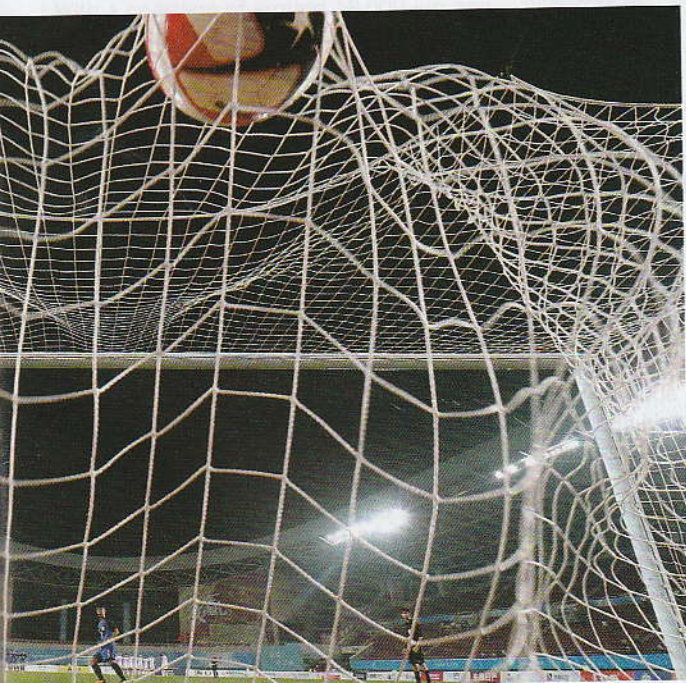
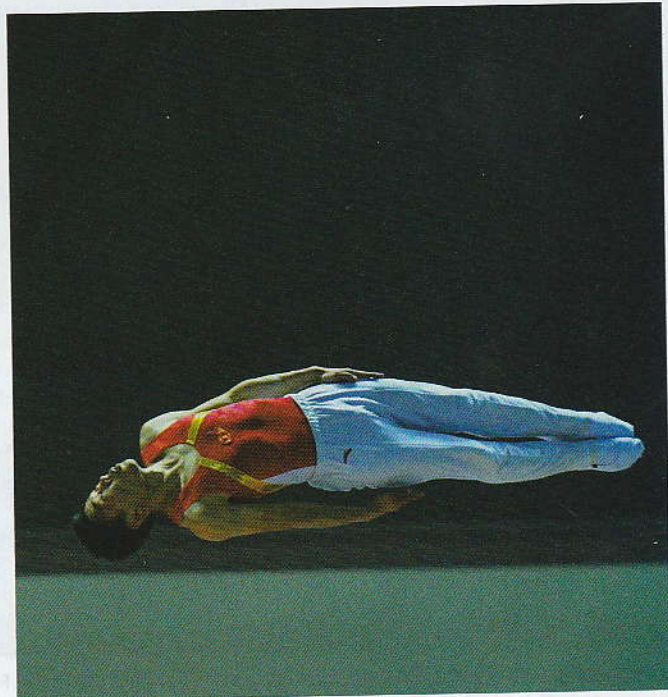


Ju Wenxin of Hebei takes part in a tai chi competition on August 28

Gao Lei of Shanghai competes in a trampoline event on August 29



A penalty shoot during a match between the under-20 men's football teams of Hubei and Tianjin on August 29



Xu Anqi of Jiangsu celebrates her victory in the women's individual epee final on August 29



The opening ceremony of the 13th Chinese National Games in Tianjin on August 27

A Sports Gathering for All

The 13th Chinese National Games, the largest ever round of the quadrennial event, kicked off on August 27 in north China's Tianjin Municipality, which adjoins the capital Beijing.

Bearing the theme National Games for a Healthy China, the Games this year have drawn a total of 12,721 athletes to participate in 417 events across 33 sports. In addition, 7,620 amateurs will take part in 126 events belonging to 19 popular disciplines.

The 38 delegations taking part represent almost all of China's provinces, municipalities, autonomous regions as well as the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions, the People's Liberation Army, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, and sports associations of industries such as the railways and coal mining.

Medal-winning swimmers, divers, badminton players and track and field athletes who have just returned from their respective world championships—including multi-title holder Sun Yang, star Chen Long and newly crowned shot putter Gong Lijiao—are competing under the flags of their provincial sports authorities.

One major change sees the National Games open its doors to amateur athletes for

the first time in 30 years. The move has made Tianjin 2017 the best-attended National Games in history, but more importantly, it underlines the nation's determination to be a society that is both wealthy and healthy.

Another innovation saw Deng Shangyu, 72, become the eldest competitor in the tournament after bridge was included in the 13th National Games as one of the popular events.

Tianjin 2017 is also the first time that a youth group has been added to some sports like swimming and athletics. An incentive has been offered to coaches as well, who are given the chance to be honored for their work with winning athletes on the podium at award ceremonies.

The country's top comprehensive sports gala, inaugurated in 1959, serves as an important way to nurture future stars. This year's edition, which runs through September 8, also provides an occasion for athletes to test their mettle for the upcoming 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. ■

(Photos by Xinhua)



Copyedited by Chris Surtees
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