

Cup of coffee a must for cyclists, says Xu

Qin Dongying and Yang Yang

Xu Gang, a Jiading native and retired professional cyclist, served coffee at Dishui Lake to competitors at the recent Skoda HEROS Cycling Series China 2018 in Shanghai. Xu was recommending a lifestyle that combined cycling with drinking coffee.

Xu spent four years undergoing tough training at Jading's adolescent sports school. A combination of athleticism and strong will, he reaped the benefits at the national cycling championships from 2008 to 2012.

He signed up with Italy's Lampre Team

in 2013, becoming China's first cyclist to join a world top professional road cycling team and also China's first member of the Union Cycliste Internationale.

Now retired, Xu opened his Pro XG Cafe and Cycles in Jiading. A place for both sports and leisure, the bike lounge serves customers coffee, as well as selling bike-related products.

Xu's reputation as a cyclist makes his coffee store on Xincheng Road stand out among other cafes with a cycling theme.

Xu's interest in coffee can be traced back to his career with the Italian cycling team.

The team would stop to drink a cup of espresso when passing a cafe and resume their training afterward. Xu had never expected training to halt for a cup of coffee.

But it was during their coffee breaks that he and his teammates built trust in each other. Their coffee break might last from minutes to several hours, becoming an essential part of their daily life.

"In Italy, people stop chatting when they stop drinking coffee," said Xu.

He added: "Italians judge whether you are a local or not by how you master knowledge and skill of coffee making. Generally speaking, it's OK to drink

espresso at any time of a day. But if you drink cappuccino after 10:30am, you are telling Italians that you are a foreigner."

Xu has spent hundreds of thousands of yuan on coffee machines. He selects the beans, roasting, gridding and brewing by hand. Every day he drinks a cup of espresso before doing anything else. He turned himself into a vender selling coffee during cycling or triathlon competitions.

"Young cyclists in China are also willing to socialize during their coffee drinking. I made quite a few friends after I opened the coffee store," said Xu.

Quyí art form wins top award

Ran Tao and Yang Yang

JIADING District has been awarded a "China Renowned Quyí City," becoming the country's fourth to win the title.

Changzhi in Shanxi Province, Zhangjiagang in Jiangsu Province and Xigang in Liaoning Province are the other three renowned quyí cities. Quyí is the general term for several hundred speaking and singing art forms in China.

"Quyí artists in Jiading staged works favored by the general public. These works are talentedly and passionately created. Quyí plays a big role in the life of both adults and children in Jiading," said a member of the survey team.

There are eight district-level quyí cultural bases across Jiading such as the Laolehui Club in Malu Town. At the club every month, the community would invite popular quyí artists to perform. Performances vary from monodrama to *pingtan*, a combination of storytelling and ballad singing in the Suzhou dialect.

Besides district-level quyí centers, almost every neighborhood and town has its own quyí base. The Juyuan Old Tea House on Shengzhu Road is a favorite with not only community residents, but also citizens from Jing'an District, the Pudong New Area, and even Taicang and Kunshan cities in neighboring Jiangsu Province.

"I like visiting the old tea house in my spare time. Brewing a cup of tea, listening to a piece of quyí music and chatting with several friends, life of such is full of charm," said Wang Rugang, a famous performing artist.

"I often bring my child to the Juyuan Old Tea House. We can restore the ancient ways by drinking tea and watching performances here, meanwhile children can learn excellent quyí culture here," said Chen Ajuan, a resident in Jiading.

Jiading holds various quyí contests for children and teenagers.

Excellent performers will represent the district at the national children's quyí competition this year.



Team members participate in a pastoral orienteering event and experience rural life by running through country fields and forest roads in Jiading's Huating Town.
— Li Huacheng

Orienteering takes to the country

Mao Guanjun and Yang Yang

AN orienteering event in Huating Town early this month attracted around 1,000 participants to experience rural life by running through country fields and forest roads.

Located in the northeast of Jiading, Huating is rich in rice, garlic, melons and vegetables. Orienteering normally takes place in an urban environment but the Huating event

offered participants a chance to get out into the country.

There were three routes, the longest being more than 2 kilometers. Destinations along the way included Maoqiao Ecology Farm, Beixin Pastoral, Hengji-azhuang Farm, UpGolf, Quanjin Equestrian and Liudao Ecological Garden, all landmarks representing Huating's modern agriculture, tourist industry and ecological reserves.

Besides appreciating the

rural scenery, participants were required to finish tasks at each destination. Urban orienteering requires people to answer questions, do push-ups or pose for the camera, but the sponsors of the Huating event designed a series of tasks with a rural touch.

For example, participants were required to transplant a certain number of rice seedlings. This, for most urban dwellers, was a novel

experience. This pastoral orienteering is also Huating's trial to promote its rural traveling programs.

There were other activities like equestrian carnival, fishing competition and parent-kid sports events.

"We will keep on holding various sports events with rural touch to promote Huating as an ecological town," said He Rong, Party secretary of Huating.

Pastoral complex gets ready for visitors

Wang Anqi and Yang Yang

MAOQIAO Fair, a pastoral recreation complex in Huating Town, Jiading District, is set to open to the public in June. Its main body has been completed so far, whereas another pastoral complex, the "Countryside New World" in Xiangyang Village, will soon undergo construction.

The wooden architectures surrounded by trees in the

complex are simple and archaic, typical of local old residences of water town and garden style.

Part of the buildings will be adapted into a folk custom fair and the rest will be developed into B&B accommodation.

A 400-meter-long snack market on the north bank of Hengtang River will accommodate over 50 food suppliers who will present more than

100 varieties of snacks.

The construction materials used for making wooden stores have undergone fire prevention and anticorrosion treatments.

Maoqiao managed to preserve the village's natural ecology while developing the fair. No local families was forced to resettle due to demolition and villagers have been encouraged to rent their

vacant houses, transforming property into capital. Locals will enjoy preferred recruitment in job hunting.

"Countryside New World," another pastoral recreation complex in Jiading, will begin construction at the end of this month. Scheduled to end construction by 2020, the complex will integrate cultural experiences, B&B, farming, dining and entertainment.