

Feb 17, 2007 Sat

STI Home > Sports > Story

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SHOOTING

C'wealth champ goes full-time

On will embark on year-long training stint at US Olympic training centre**Sections**

By Chan Yi Shen



RARE TALENT: On won the Commonwealth Games gold after taking up the centre-fire pistol for only 14 months.

COMMONWEALTH Games shooting champion On Shaw Ming is going full-time.

The army regular has been selected by the Singapore Shooting Association (SSA) for a year-long training stint at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs.

The programme is part of a tie-up between the Singapore Sports Council and the US Olympic Committee.

On, 29, will be the third Singapore shooter to train full-time, following air-rifle specialist Lee Wung Yew and air-rifle specialist Vanessa Yong.

The SSA's high performance manager, Lim Meng Kiaw, said: "Based on his performances and how he managed to win gold in the Commonwealth Games just 14 months, he has the potential and the temperament to make it to the Olympics. Maybe not for 2008, but for 2012."

'Outside of those under Project 0812, he is the next-best performer in the country.'

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'Now, he needs the full-time training to make the leap to the Olympics.'

On won a surprise gold in the 25-metre centre-fire pistol at the Commonwealth Games last March. However, he failed to qualify for December's World Cup in Beijing.

Lee and Vanessa are training full-time under Project 0812, with the aim of winning Singapore's second Olympic medal at either next year's Beijing 2008 or the 2012 London Games.

However, On's 12-month US stint does not come under the Project 0812 umbrella.

He will still be under Singapore Armed Forces' employment, but his training will be considered part of his training under the SAF shooting team.

He trains under national pistol coach Gai Bin at the National Shooting Centre in Choa Chu Kang three to five times a week.

In Colorado, he will stay at the centre's residence hall, and train

national set-up.

He said: 'They have a good system over there, both in terms of mental skills development.

'It's a rare opportunity and it will help me move up to world :

On will be switching to the 25m rapid-fire discipline, as the c does not feature in the Olympics.

The SSA and the SSC are in the final stages of ironing out th programme, which is expected to start at end of next month

The SSC is understood to be footing the estimated \$25,000 t

On will compete in events in the US, although one of his mai December's South-east Asia Games in Thailand.

For him, the move is a step closer to making his Olympic dre

He said: 'It's good for the long term. I'm looking at the 2012 beyond.'

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