

They're truly fit to sail

National sailors prove they are no slouches with impressive Beep Test scores

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THE sport doesn't require any running, kicking of a football, or jumping over hurdles, but Singapore's national sailors are still required to undergo the Beep Test – the multi-stage fitness test.

Five years after SingaporeSailing introduced the test, their sailors are among the fittest athletes here. They average 13.0 in the test, which is conducted approximately once every three months.

Footballers in the S-League are required to meet a minimum level of 13.1 to be eligible to play.

National 470 sailor Joel Pang was the best performer in the latest test conducted last month, registering a mark of 14.2, the level attained by one of the fittest players in the S-League, Tampines Rovers' Thai winger Sutee Suksomkit.

With just two automatic spots

available to Singapore at next year's Youth Olympic Games sailing competition – it will feature the boys' and girls' Byte CII and boys' and girls' Bic Techno 293 – physical fitness could well be a decisive factor in getting the nod.

“Two or more sailors may be virtually indistinguishable by their sailing results come the eve of the Youth Olympics, so we might ultimately have to select on the basis of who is the fittest,” said Dr Peter Logan, SingaporeSailing's Olympic and Sports Science manager.

“High levels of aerobic fitness enable the sailor to work nearer to his or her maximum intensity for longer periods without getting excessively fatigued.

“It means the sailor can concentrate for longer periods, which translates into a greater ability to focus on important cues and stimuli, to consistently make the right decisions and be able to withstand

a variety of different pressures and distractions.”

MORE THAN SITTING IN A BOAT

The Beep Test is a multi-stage shuttle run which determines an athlete's fitness level.

It is most commonly used in sports like cricket, football, hockey, rugby and tennis, and the highest level attainable is 20.

An athlete covers a distance of 20 metres multiple times at a steadily increasing pace, with several stages to be completed at a certain pace before moving on to the next level.

Many of the national sailors' high fitness levels are down to SingaporeSailing's emphasis on strength and conditioning.

They undergo alternate strength and aerobic work, or both, for up to six days a week.

“The perception is that sailors just sit on the boat and don't

need to be very fit,” said 2006 world and Asian Games Laser 4.7 champion Colin Cheng, 19, who attained a level 13.4.

“But sailing manoeuvres like tacking and jibbing all require a lot of fitness.”

Victoria Chan, the 2006 women's Laser 4.7 world champion, added: “Out at sea, you need to be very agile and fast because you're pushed to your limit often.”

While the Beep Test is

mandatory for all national sailors, SingaporeSailing have not imposed a minimum level for them to achieve.

Said Logan: “While (lack of) aerobic fitness is not a limiting factor to one's performance, one should not underestimate its importance for sailors. Tour de France cyclists have scores of 16 to 17, while middle-distance runners are about 16. So elite sailors need to be at the upper end of the spectrum.”



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SPORTS BETTING			
League	Home Team	Away Team	Match KickOff (Singapore date/time)
World Cup	Australia	Bahrain	Wed, 10/06/09 6.00pm
World Cup	Japan	Qatar	Wed, 10/06/09 6.35pm
World Cup	Korea Republic	Saudi Arabia	Wed, 10/06/09 7.00pm
League Cup	Super Reds	Woodlands	Wed, 10/06/09 7.45pm
World Cup	Iran	UAE	Wed, 10/06/09 10.30pm
World Cup	Finland	Russia	Thu, 11/06/09 1.30am
World Cup	Holland	Norway	Thu, 11/06/09 2.45am
World Cup	England	Andorra	Thu, 11/06/09 3.15am
World Cup	Ecuador	Argentina	Thu, 11/06/09 5.00am
World Cup	Colombia	Peru	Thu, 11/06/09 7.00am
World Cup	Brazil	Paraguay	Thu, 11/06/09 8.50am
World Cup	Venezuela	Uruguay	Thu, 11/06/09 9.00am
World Cup	Chile	Bolivia	Thu, 11/06/09 9.00am
World Cup	Mexico	Trinidad&Tobago	Thu, 11/06/09 9.30am
World Cup	Honduras	El Salvador	Thu, 11/06/09 9.30am
League Cup	Home United	Gombak	Thu, 11/06/09 7.45pm
LIVE TELECAST AT SPORTSBUZZ@PARADIZ			
World Cup	Korea Republic	Saudi Arabia	Wed, 10/06/09 7.00pm
League Cup	Super Reds	Woodlands	Wed, 10/06/09 7.45pm
World Cup	Iran	UAE	Wed, 10/06/09 10.30pm
World Cup	Brazil	Paraguay	Thu, 11/06/09 8.50am



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