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# YOG Singapore 2010, Day 1: Spectacular Opening Ceremony celebrates Youth, Sport and Culture

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The inaugural edition of the Youth Olympic Games, in Singapore (SIN), is officially open. After a spectacular Opening Ceremony, where Youth, Sport and Culture were the key concepts, the best young athletes of the planet will start competing in 26 sports, until August 26. The President of the International Olympic Committee, Jacques Rogge, addressed them a strong message: "You will learn the difference between winning and being a champion. To win, you merely have to cross the finish line first. To be a champion, you have to inspire admiration for your character, as well as for your physical talent. You have to compete in spirit of fair play, respecting your opponents and the rules — without doping or any other unfair advantage". Held in the breathtaking scenario of Singapore's Marina Bay, surrounded by the city skyscrapers and the now emblematic Marina Bay Sands complex, the show combined light and music with original choreographies and some innovation in terms of the Olympic protocol at Opening Ceremonies. The parade of the athletes was, for example, not done in the traditional way; this time, the competitors entered in a block in one of the first "chapters" of the Ceremony. A bit later, the flags of the 205 nations present in Singapore made their formal entry in the Marina Bay. Besides the usual athletes and officials' oath, coaches also swear to respect the Olympic ideals during the competition.



YOG Opening Ceremony - *credit: Pedro Adrega*

Several messages were also transmitted throughout the “chapters” of the show, including: the unity of the five continents through music, the diversity of the people across the world, the short but rich history of Singapore, the very successful “Monster”, by which all were invited to face their fears in order to fully obtain their own goals, the remembrance of the Olympic motto “Faster, Higher, Stronger”, and how it helps in achieving dreams, and the SOS for a better world, namely for the protection of the natural resources.

The pinnacle of the Opening Ceremony was naturally the lighting of the Olympic cauldron. Arriving by boat Marina Bay, the flame was then relayed by several Singaporean athletes, and the last one to hold it was Darren Choy, a young competitor in sailing. He then lit the cauldron, which has the shape of a lighthouse tower, measuring 32m. Moreover, the flame creates a vortex effect before reaching the air. In fact, the fire is contained within a tube with an opening at the top end. A special technique creates an elongated and intense fire known as a “fire tornado” because of a spiralling effect within the flame.

**On the starting blocks**

The Swimming programme of the Youth Olympic Games starts this Sunday in the Singapore Sports School, and includes three finals: the men's 400m free, the women's 200m individual medley and the 4x100m free mixed relay. This last event will be long remembered, as it is the first of its kind in the FINA history: for the YOG, two boys and two girls will swim the relay (the sequence boy/girl for each relay is decided by the respective team), a format that was already tried in some countries but that will make its official appearance at these Games.



YOG Opening Ceremony - *credit: Pedro Adrega*

For the heats, and according to the latest available start lists, the best three entry times by event are:

*Men's 400m free:* 1. Jun Dai (CHN) 3:48.59; 2. Peter Bernek (HUN) 3:49.43; 3. Adrian Mantas (ESP) 3:52.12

*Women's 50m breaststroke:* 1. Alessandra Marchioro (BRA) 31.08; 2. Martina Carraro (ITA) 31.39; 3. Chang Wang (CHN)

31.80

*Men's 100m backstroke:* 1. Jianbin He (CHN) 55.31; 2. Christian Diener (GER) 55.40; 3. Andrii Kovbasa (UKR) 55.80

*Women's 100m backstroke:* 1. Anqi Bai (CHN) 1:01.06; 2. Klaudia Nazieblo (POL) and Daryna Zevina (UKR) 1:01.49

*Men's 100m breaststroke:* 1. Anton Lobanov (RUS) 1:00.08; 2. Ioannis Karpouzlis (GRE) 1:01.11; 3. Ivan Capan (CRO)

1:02.36

*Women's 200m individual medley:* 1. Ekaterina Andreeva (RUS) 2:15.02; 2. Stefania Pirozzi (ITA) 2:15.16; 3. Kristina

Kochetkova (RUS) 2:15.80

### **Quotes of the day**

During the entire duration of the Youth Olympic Games, this section will display some of the best quotes collected by the Youth Olympic News Service in Swimming and Diving. They are part of longer articles on the YOG website and are selected by the FINA Press representative at these Games; they are intended to express the athletes' feelings on this competition, their backgrounds, the funny stories behind their participation, their experiences on the social and educational YOG programme, or simply the reaction to their performances.

*instruments, which was a lot of fun."* – Matt Stanley (NZL), after a cultural visit to Bukit Panjang Government School that included traditional music and dancing with local students

*"I'm hoping to medal in the 100m freestyle and butterfly. The 200m [butterfly] is a lot harder because the competition is*

*stronger, and it's not my strongest event."* - Velimir Stjepanovic (SRB) on his expectation for the YOG

*"It's exciting to be here because many other Kenyans don't get this chance. When I was 11 years old my coach told my mum*

*that I could be 'something special' and that I should start swimming. I started and did really well. Now it's important to me."*

- Sylvia Tanya Atieno Brunlehna (KEN), first female swimmer of her country to compete at an Olympics

*"Every competition gives you a new experience. It is different everywhere, the racing and the strategy. It's fun. My goal was*

- Marko Blazhevski (MKD)

*"He's always dad but he can still be my coach at the same time. But mainly he's my dad. It is pretty good coming away with*

*my dad because we can share the experience."* - Emma McKeon (AUS), who is trained by her father Ron (Olympian in 1980 and 1984)



YOG Opening Ceremony - *credit: Pedro Adrega*

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