

When autumn's sun shines brightly and tenderly, all kinds of outdoor sports activities happen in Wuhan. In the past two weeks, we have witnessed some big international sporting events like the 15th International Horse Racing Event and the first Wuhan Marathon Swimming, as well as a campus cricket tournament and a mountain climbing festival. It is the time to walk outdoors and have fun in the golden days of autumn.

## Sports events in golden autumn Having more than enough fun

Jet skiing and flyboard acrobatic performances on East Lake Photo by Ren Yong

### Wuhan Marathon Swimming rocks East Lake

By Jessie Fan

The 2017 Wuhan Marathon Swimming started at 2:00 P.M. on November 5 with 73 professional athletes competing in a 10-km open water race in the Zhenghu area of East Lake. Matteo Furlan from Italy won the men's event, coming in at 1:40:31.16. China's Xin Xin won the women's race, finishing at 1:46:28.11.

On the men's side, 28 out of 40 athletes completed the marathon. All 33 female athletes finished the race. The men's and women's champions are each rewarded USD 10,000; second-place finishers, USD 4,000; and those in third place, USD 3,000.

Men's winner Matteo Furlan is a professional marathon swimmer who won the 2013 World University Games 10 km in Kazan, Russia on July 17, 2013. In July this year, he won a silver medal in the Men's 25 km in the 17th FINA World Championships, only 0.6 seconds behind the winner. This was Furlan's first time in Wuhan. Furlan admitted that the Wuhan Marathon Swimming was a tough race as several athletes had trailed closely behind him the entire way. He said that East Lake is very beautiful and that he wanted to participate in the Yangtze River Crossing Festival next year.

The women's winner, Xin Xin, is one

of the top Chinese open water swimming athletes. At the age of 20, she placed fourth in the Women's 10 km swim at the Rio Olympic Games. Her time of 1:57:14.4 is the fastest that a Chinese athlete has ever achieved in this sport in the history of the Olympics.

The Wuhan Marathon Swimming is divided into two parts: competitive swimming and healthy swimming. In the healthy swimming event, 1,015 Chinese swimming enthusiasts, together with 15 foreign swimmers, participated in a 1.2-km group swim starting at 2:20 P.M. The oldest swimmer was 66 years old while the youngest was 27.

Brwa Aziz, who is from Iraq and currently studies at Central China Normal University, was one of the foreign swimmers. He likes swimming and has swum in lakes, rivers, and seas in Iraq, Malaysia, Turkey, and China. However, he definitely considered the experience of swimming in East Lake to be unique. "It's not because of the water, but because of the audience and people. They made us feel happy. And the opening ceremony was great. Today is really special."

The organizing committee of the marathon swimming event also held dragon boat and sailboat races and put on jet skiing and flyboard acrobatic performances.

### Most popular horse racing event in 15 years

By Jessie Fan

The 15th China Wuhan International Horse Racing Festival was held on October 28 and 29 at Oriental Lucky City's racecourse. A record-breaking crowd of nearly 30,000 spectators watched 12 exciting races.

During the two-day event, over 70 jockeys from home and abroad rode 150 top-ranked horses in 12 races for a purse of RMB 700,000. Members of the international horse racing associations from France, the U.K., Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Mauritius were in attendance.

On October 28, opening day, Moonlight Shadows Half of the City, the horse that is owned by Sha Baoliang, a famous Chinese male singer, won the first race. After that, an International Jockey Invitation Race attracted the attention of most people. Five top jockeys from China and jockeys from France, the U.K., Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Cyprus participated in a 1,000-meter race. Achard Alexis from France was first to cross the finish line.

During the opening ceremony, audience members also enjoyed a "1,000 hats show," vigorous aerobics, and interactive guessing activities.

About 100 of *Changjiang Weekly's* foreign readers were invited to watch the races. Najaf Iqbal, a Pakistani who is studying at Wuhan University of Technology, said it was his first experience watching horse racing in China. As a boy, Iqbal watched his uncle race horses on the traditional race tracks in the village. "But this is a different experience. It is modern and organized," Iqbal said.



### Mulan Mountain climb attracts over 10,000 people



Hand in hand to cross the finish line

The 9th China (Wuhan) Mulan Mountain Climbing Festival was held on October 28. More than 10,000 mountaineering enthusiasts and mountain hiking sprint competitors from all over China climbed Mulan Mountain and spent the Double Ninth Festival together. The number of participants reached a new record.

October 28 happened to be the Double Ninth Festival, a traditional Chinese festival which falls on the ninth day of the ninth month of the lunar calendar, with the custom of climbing to a high location to take in the view. Guo Fushan, 74 years old, came to climb Mulan Mountain with his friends and celebrated the Double Ninth Festival. He joked that to breathe the fresh air on Mulan Mountain is also a kind of celebration. The beautiful autumn scenery of Mulan Mountain makes Guo Fushan feel relaxed and happy. He said, "On the way down the mountain, I could enjoy the autumn scenery again."

For nine years, Mulan Mountain Climbing Festival has held all kinds of outdoor competitions and fitness activities around the Mulan Mountain cultural and ecological tourist area. Mulan Mountain, therefore, has become an outdoor paradise for the outdoor mountaineering enthusiasts from not only the city but throughout the country.

### Cricket tournament, a day of entertainment

By Jessie Fan

Sixty players on six teams competed in 10 matches during the second Wuhan University International Student Union Cricket Tournament at the outdoor stadium of the Faculty of Engineering, Wuhan University, on October 29.

Players were from countries such as Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, nations where cricket is a popular sport. All teams except one had names that were variants of the names of international teams or famous clubs: the Bangladeshi Tigers, Black Stallions, Indian Warriors, Karachi Kings, Wuda Knight Riders and Wuhan Zalmi. After a day of competition, the Bangladeshi Tigers won the trophy. The best player of each match was given the Man of the Match award.

Pop or Indian music was played each time a goal was scored. Roy Dilawer Khan, one of the organizers, said that playing music during the matches is a tradition at cricket games. "We have made this game day a day full of action, full of entertainment, and full of everything you could have wished for in a single day of cricket."

Khan said that the next tournament will be held in April 2018.