

# VALLEY AND PLA MAKE RUGBY HISTORY IN SHENZHEN

By Jason Cornell



NOVEMBER 22nd marked an historic day for both Hong Kong and Rugby, as the PLA officially entered the Second Division competition. Valley Rugby Club was drawn against the Chinese pioneers for the first two encounters, which would certainly test the championship contenders.

Valley Mustangs have previously toured some interesting locations in Asia, and a large turnout was expected for the ground breaking tour. Such Hong Kong luminaries as Spicer, Olsen, Ashall and Deayton appreciated the historical importance and the chance to dust off the old rugby tunes of yesteryear.

I had seen first hand the skills of the PLA, at the last two Beijing 10's and representing the Asian Barbarians in Hong Kong and made it clear to the assembled Mustangs it would not be a walk in the park. Despite this many were wearing the Wan Chai grin as we departed, and regretting it as we were quickly behind our posts down 6-0.

The PLA were obviously under a lot of pressure to win this first encounter, and this may have encouraged the decision to take the penalty points, when the Mustangs were clearly on the back foot. They were to regret this as Valley ran at every opportunity and only the last pass failed to complete some exciting end to end rugby.

David Spicer is well known for his cross-culture exchanges, and was in deep discussion when the referee decided enough was enough, but was lenient in only giving a yellow card to

the smiling culprit. But this gamesmanship seemed to put the soldiers off their game, resulting in a flood of penalties. The Mustangs Steve Wong came in for particular attention; Maybe it was something he said, but he had a stirring man of the match performance.

Maybe the PLA were confused by the new hairstyle, but they remembered the speedy running style of the 1985 7's star Mark Ashall from the black and white tapes. The soldiers with their superior fitness are just lacking that game day experience of short cut angles, strategic injury breaks and pacing yourself over the full eighty minutes. Anyway, the Mustangs controlled the game at the base of the scrum and eventually ran out winners 48-13.

It was all smiles at the end, with a large media presence and some familiar sights of opponents arm in arm with liquid amber aplenty. With the flash of photographs still going off the PLA manager vowed revenge the following week.

Despite the great stories of our adventure to Shenzhen, numbers were limited for the following weekend clash between the undefeated Valley Knights and the now streetwise PLA. The Knights looked a better side on paper, but despite new names the Wan Chai grin was familiar.

We encountered an enlightening display of Chinese diplomacy and negotiation on arriving, as a local soccer derby was just about to take place on our appointed pitch. The Shenzhen standoff was comical to say the least as

the PLA warmed up in the middle of the opposing group.

With the light fading fast, we eventually got under way and the Knights could have been excused for being asleep, as the PLA executed two wonderful backline moves which resulted in a 14-0 lead after just 5 minutes. Even club captain Toby Bland was lost for words. One of the great strengths (weakness??) of the Valley club is its diverse nationalities, and it was two individual pieces of French and Irish flair which put Valley back into the game. But the half time scoreline of 21-19 was a clear indication of a game in the balance.

Once again it was Valley's dominance at the scrum base which was to prove decisive. With Paul Twight and John Crombie as the premier No.8 and scrum half in the competition, the Knights were able to control possession and shut out the soldiers. Troy Sing also recovered to dominate his opposing centre in the second half and Mark Cameron got the forwards and backs working together, for a final score of 43-26.

Although the PLA are two losses from two, they should not be discouraged as a win is just around the corner. They have far and away the best lineout in Division 2 rugby, and a backline which is fast and committed in defence. Some more big game experience will bring with it composure under pressure which is now lacking. As a warning to other Division 2 opponents, the home ground advantage in Shenzhen will soon be the cause of some quiet bus trips back to Hong Kong.



## 香港聯賽前兩輪隨想 解放軍體院橄欖球隊教練

馬巍然(中國人民解放軍體育學院橄欖球隊教練)

在香港橄欖球總會的大力支持和協助下,在國內有關方面的支持和關懷下,解放軍體育學院橄欖球隊從十一月二十二日起正式參加了香港97至98年度橄欖球聯賽。比賽已過兩輪,現就我隊參加香港聯賽的一些感想敘述如下,願與橄欖球界的朋友們共同交流。

由於中國內地的橄欖球運動從九十年代初起步,中國橄欖球協會於去年才正式立,雖說目前國內已有十幾支球隊,但還都集中在大學裡面,國內目前還尚沒有正規的聯賽制度和舉行過正式的全國錦標賽事,只是每年一屆「全國大學生橄欖球比賽」,故而,對我們球隊來說,每年的比賽機會實在是太少了,以軍體院隊來說,在我未參加香港聯賽前,十五人制的正式比賽只在八月份的大學生聯賽上打了三場,這麼少的比賽場次,對一支球隊水平的提高極為不利的。所以,我隊今年能有機會參加香港的橄欖球聯賽,對我隊來說是一個非常難得的鍛煉機會。十場正式比賽的磨練,對我隊技術、戰術和比賽經驗等方面的提高將起到積極的作用,尤其是比賽經驗方面,是其他任何東西都無法替代的。說到此,對多年來一直支持、幫助我隊的香港橄欖球總會,我們表示真誠的感謝。

解放軍體育學院橄欖球隊成立於一九九三年十一月二十九日。建隊以後在學院和上級領導的關懷和支持下,在香港、台灣、澳大利亞等橄欖球界朋友的支持幫助下,球隊進步較快;九五年獲得了全國大學生聯賽乙組的冠軍,九六年獲全國大學生聯賽的亞軍,九七年獲全國大學生聯賽甲組的亞軍;在廣州地區是第一強隊。九六年和九七年的三月參加了香港舉辦的國際十人制邀請賽,均獲得小組出線,晉級「銀碗」賽,特別是九七年的比賽在小組賽中我隊力克駐港英軍隊,在「七一香港回歸前,振國威、揚軍威,得到國際、國內輿論界的一致好評,也受到了總部的表彰。九七年九月二十日,中國第一支正式國家橄欖球隊集訓,我隊入選了十名隊員並有五人隊員最後表國家隊赴新加坡訪問比賽。

現我隊共有隊員三十人:四年球齡以上的有三人,三年球齡的有五人,二年球齡的有六人,其餘的都是今年八月份以後入隊的十七、十八歲,個別十六歲的新隊員,球齡最短的隊員才打了二個多月橄欖球,所以目前我隊正處於新老交替的時期,預計二、三年以後將是我隊的強盛期。

十一月二十二日開始的香港聯賽,我隊編在乙組聯賽的A組,在A組中共有六支球隊。兩輪戰罷,我隊先後以14:48和26:43的比分輸給了VALLEY MUSTANGS和VALLEY KNIGHTS隊。



由於部分老隊員受傷無法上場,參加比賽的一半是新隊員,比賽以大比分輸球,是正常的事情。從比賽的情況看,我隊無論從技術、戰術和比賽經驗上,比對手都有較大的差距。尤其是比賽經驗上,對一些從未打過正式十五人制比賽的新隊員來說,比賽經驗基本是零。

從技術角度具體分析,我隊前鋒在LINEOUT時佔有一定的高度優勢,本方投球成功率較高,兩場比賽共有28次LINEOUT,成功19次,失敗9次,成功率為78%。並且在對方投球時搶得或破壞了對方的有5次。

SCRUM的情況,從技術統計的數據看,當本隊投球時,基本能夠繼續得球,兩場比賽SCRUM共21次,成功19次,失敗2次。成功率為90.4%,但是從比賽的實際情況來看,由於本身我隊前鋒集團的總體重只有750公斤左右,大約比對方前鋒少50到70公斤,加之本身頂架時的身體姿勢和用力的一致性不好,當對方真的用力推我們時,我們就難以頂住了,兩場比賽,對方有三次採用SCRUM的強推戰術達陣得分,另外,由於頂不過對方,本隊前鋒集團也無法組織起SCRUM的直接攻擊戰術;而在對方投球時,本方的側鋒球員出擊防守的速度也大大地受到了限制。

RUCK的情況要比MAUL好。RUCK共42次。成功30次,失敗12,成功率為71.4%。MAUL共9次,成功5次,失敗4次,成功率為55.6%。

前鋒集團在比賽中,輸得最多的地方在於:在亂集團作戰時,進攻的身體姿勢過高,護球的動作不好,不會合理地使用推進、轉身等技巧,而跟進的球員在接觸對手時的衝量又不够,不能一下將對手清走;第一次攻擊還有人跟進支持,第二次第三次攻擊時,跟進的隊員就少了或是沒有了,連續攻擊的能力不够。而在防守時,對比賽的預見性差,對球的反應慢,向前壓迫的意識不強,TACKLE的質量不好,不能很好地做向前的TACKLE,不能一下就將對方球員TACKLE倒地。而是讓對方有時間再次傳球或連接,搶挖球的意識和技術差,不能有效地阻止對方的進攻,總是讓對手能夠向前衝起來並向前推進。後鋒線球員在進攻時所表現出來的缺點,

除了和前鋒有相同之處外,主要是尋找對方防線空檔的能力不足一對一時突破的技術和手段不多,容易被對手看死。另外對甚麼時間該傳,甚麼時間該突圍的時機掌握不好。整個防線對對方後鋒突然地改變進攻之方向的預見性不強。

本來我隊的體能應該是佔有一定的優勢,但是由於對方比賽經驗較足,抓住了我隊前鋒集團較弱的弱點,利用前鋒控制住球,使我隊老是處於被動的防守的狀態下。加上心理緊張,體力消耗較大,也就使我隊的體能優勢難以發揮出來或是被抵消掉了。

兩場比賽雖是輸了,但令人欣慰的是,我隊的作風沒有輸,打出了我隊敢打敢拼,頑強拼搏的氣球,且從比賽的進程看,我隊也是一場比一場打得更好。第一場我隊全場只有一次TRY,與對手相差34分。第二場我隊就有了四次TRY。與對相差17分,相信再經過幾場比賽的鍛煉,我隊就有可能贏球了。

中國橄欖球運動的發展,需要國家體委大力推廣,也需要國際橄欖球界朋友們的大力支持。筆者以為,國內錦標賽和聯賽制度的盡快建立和實行,是目前橄欖球運動發展的必要條件。而全運會設立橄欖球比賽等項目,將是橄欖球運動發展的一個重要契機。九運會將在廣東省舉辦,香港應該可以協辦。如果在九運會能夠設立橄欖球項目,對橄欖球運動的發展來說將是一件好事。

如果中國橄欖球協會和香港橄欖球總會有意促成此事,我想應有很大的可能性。香港橄欖總很有可能和機會為橄欖球的立項做大力的推動工作,因香港和廣東的比賽場地是現成的。裁判員隊伍的水平和力量也足夠,找到像推動亞運會立橄欖球項目的「嘉士伯」公司,對香港橄欖總來說我想也不會是太難的事。如果十五人制有困難,十人制還是可以的。從目前國內的情況看,北京、農民體協(中國農業大學可以代表北京也可代表農民體協或兩者兼之)、上海、解放軍、廣東、遼寧是有基礎了,加上南京、河南、新疆、湖南等地,再加上香港、澳門,參賽的隊伍也應足夠。如果早一點立項,有一些有條件的省選組隊。■

