nicknamed "Tak Goh", a police officer who became friends with Mr Cheung Siu-lun for five years through the programme, said.

During the weekly appointments between them, Tak Goh has discovered Siu-lun's gift in painting and colours.

According to the social worker in Lok Wah Training Centre, Siu-lun was able to pick up the interest of drawing and became more confident and outgoing because of the encouragement and support from Tak Goh.

Mr Lee Cheuk-ming, in his wheelchair, started clapping and laughing when his friend Mr Poon Ping-hong, nicknamed Ah Ping, a student of Shue Yan University, was arriving at the door. Ah Ping said, "He could recognize me, and know I'm coming for him."

Mr Lee was born mentally handicapped and was sent to Lok Wah Training Centre

three years ago because his father was too old to look after him.

"He was bad-tempered and did not want to communicate with colleagues in the center at first," Ms Choi, a social worker, said.

"He knows there is someone who can accompany him frequently and really concern about him," Ah Ping said, "What he wants is not much, but some chats or a greeting over the phone."

Ah Ping once brought Cheuk-ming to the peak for a "long" trip.

"Cheuk-ming does not have many chances to go out because of the inconvenience brought by the wheelchair," Ms Choi explained, "But with his friend Ah Ping, he is able to keep contact with the outside world on a more frequent basis."

In this one-on-one friendship, people having mental handicap are not only the receivers, they also bring colours to their friends' world. For Tak Goh, the experience gives him a chance to relax from the stress in work and express his true feelings.

"Together with Siu-lun, I feel I could throw the mask away and say whatever I like," Tak Goh said.

EDITED BY SYBIL KOT

FEATURES

A STRIKE NOT FOR THE FAINT-HEARTED

BY YOYO SUN

It was eight in the evening in a mansion at Tsim Sha Tsui. Paired up, these students all took up a still stance and displayed firm anchorage while trapping each other's hands at an impeccable speed. With strikes as explosive as a bolt of lightning, they were actually practising Chi Sao (sticking hands), a very basic skill in Ving Tsun.

Ving Tsun, colloquially known as "Wing Chun", is a branch of Chinese kung fu originated from Southern China back in Ming Dynasty.

"Ving", in Chinese, means "eternal" while "Tsun" means "spring". This branch of Chinese martial art is known for its efficient use of force and quickness in close-range combats.

For some people, their knowledge of Ving Tsun may come from the 2008 movie *Ip Man*, a semi-biographical film about Ving Tsun grandmaster Ip Man starring Hong Kong martial artist actor Donnie Yen Chi-tan in the title role. And now it seems Ving Tsun has leaped from being a mere silver screen sensation to an actual city scene around town.

According to the Yip Man Martial Arts Athletic Association that has been run by the descendants of Ip Man since 1970s, people flocked to the association to learn Ving Tsun after the movie *Ip Man* was released. The number of Ving Tsun practitioners there has soared from around 50 to 60 in the past to about 100 now every night.

Sifu (master) Sam Lau Kung-shing, director of Yip Man Martial Arts Athletic Association, said Ving Tsun has become the city's most popular form of martial art.

"Ving Tsun is simple and direct in a close-distance fight, which makes it ideal to exercise in densely populated places where only limited space is available, like Hong Kong," said Sifu Lau.

Sifu Ip Chun, the eldest son of Ip Man, said it was his father who brought Ving Tsun to Hong Kong when he first set foot in Hong Kong back in 1950. Before that, Ving Tsun had never existed in Hong Kong.

"It would have never occurred to my father that Ving Tsun would become this pop-

ular under his influence," said Ip Chun.

It certainly takes a lot to master Ving Tsun, as Sifu Lau said, "Martial arts training ought to be hard. Ving Tsun is no exception. If there is no 'blood, sweat and tears', you can never master Ving Tsun."

Mr Jeran Cho, a 23-year-old physiology graduate from Canada, has practised Ving Tsun since he was 14. Learning how to stay calm and be observant are among the many rewards he got from practising Ving Tsun.

"Everything in Ving Tsun, like the hand-sticking routine, the stance and the angle of strike, has wisdom in it," said Mr Cho.

Ving Tsun's popularity has gone beyond Hong Kong, evident by the fact that there are approximately 2,000,000 people learning Ving Tsun all over the world. And now Hong

Kong is regarded as the ultimate destination for many Ving Tsun enthusiasts from around the world.

Mr Michael Currigian, who started learning Ving Tsun four years ago, has already become a private tutor in Britain.

"After I watched Bruce Lee's movies, I was stuck on kung fu and then I decided to learn it myself," said Mr Currigian.

He first learned Ving Tsun in Britain but then he moved to Hong Kong because he said Hong Kong has the best masters and is the "birthplace of modern Ving Tsun".

Mr Currigian also said many people in Britain are fond of Chinese kung fu and the existing four Ving Tsun training schools over there will not meet the demand in the future as the number of people aspired to learn Ving Tsun in Britain is increasing every year.

After spending so many years training and teaching in the field of martial arts, Sifu Lau's biggest wish is to promote Ving Tsun on an international level.

"I hope Ving Tsun will one day become the city's name card," said Sifu Lau.

This is not only Sifu Lau's but Sifu Ip Chun's wish as well. Still supervising Ving Tsun classes every day at the age of 85, this Ving Tsun master said, "I teach Ving Tsun because it keeps my retirement life dynamic. But beyond that, I really want to bring Ving Tsun to more people and see this innovative Chinese kung fu continue to blossom."

EDITED BY YVONNE LOU



VING TSUN
FOR
DUMMIES...



Photo: Yvonne Lou



SIU NIM TAO (LITTLE IDEA)

This first and foremost form of Ving Tsun moves lays a foundation for series of short-range moves that follow. Here, relaxation is the key.



CHUM KIU (SEEKING THE BRIDGE)

This second form moves aims to "bridge the gap" between opponents in a combat in order to execute further attacks.



BIU TZE (DARTING FINGERS)

Dubbed the "emergency techniques", this third form moves is characterised by powerful elbow strikes and finger thrusts.

FEATURES

Night out in church-turned club in Leeds



(Above) The stained glass with dance floor below it.

(Left) Situated in Leeds where mining used to be the major industry, the church surface looks weary blackish.

BY DAISY ZHONG in LEEDS

Beside the campus of the University of Leeds stands a Victorian Gothic style mid-nineteenth century church building. It has everything a church should have -- the shape of a cross, towering spires on the west end and figurative stained glass, contributing to its solemnity and serenity.

Meanwhile, when walking nearer, one will discover empty beer bottles scattering around the corner.

In this building listed by the government as of architectural or cultural importance, there is no pastor preaching, but music by DJ Tango and DJ Infiniti Stlyz. There is no disciple praying, but excited youths waiting in a long queue. There is no communal wine, but Heineken and Jack Daniels. In the daytime the nightclub is locked, and it wakes up at 10

pm unveiling a night of frenzy.

"It hurts me to see people drinking, dancing, some of the girls seem not to be wearing many clothes...in a place where God used to be worshiped," Mr Laurence Pusey, the longest serving chaplain in the Leeds University Chaplaincy, next door to the nightclub, said.

"Church membership in this country has been declining for over a hundred years," he said.

Mr Pusey said that in the 1980s there was a movement called "Liberal Theology". Originated in Germany where churches doubted the reliability of *Bible*, it spread through churches in England.

"All churches which embraced this theology suffered loss of members around the world but mostly in the West," he said.

Mr Hugh McLeod, the author of *The Religious Crisis in the 1960s*, said in his work that there was a dramatic drop of churchgoing which was considered a religious crisis by historians at the time because Western Eu-

ropeans were exposed to enormously widening of alternative options of faiths and world-views.

The nightclub preserved some characters of a church under government restriction as it is a "listed building".

"As a nightclub it is nothing special," Mr Zach Kang, a postgraduate student at University of Central Lancashire said. He also said the preserved signs were not obvious.

While some saw it as an usual nightclub with an unusual appearance, the contrast between nightclub and church atmosphere offending many others.

"Oh, God, you can't live in this house any more!" said Mr Imran Iqbal, a PhD student at the University of Leeds. Being there once, he found it weird to see fancy dresses and drunks under the stained glass.

"People there used to drink wine in memory of Jesus, but now they drink wine to get drunk," Ms Sophie Hamilton, a cultural studies student at University of Leeds, said. Being a Christian, she thought people's behaviour there was disrespect to God and spiritual life.

Mentioning it was a sign of the decline of Christian faith, Mr Pusey said with a pity, "It is really the fault of the church in this country...if we are doing a good job, the church would not close."

EDITED BY ANDREA WONG

FEATURES



SHOPPING AT FRANKFURT'S FLEA MARKET

BY STANLEY SUM in FRANKFURT

Young people usually go to karaoke or cinemas at weekends. But Ms Sandra Alexandra and her sister, Ms Sarah Alexandra, have another thing to do on Saturdays-- selling things at Flohmarkt.

Flohmarkt is a flea market in Frankfurt. In this fifth-largest city in Germany, it takes place in Schaumainkai or Lindleystraße, both regions are in line with the Main River. Schaumainkai is closer to Museumsufer, an area full of museums; while Lindleystraße is nearer to the city center. The market opens every Saturday and is organised by Management für Hafen und Markt Frankfurt.

The two German ladies who visit the market every month think that the flea market is a very comfortable place for leisure on Saturdays.

"I like it and we have planned to sell things next week," Ms Alexandra says.

What makes doing a business at flea market special is that any old stuff can be sold. Thus, there is no doubt that this weekly market is said to be an exotic mix of junk. From Elvis Presley's records to yellowed magazines, valuable antiques to even some headless plastic dolls, everything can be bargain hunters' targets.

Bargain hunters have to know that they should never give sellers the asking price. Customers can save an Euro or even more, and after all, sellers do not want to bring everything home.

Dealing with some stubborn sellers can be exhausting. It is time to refresh by eating delicious pork steaks or even drinking schnapps at the market. Butchers are grilling brats and, merchants are selling fruits and vegetables. The smell of food fills up the whole area.

The market is also a place for couples to



Pyramids of hand-made soaps.

hang out. Ms Konstanze Toerschen and her boyfriend both regard shopping at the flea market as one of their weekend activities.

"His home is full of so much stuff bought from the market," Ms Toerschen points at her boyfriend and laughs. "We should sell them all and we will be rich."

If the couple intends to sell at the market, they need to rent an area first. The procedure is simple. Ms Gilda Roeder who is doing her third-time-selling at the flea market says that she comes here to rent a space at 8:30am. The seller adds that one meter costs about five to six Euro.

"Some students are doing this business because it is easy and they can get lots of fun," she says.

Ms Roeder thinks it is such a great thing to sell here, as she can make others happy and have more money at the same time. "I am selling my own clothes," she smiles broadly and says, "but I guess it is the last time for me (to sell) because now I don't have anything to put into my stall."



Ms Gilda Roeder (right) finds it fun to sell clothes in the flea market.

Information of Flohmarkt

Location: It is located in Schaumainkai or Lindleystraße. From the Frankfurt am Main Hauptbahnhof (Hbf), the central station, get on the bus number 46 to Städel, Schaumainkai is on the right hand side; or get on the tram number 11 in the central station to Osthafenplatz and Lindleystraße is just a few steps away.

Time: It opens every Saturday from 9am to 2pm except national holidays

Cost: Free

EDITED BY SAMSON LEE

COVER STORIES

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Closer look at our East Asian Games

Hong Kong is going to hold her first international sports event in coming December. Our city has long been a barren place for sports. Being able to hold such a big sports event is not easy. Though there are a couple of scandals during preparation, sports itself should not be off-focused. Let's look at the Games as purely a Game.

It is time to showcase our persistence and hard work to the world. This is Hong Kong and this is what sports should be promoting.

Ines Narvaez, Cathie Guo, Candice Wong and Thomas Yau report.



Photo: Edith Tsang

Work out an open mind to adversity



It was an afternoon in July 2009, five months before the East Asian Games (EAG) opening. Lisa Cheng Lai-sho, a 23-year-old bodybuilding athlete, was crying in her bed when she should start pushing herself beyond her limits.

Cheng joined the "fitness and figure" competition listed under the bodybuilding sports, which emphasizes on muscle symmetry and muscle tone over muscle size.

Long before she started her profession in bodybuilding, she had won a champion in rock climbing.

During the past six months she had been living and training in Guangzhou for 12 hours a day, solely for the East Asian Games' bodybuilding event and she had even ceased her training in rock climbing.

Other than the tough training by herself, no professional support is there to work on her training schedule, advise her diet or monitor her physical conditions.

Since there was no one sponsoring her, she needed to come back to Hong Kong every weekend to work as a fitness trainer. She used the salary to pay for her training programmes and personal expenditure.

But perseverance and self-discipline do not guarantee success sometimes - the HKSAR government cancelled the bodybuilding event on July 21 this year because of "lack of consensus between the International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness (IFBB) and Asian Bodybuilding and Fitness Federation (ABBF) on the appointment of International Technical Officials and Judges".

The two federations have opened fire with each other for a long time since the ABBF approved three Hong Kong athletes who did not pass drug tests in 2005 to join the 2006 Asian Games.

"This is not true...This is not true..." she kept saying to herself until a dozen of journalists interviewed her on the phone and confirmed her the news. Her efforts were blown away and her dreams seemed to be destroyed.

Lisa Cheng works out every day in the gymnasium.

A few days later, she finally calmed down and started to sort the whole thing out. Like every athlete who fell down and managed to stand up again, there was a point where her personality kicked in and salvaged her from sorrow and tears.

"Even I lost a chance, I still have to be tough...Competition is just a small piece in my life and life is filled with ups and downs," Cheng says.

In the past few months, she joined the Asian Bodybuilding and Fitness Championship and won one silver and one bronze medal. Then she won the championship in another competition held in Guangzhou. These achievements all come from her preparation in this year.

She says, "I didn't have to give up myself because the EAG had gone, after all I do all these trainings for myself and I do enjoy the fruitful results in the competition."

During that adverse period, she was counting on herself to overcome those obstacles, a trait that emerged at the early stage of her career.

She explains, "I remember when I first left my [rock climbing] coach because of some arguments, I wanted to prove to my coach by always trying to be the best."

Since then, she has developed into an independent person.

"I want to achieve success with my own efforts. I don't want to depend on others' help," she says.

She is an ordinary girl who likes to look pretty and also loves running and climbing around since her childhood.

"Bodybuilding gives me chances to do what I love. When I am on the stage, showing my beauty and efforts to others, I get great satisfaction if the audience is cheering for my abilities," she adds, "I love this kind of feeling and that motivates me to strive for better results."

For the budding athlete, the goal of EAG has come to a termination but it has not hindered her ambitions to join more competitions, further her studies, improve her language skills and the biggest of it - to become a Kung Fu star someday.

"Chances are for those who are prepared," she says.

Mountain drives to hit the trophy



“I don’t really remember how it felt, playing hockey for the first time,” says Katy Mountain, one of the players of EAG hockey squad and former captain of the Under 21 Hong Kong Women’s Hockey team. “I guess it was fun. I’ve been playing for 12 years and so it has been a long time,” she says.

Although Mountain has been playing the game for a long time, she does not think she knows everything about it. “There is still so much I don’t know,” Katy shakes her head, reclining in a chair in a busy Starbucks on a sunny Sunday afternoon.

The 22-year-old modest athlete has been in the Hong Kong hockey scene ever since she started playing in P.E. lessons, making her way into the Under 14 (Age), Under 16, Under 18 and Under 21 teams and eventually the Hong Kong Delegation. And in the coming December, she represents the city to fight for championship in the EAG.

In the daytime, she works in the marketing field in a well-established bank. After work, she fits in practicing three times a week with the squad at Kings Park Hockey Ground as well as training with the Hong Kong Football Club hockey team. To stay in shape, she also practices running and weightlifting in her spare time.

“If I don’t have to work full-time, I could probably have more energy and put in more time to be the best hockey player I can be,” says Mountain. “Sometimes I have too much work to do but I still try to make it to all the trainings.”

Hockey is one of the 22 sports in this year’s EAG. It has become popular in Hong Kong since the 1950s and was dominated mainly by the armed forces.

Today, according to the Hong Kong Hockey Association, there were a total of 65 men’s teams and 43 women’s teams in the 2008-2009 season. Over the years, Hong Kong has qualified for international



Every practice Mountain joins represent a step closer to the championship of Hong Kong hockey squad in the coming EAG.

tournaments and hosted events such as the sixth Women’s Asia Cup in September 2007 and the Grand Masters Hockey World Cup in September 2008.

This December will be the centre mid-fielder’s second EAG and Mountain admits it will be tough. Rewind just four years back to the 2005 EAG in Macau, the Hong Kong team came last out of four teams, playing with some of the top ten teams in the world.

“It was tough playing against those teams,” Katy says. “Hopefully we will do better this year but it depends on which team we will be against on our first match.”

According to ABN AMRO Women’s World Rankings updated on September 1 this year, China ranked second in Asia and third in the world, Japan ranked first in Asia and sixth in the world, and Korea ranked third in Asia and tenth in the world. All three teams will be participating in the

EAG this year so the Hong Kong team will be facing some serious competition.

“The hardest part is getting the team together,” Mountain says. “You can have strong players but it will only work if they can perform well together as a team.”

She says each player has something to contribute to the team and the key to win is combining everyone’s skills and form the best set up. Her sister, Barbara Mountain, is also in the team and is one of the strongest players among the squad. The sisters will be one of the four pairs of siblings representing Hong Kong this year.

The EAG Hockey matches will be at Kings Park Hockey Ground starting on December 6.



Volunteer leaders receive training from the Agency of Voluntary Service.

Torches fail to light up students' enthusiasm

The School Torch Relay organised by the East Asian Games Limited between September and November 2009 received low attention.

There are altogether 1,128 primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. However, the EAG Limited has provided only 500 torches, which means that less than a half of primary and secondary local schools can get the chance to conduct their own torch relay during their school athletic meets.

Among the 500 accepted applications, the school torch relay didn't catch students' interest as expected, while some students and their parents said that they had never heard of this event before.

Mr Cheung Yui-san, a F.6 student from Poh Tang Pui King Memorial College, where there are two students representing Hong Kong in the Latin Dance event, said he had never heard of this school torch relay before and he had no interest at all.

The Young Reporter has randomly picked ten schools listed on the torch relay list. Eight of the respondents said they did not know the school was organising any torch relay. One of them has even cancelled the event due to academic arrangement.

Fact sheet of EAG

- Held every four years.
- Previous host cities: Shanghai, Busan, Osaka and Macau.
- Australia took part in the third EAG.

About fifth EAG

- Date: December 5-13, 2009
- Participating places: China, Hong Kong, Macau, Chinese Taipei, Mongolia, Korea, DPR Korea, Japan and Guam.
- Number of athletes: Over 3,000
- Number of gold medals: 262
- Number of sports events: 22
- Slogan: "Be the Legend".
- Mascots: "Dony" and "Ami"
- The Opening Ceremony: December 5, 2009 at Hong Kong Cultural Centre Piazza.

Unsung heroes perk up for the moment

She can hardly walk but she has the passion to help out. He is retired but he keeps serving others. They come from Beijing but will give a big hand in Hong Kong for the fifth EAG in December.

They are volunteers for the Games.

From May 2008, East Asian Games (Hong Kong) Limited and its co-organiser, Agency for Volunteer Service started to recruit volunteers from all over the world. After a nine-month enrollment, it received 14,000 applications.

"We seek for someone who has passion, good communication skills and language proficiencies. Of course we also considered if they had related voluntary experiences before," Ms Flora Chung Woon-fan, Chief Executive Officer of Agency for Voluntary Service, said.

There are about 6,000 volunteers chosen for EAG and only 400 of them have been appointed as voluntary leaders. To be a qualified leader, one needs to attend 32 hours of basic generic training and another 32 hours for the volunteer leadership section. Each of them will be guiding and cooperating with about 20 volunteers throughout the Games.

Mr Eric Ko Tat-ming, a personal banking manager, is a volunteer leader of Volleyball Section. He said the training was of high standard.

"The trainers were good and they used interactive games and role-plays to build

our leadership skills, which is different from those required in office," Mr Ko said.

About ten per cent of the EAG volunteers are retired people. After being a Fire Service Officer for more than 30 years, Mr William Tuet Tsang-lap will be a voluntary leader in the Security Section in December.

"The ultimate spirit of volunteers lies on the passion to contribute and serve the society but not about whom is your target service group. Whether it is athletes, VIP or normal citizens, it should be the same," he said.

Ms Sky So Kam-yi is the only wheel-chair volunteer in the Games.

"I want to let others know more about the disabled parties that they can do more and contribute to the society," she said.

She is assigned to serve representatives in a hotel. "If I am able to communicate with the VIPs, I would also want to show them that Hong Kong is a socially harmonious society that accepts disabled people as well," she said.

Student volunteers from Tsinghua University have also received an invitation to join the fifth EAG. Among them was Mr Zhang Hong-kun who worked as a volunteer in Beijing Olympics.

"The concept of volunteer is centuries-old in Hong Kong. Local volunteers have showed great enthusiasm and dedication. I will be so glad to work with them," he said.

EDITED BY SIMPSON CHEUNG,
MAVERICK LI, EDITH TSANG,
CONNIE WAN

INTERVIEWS

Beauty blossoms with sincerity

Angel Tong On-ki tells the secret of her beauty kingdom

BY LEILA POON

It is not a rare thing to receive calls from beauty parlours saying that they offer a free trial to first-time visitors. These trials may sound like a free lunch to customers but they always turn out to cost you a large sum, as their staff will persuade you to join some more slimming or facial treatment plans.

Ms Angel Tong said she felt sad to see the beauty industry in a state of chaos. "I don't want to be in the same group with them. The industry here is abnormal. I don't understand why the government does not set up laws to prohibit the unscrupulous slimming centres from using such a sales tactic to cheat customers," she said.

"At that time I swore I would open a 'clean' beauty centre with clear conscience in the future."

Being one of the China Top 100 Women Entrepreneurs in 2004 with her Angel Face Beauty Center being awarded Superbrand from 2004 to 2007, Ms Angel Tong On-ki, the 41-year-old businesswoman, has won fame and credibility in her path to help women accomplish beauty and health.

Asked what led to her success, the answer is "my sincerity to my customers."

"I like and aim at helping people and it has been my priority in the past twenty two years," she said firmly with no goggle of her eyes.

Having been promoting healthy slimming for over 20 years, Ms Tong said Angel Face has never used western medicine or slimming pills in their slimming programs, but only herbs and Chinese medicine.

"I object to the usage of slimming pills for a person who is less than 30 pounds heavier than she should be," she said seriously. "If a doctor does this instead of recommending her to see a nutritionist, I think it's questionable," she said.

"No doubt slimming pills can make you slimmer, but they can bring you death too,"



Ms Tong, the owner of Angle Face Beauty Creations.
(Courtesy: Angel Tong)

she stressed.

With passion for healthy slimming, Ms Tong finished courses in Nutritional Studies in Chinese Medicine and is recognised as a naturopathic physician by the Canadian Council of Naturopathic Examiners.

"I incorporate the concept of corroborator diets into my programmes. For example, it can be edema in some women who look chubby but it is not real fatness. In this case, we will suggest them to have black soya milk

which is beneficial to kidney," she said.

With eight branches under her name, the entrepreneur can always be seen on the advertisements on newspapers, magazines and television. However, her path to success was not easy at all.

Ms Tong grew up in a single-parent family and worked as a part-time model and dance tutor when she was 16. Later on, she worked as a junior trainee in a beauty centre and realised this could probably be what she would love to do for the rest of her life.

Ms Tong said if it had not been one incident, she could probably still be working for that beauty centre.

One day, she received complaints from customers about cheating them to buy ineffective products.

She then reported it to her boss.

"The boss's response has a great influence in my life," Ms Tong said seriously.

"Little girl, without playing tricks, there'll be no businessmen. Just let them go if they don't want to come. They have already paid for the treatments," Ms Tong smiled bitterly when she recalled the words her old boss said to her, right before she quitted the job.

"At that time I swore I would open a 'clean' beauty centre with clear conscience in the future," she said.

Returning to her part-time jobs and receiving fifty thousand dollars from her mother, Ms Tong eventually opened her first Angel Face shop in 1987 and named it after her own name as a guarantee to customers.

Ms Tong is now a mother of a three-year-old who needs round-the-clock company. She moved her workplace to the Internet and shares slimming tips and healthy diet recipes on her blog which has almost 2 million visits.

"I want my customers to learn how they can stay healthy from what I wrote," she said.

And to what can further be done, Ms Tong said the Consumer Council should have kept publicising the complaints of all kinds of malpractices to protect customers.

She also said beauty parlours in Hong Kong can learn from their Japan counterparts.

"They served customer as God and required a high degree of profession in the industry. This is what the local industry still cannot achieve now. ...I am thinking about what I can do," Ms Tong said, thoughtfully.

EDITED BY GRACE LI

INTERVIEWS

The man behind Agent Q

BY EDWARD MA

One minute Ah-Wing is sipping cold milk tea in a café, wearing a pair of flip-flops like any ordinary guy, the next he is pursuing terrorists in the costume of Tigger at Hong Kong Disneyland as one of his “missions”.

As the hero of novel *Agent Q*, Ah-Wing has been portrayed as a slovenly but also agile and courageous spy that is favoured by hundreds and thousands of teenagers in Hong Kong. Yet, Mr Leung For-hing, who gave birth to this sophisticated agent, seems to be of the more reticent and gentle kind.

When Mr Leung was a Chinese student at Hong Kong Shue Yan College (now Hong Kong Shue Yan University) in 1980s, he had started writing pieces of different genres such as poets, prose, book reviews and novels. As their publication debut, Mr Leung and his fellows compiled two poetry collections and published with a small circulation of 50 copies.

Straight up enough, the writer said his motivation for literary creation is simple: “I enjoy, therefore I write.”

After finishing his master’s degree in Librarianship at Dalhousie University in Canada, Mr Leung became a librarian at Hong Kong Public Libraries in 1996. Driven by personal interests, the librarian wrote book reviews that were published as collections one year later. Nevertheless, what makes his name prominent among the teenagers as well as the writing industry is the popular detective series *Agent Q*.

“Giving birth to *Agent Q* and the character Ah-Wing are coincidences,” said Mr Leung, “About ten years ago, Breakthrough (a non-profit educational organization) invited me to write a book that investigate Christian beliefs from scientific perspectives for young readers. But I found many similar publications in the market.”

Then he decided to repackage the book in the form of fiction as an attempt to arouse teenagers’ interests. Later, several short novels comprised the first episode of the series *Agent Q: Impossible Missions*. The pieces featured religious scientific topics including Jesus Christ’s shroud, evolution and environmental conservations through Ah-Wing’s experience.

“Teenagers in Hong Kong generally love scientific fictions,” the writer said, “I hope



Mr Leung For-hing said giving birth to Ah-Wing was just a coincidence.

the series can help the readers to gain knowledge about Christian beliefs in a more enjoyable way.”

In order to make the stories more realistic, Mr Leung has to do comprehensive researches on the background. “For example, I wanted to let Venice appear but since I have never been there, I have to refer to lots of books and online information to get details.”

The efforts do pay off. In 2006, the series won over the British novel series “Harry Potter” to be “The most favorite books of secondary students” in Hong Kong. Moreover, episodes of *Agent Q* have been voted as one of the “Best 10 books” by Hong Kong Education City for ten times, selected as one of the “Best 10 books for secondary students” for twice. Since 1998, the fiction series have been awarded a total of 18 prizes.

But neither winning awards nor gaining fame is Mr Leung’s goal.

“Puberty is puzzling,” he said, “through my works I hope to be the friends of teenagers and to share my thoughts about the problems they have during this period.”

“Sometimes I felt more comfortable after reading this series,” said Mr Bryan Li Yiu-sang, a reader who has read all the episodes of the *Agent Q*, “The author included Bible stories in the novels via Ah-Wing and his sister’s conversations. It affects my way of



The fiction series *Agent Q* has been awarded 18 prizes since it first emerged in 1998. (Courtesy: Breakthrough)

treating life and things.”

Meanwhile, Miss Wong Sin-yan, another reader of the series, identified with the local language the author uses.

“I used to hate reading any books with words,” said the music teacher, “However, about six to seven years ago, Mr Leung’s novels raised my reading interests because they are written in a very interesting and humorous way. Moreover, the plots and details in the stories pretty much fit our daily life. So resonance and dedications can be easily emerged.”

To give the youth some ideas on writing skills, the veteran suggested, “Try to start your writing with the topics that you are familiar with. Details of your daily life can be developed into good topics.”

Presently working in the Hong Kong Literature Room of Hong Kong Central Library, Mr Leung is responsible for promoting and collecting Hong Kong literature. For more than ten years, the librarian has been travelling between fiction and reality and has no intention to stop writing.

Agent Q is still on his way to missions.

EDITED BY HUANG YIXIA

REVIEWS

JENNIFER'S BODY: A BLOODTHIRSTY MEGAN FOX

Jennifer's Body tells us that the only thing scarier than an angry teenage girl is an angry teenage girl possessed by a demon. The Academy Award winning screenwriter Diablo Cody combines stereotypical American high school life and 1980s horror themes with blood and gore special effects, along with her talent of creating snappy one-liners referencing pop culture in her latest creation.

A visiting Satan-worshipping indie-rock band ritually sacrifices the most popular girl in school Jennifer Check (Megan Fox), as an act to achieve fame. Since the ritual needs a virgin, the 'experienced' Jennifer returns to life, possessed by a demon, with an insatiable hunger for flesh and blood. Her target: high school boys.

Only her socially challenged best friend Anita 'Needy' Lesnicki (Amanda Seyfried) is aware of the change and does everything to stop her before her boyfriend Chip (Johnny Simmons) is next on the buffet line.

There are no mysteries of who did it and no surprises that reveal true motive. The film keeps away from the obvious clichés of slasher films but keeps the tradition of helpless (which means dumb and easily persuaded) victims for Jennifer to feed on. Then again, we are talking about pubescent boys who just realised that the hottest girl in Devil's Kettle (the setting of this story) knew they existed.

Fox's acting range varies throughout the film, which showed that she has the potential to move past her hot girl image. Though the movie is just about Fox being there and verifying the rumoured 'intimate friends' scene (appearing three quarters into the movie without any sense), the sultry actress delivers a performance that made her Transformers role transparent.

With the help of blood and zombie-like makeup, Fox can turn her occasionally deadened image into something horrifying with a simple toothy grin. The character of an evil cheerleader (and not just high school evil as

Needy reiterates) allows Fox to take woman empowerment to great heights by expressing savagery on her victims.

Cody, who wrote the Oscar nominated film *Juno* in 2007, intended to mix horror and dark-comedy to make the film as entertaining as when audiences thought the troubles of teenage pregnancy was funny. However, it rather becomes just another teen movie with blood and gore (albeit not as much) on the side. The simple horror plot is made complicated by Cody's form of comedy which, while successful on *Juno*, does not work here. Only a few horror parodies like *Shaun of the Dead* combine the two successfully.

Her 'one-liner' signature may keep the audience in their seats, like the endless barrage of one-liners within the dialogues in *Juno*, but in *Jennifer's Body* they only give half a second of giggles and most are just out of nowhere. Only audiences with in-depth knowledge of movies and advertised products may appreciate the essence of the comedy, such as when the two friends greet each other as 'Vagisil' and 'Monistat', two health products specially made for women.

Additionally the film tries to poke fun at teenage ignorance with these lines that are not effective without an awkward voice, such as when Jennifer (in a cute melodic sound) declines a date to watch the *Rocky Horror Picture Show* (a cult horror classic) because she disliked boxing movies.

To say that this movie is remotely scary would be a lie as suspense is non-existent and the gory parts are not fully shown. Anything that is considered scary, like Jennifer's true form, is only for an instant, just like the presence of laughter.

Jennifer's Body is neither hilariously funny nor heart-pounding scary. Cody's talent can be better used for another teenager with real problems and leave the occult to films long past. The Body is just to look at.



(Courtesy: Fox Atomic)

WRITTEN BY JOHN A.L. NICOLAS
EDITED BY NATALIE WONG

Movies

The Time Traveler's Wife



(Courtesy: Warner Bros.)

The idea of time travelling is nothing new in film history but the Robert Schwentke-directed romantic film is fresher.

Suffering from a rare genetic disorder, Henry DeTamble (Eric Bana) travels through time and space unexpectedly. He

cannot control when and where to travel. Clare Abshire (Rachel McAdams), who has known the man since six insists on marrying him but faces difficulties.

Henry would suddenly disappear and randomly travel to any place at any time, all naked. This draws laughter. But audience have to be smart, you can only judge whether he pushes back the clock or travel to the future by his hairstyle.

Since it is based on a novel by Audrey Niffenegger, most people compare the two, and so as me. The emotion expressed in the film are natural but not profound. Love between the two doesn't move me and is not handled much better in the novel.

Overall, it is not a bad choice for a romance if you haven't read the novel beforehand. DVD will be out in early 2010.

(500) Days of Summer



(Courtesy: Fox Searchlight)

(500) Days of Summer is about the relationship of Summer Finn (Zoëy DeSchanel) and Tom Hansen (Joseph Gordon-Levitt). The story is told from the perspective of Tom – a romantic comedy for men.

Despite its trite plot, the non-linear narrative makes the story different from most romantic comedies. Director has tried to link comparable events, before-and-after, together, as if audiences are flipping over the book of the relationship of Summer and Tom.

Director Marc Webb has been directing ranges of music videos and short films, but this is his debut feature film. The film has included songs from some 1980s British indie rock bands. Music used is informative that presents story in parallel with the scene. "Sid and Nancy" is another 1980s element added to the film, which brings laughter to the whole story.

This is a story of boy meets girl. But you should know up front, this is not only a love story. To me, this is also a story with life lessons and explication of social phenomena.

Restaurants

China Café

1081, Canton Road, Mongkok



Bing Sutt (old style cafe which was popular in 1960s and 1970s, providing only drinks and simple food) used to be a good place for people to spend their leisure time. However, many closed down as time goes by.

Opened in 1964, China Café is one of the rare survivals. Time rewinds at the café. Everything there seems to be antique. Though electric fans are no longer used, you can still see them on the ceiling. The L-shaped cashier and the two-storey design of the shop attract a lot of photo-takers.

French toast with Kaya and a meal set including toast, omelette with ham and instant noodles with barbecued pork are their most popular dishes. You can never miss milk tea and iced red bean with milk when you visit a traditional Bing Sutt. But the milk tea here disappoints me. It is not smooth enough. The taste and aroma of the tea are just fair. Luckily, the iced red bean with milk scores some points.

Though you cannot treat your taste buds here, it's a nice place for retrospection. Give up fast food for one day if you are in Mongkok.

King of Rice Noodles

22, Whampoa Street, Hung Hom



With huge banners and small hand-written posters hanging on its front door, electric fans mounting on the wall, King of Rice Noodles looks no different with local tea restaurants. However, it is known for Chinese spicy dishes instead of local cuisine.

As for Sichuan-style soup base, the restaurant provides six levels of spiciness – from "very mild" to "extremely hot". "Mild" is a wise choice for first-time diners. Don't worry if you are not interested in chilli peppers, Guangdong-style rice noodles, mai sin, with pork bone soup base may fit you.

The most popular dish is Chongqing "Mouth-watering" chicken. It is named so because of its rich flavour: spicy yet sweet. The sauce of the cold dish contains peanuts, garlic, chilli peppers, Sichuan peppers, etc. The dish tastes even better if served cooler. You can match the dish with sweet potato noodles (hong shu fen) or rice noodles. The former is a better choice as it is less common in Hong Kong.

Moreover, dishes are highly-seasoned, so you may need much water after meal.

WRITTEN BY MINERVA CHENG, BONNIE FUNG
EDITED BY JOJO CHOI, MILEY LI



TIM HAMLETT

Games for a city where nobody plays

I have always had a soft spot for sport. Despite having no talent for ball games, poor eye-sight and the build of a stick insect I would try anything which was not ostentatiously dangerous. I must have spent more of my student days sitting in boats of various kinds than I did in the library. And for five years I was a sports reporter, immersed every day in the bewildering array of pastimes with which English people amuse their leisure hours.

Yet somehow the imminent arrival of the East Asian Games is not exciting. Partly this is because no sensible planner would have chosen East Asia as a good region for a Games. One country is much bigger than all the others. There is a certain lack of suspense. China will win most of the medals. So it should, in view of its relative size.

Partly perhaps it is due to a lack of local prospects. Nothing stirs the audience like the spectacle of a local winner. But the Hong Kong winners on these occasions tend to be thin on the ground. And most of the supposed Hong Kong winners will turn out to be recently arrived mainlanders. This is not surprising. Hong Kong is a curiously barren place in sporting terms.

Official spokesmen can point to large sums of money spent on the cultivation of so-called elite athletes by professional coaches in luxurious centres. Show them a sportsman with a reasonable chance of collaring a medal and they are happy to help. But this is an upside-down way of doing things.

Working as the sports editor of a local newspaper one of the things you discovered was that behind every sporting star was a local substructure from which he emerged. This consisted of one or more local leagues, playing in schools, public parks, fields behind pubs and other unlikely spots. For any sport, many were called but few were chosen. Yet the infrastructure of mediocrity and worse was necessary. It was the nursery from which genius would spring.

Hong Kong is prepared to pay for the genius, but not for the nursery. The sporting

facilities in most local schools are pathetic. The number of public pitches is tiny. I was once asked to do a story about the number of British Army bases in Hong Kong. We were able to pick them out easily from satellite photographs because they all had a football field. The number of civilian pitches was too small to be a distraction. Three universities share one sports centre. All the territory's rowers share one boathouse. We get all the toxic aspects of big sport — the corruption, the gamesmanship, the politics — and miss the compensation, which should be that large numbers of ordinary people are encouraged to participate and exercise.

We do, it must be conceded, have a decent supply of swimming pools. There are also some palpably indigenous Hong Kong swimmers from whom we can hope for pleasant surprises. They will have earned their medals. Swimming training is ostentatiously boring, even by athletic standards. Accounts of local swimpeople, though, suggest that like so much sport these days even the amateur version has become a full-time job. Successful practitioners aspire to become full-time coaches for the next generation of professionals.

This is what these big international sports-fests do in the long run. They turn what used to be a pastime into a profession, inhabited by the products of university sports programmes and national medal-winning systems for propaganda purposes: not so much a sporting event as a circus.

Oddly enough the only Olympic gold medallist I met during my reporting days had surprised everyone by winning the clay pigeon shooting in, I think, Mexico City. He had then returned to his work as a vet, in which capacity he fixed up my first whippet. Shooting, he said, was something he did for fun. How antiquated!

Tim Hamlett is a veteran journalist and Baptist University academic.

Letters to the Editor

Behind the thriving five stars

The extravagance of China's lavish parade drew controversy and worries. In light of recent economic difficulty and the ever-widening income gap, there are doubts whether celebrations of such scale are appropriate. Some foreigners expressed anxiety towards the troop review; it seemed to them that China presented herself in a threatening image, too.

In our culture, bad news is customarily not sung around. Every nation has its failings, and China is no exception. The gross weakness of this world is greed, which ironically supports our economic power. GDP per capita is not an accurate assessment of the living standard of the general public; an astonishingly large amount of wealth is in the hands of the extreme minority of the population whereas hundreds of millions of Chinese people still live in poverty and exploitation.

Perhaps that's why I flinch at the leadership calling this age the revival of the great Chinese nation.

It seems revolting to me how people are abandoning the wisdom in the teachings of Confucius and desperately grab money.

**AMY CHAU SZE-YAN,
United Christian College
(Kowloon East)**

Thank you for your letter, Amy. A critical piece. Poverty is not the only problem in China. A more macroscopic view is about the Three Rural Issues, which have been under media limelight since the 90s and has tormented the authority for long.

The widening of wealth gap further brings other social problems like polarisation of the society, social welfare problem, discrimination, issues on land, tax, infrastructure, health, education and many more.

Perhaps it is all about social hierarchy. I personally think that education is the only way to terminate poverty. If you are interested in related issues, I recommend you a book called *Zhongguo Nongmin Diaocha* by Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao.

SIMPSON CHEUNG, Chief Editor

Send your letter with your full name, address and phone number to tyrej@hkbu.edu.hk

EDITORIAL

Countdown to China's big birthday

Our deputy editor reveals the 12 rush hours in Beijing ahead of China's 60th anniversary

BY NATALIE WONG

It's now 9.30 at the night before the majestic birthday party starts. I'm at the Media Centre in Beijing, desperately waiting together with hundreds of journalists for the verification of our digital-chipped press cards exclusively for Tiananmen Square tomorrow.

Actually I was mentally prepared to wait as I know a large part of being a journalist is to wait, especially in such a sensitive moment that "an jian" (literally 'security check') has always been the priority of our capital.

On the TV screen in front of me, the little rolling bar at the bottom grabbed my attention: "The military parade will broadcast live tomorrow morning at 9.47'30" Exact to seconds?! Yes, perhaps CCTV doesn't want audience to miss even a second of the parade that starts sharp at 10 am. So I decide to jot down the following 12 rush hours, showing glimpses of journalism scenes in the mainland.

It's 10.30 pm. I finally got my pass. Let me clarify my identity first: I am one of four HKBU journalism students registered as TVB reporters for this visit with the help of the Journalism Education Fund. But of course, I'm working for TYR mentally.

When night falls in this city under curfew, there's no point for me wandering around. I return to my hotel room and start reading piles of regulations for journalists. Hold on - "No cameras are allowed for print journalists?" We can hardly figure out the rationale behind this ridiculous remark. Encouraged by the tour leader Hui Yau-ming, a veteran journalist of TVB, we decide to take the risk.

Two hands of the clock point to 12. I haven't said happy birthday to my motherland. Instead, I celebrate by cruising through the thick pile of 80-page colour-printed Chinese newspaper *Beijing Qianlian Bao*, to prepare myself well for an exciting reporting experience in the morning.

Time for bed. I still have two hours to refresh myself. I immersed myself in red-themed nostalgia and fall asleep.

Waking up at four in the morning, I see raindrops dripping down the hotel windows. I have nothing to worry about as the Weather Modification Department of the Beijing Meteorological Bureau has promised to produce a picture-perfect azure sky by shooting rocket missiles containing rain-boosting chemicals into the clouds, as stated in front pages of several state newspapers.

More than 4,500 journalists from 108 countries are in Beijing for the big moment. Roads are closed even miles away from Chang'an Avenue. No taxis: only police cars are in sight. We walk for half an hour to the Media Centre in mist and drizzle.

It's 6.30 am. Censoring time again. Journalists have created a man-high rubbish hill made of food and drinks dumped during "an jian". Luckily, our cameras were not among them.

Upon arrival, the sky above the Forbidden City is amazingly clear and sunny. Thanks to the powerful chemical injected to the sky. I foresee I'll be suffering from sunburn. The journalists' zone is so close to the parade that if I sing a birthday song out very loud, President Hu could surely hear it.

To the right of the zone sit most of the world's ambassadors. At first, I am excited to talk to them but they provide only standard answers (in very different accents): "We're honoured here to celebrate the 60th anniversary... We have a very good relationship and cooperation with China..."

I surrender after greeting five of them and rush to another side of the journalists' zone where over 200 guests from Hong Kong and Macau are seated. They come from all walks of life including outstanding athletes, legislators and university principals.

Sparkling in the crowd are eight newly arrived bureau heads sitting in a single row. Journalists from Hong Kong squeeze their way in to ask questions. Chow from Food and Health Bureau talks about the good ventilation in Tiananmen Square, Tsang from Home Affairs Bureau talks about his colleague John Tsang being ill. And the two female chiefs, wearing plate-sized sunhats and large sunglasses, can pretend to be deaf to journalists' questions - maybe more important than protecting them from UV rays.

One thing you did not see on CCTV is the small pieces of cardboard hung by its staff members, read "Your face is on TV soon. Don't look straight into the camera." An interesting way of getting the audience to smile genuinely and enthusiastically, or at least to look that way.

I look at my watch. It's 9.47'30". CCTV begins its live broadcast. I go back to my pre-arranged seat to await the traditional slogan of the parade — "Long Live the Communist Party" — and at the same time to watch the CCTV screen in front of me, as you were all doing at home.

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GALLERY

Time's up for Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate

Located in Kwun Tong, Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate is a resettlement estate built in the 1960s for families who lost their homes in natural disasters.

Neighbours used to talk about trivial matters along corridors, while their kids ran up and down the stairs. The elderly chatted away long afternoons under trees after having dim sums in the old-style Chinese restaurants.

But gone are those days.

Most residents are gradually being rehoused to the Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate.

The few last households are mainly owners of the stores and food stalls, who are asked to move out before November 25, the day when the demolition begins.

A sense of nostalgia prevails among residents. Despite the fascination of a modern estate, the crowded old place remains home to their collective memories and community bonds.

Within the same neighbourhood along the same road, they are now leading a different lifestyle.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY MAGGIE TAM
EDITED BY ECHO CHEN





*"Home is like wine, the older the better,"
Mr. Wong, 68.*





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