

7 JUN 1984

EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY

SPEECH BY DR TAN ENG LIANG, CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE SPORTS COUNCIL, AT THE CHEQUE PRESENTATION OF THE FRASER & NEAVE BADMINTON TRAINING SCHEME AT THE NATIONAL STADIUM THEATRETTE ON 26 MAY 84 AT 11.00 AM

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In Singapore, we have been actively pursuing the "Sport for All" policy for the last 12 years. At the Sports Council, we have tried our best to offer a place for as many people as possible to further their sporting interests according to their abilities. Those who are talented and committed have risen from the base level to the higher levels of competition and achievement while the most able and dedicated have moved up to national and international competence.

Whilst "Sport for All" is important, equally important are the elite sportsmen and sportswomen who serve to inspire and encourage participation at lower levels. Today, I have chosen sports excellence in badminton as my subject.

The Fraser & Neave Training Scheme is an attempt to upgrade the present status of badminton by injecting excellence into the game. The scheme provides all the accelerated improvement on national calibre players up the various strata of achievement to the national level itself. But the scheme existing in isolation will not be able to contribute fully to the overall search for and growth in excellence unless there is sufficient promotional efforts taking place outside which have a

bearing on the quality of the scheme. For this I would like to suggest the following course of action:

First, create a conducive climate for greater inter-dependance and flow between the various levels - school, club and national. I believe that we have not fully channelled the talents we have discovered from one level to the other as it should be. In some cases, it is largely a matter of accident rather than design that a talented player has arrived at the top. The Ministry of Education can assist us by providing the names of the cream of players within the different age groups from schools. Last year, we introduced this system in the football training scheme and this has met with considerable success. We hope that all our training schemes will introduce this system where the recruitment is done with the assistance of the Extra-curricular Activities Centre of the Ministry of Education.

Secondly, a training effort such as the Fraser & Neave Scheme will stand to gain further and be enriched if clinics and coaching are held at all playing outlets. While well run clinics will inspire and motivate and collectively their contribution will be great, clubs and other organisations involved in badminton promotion should not feel that they could exclude this area since a training scheme already exists. To my mind, there can be no duplication. Even if a few talented players emerged,

still well-disciplined clinics will remind the trainees and give them a new perspective in their sports.

Third, improve competitions. We need more quality competitions in badminton, although some progress has been made by the Singapore Badminton Association in this direction, such as the individual ranking competition, the business houses competition, etc.

Fourth, we must instil in our players the values of skill development, stamina, true grit and sportsmanship. We must try and emulate the play of the Chinese and Indonesian players at the recent Thomas Cup Tournament in Kuala Lumpur. Our coaches at all levels must make an attempt to inculcate in our players these values as I feel this is one of the most important aspects of achieving excellence.

Last but not least, we must continue to cultivate mass participation in badminton. Not all people are prepared to undergo hard training to be 'Shoon Keats'. But they continue to derive a good deal of satisfaction playing a sport to an accepted level of competence. Since these people are always in the majority, they cannot be neglected and forgotten. The promotional programmes and provision of facilities for them must continue apace to keep up their interest, fun and enjoyment. They will

most likely form the core of active spectators whose physical presence at tournaments will make excellence in badminton that much more meaningful.

My congratulation goes to 8 trainees who are going to receive the Annual Awards for 1983.

I would like to thank the Singapore Badminton Association, its officials and all coaches in the scheme for their dedication and hard work in ensuring that the scheme achieves its objectives.

It leaves me now to express our appreciation to Fraser & Neave for generously continuing to sponsor the Fraser & Neave Badminton Training Scheme. I would also like to thank Sunrise & Co for continuing to be the official equipment supplier of the scheme.

GT/lc