

GOLDEN AMBITIONS FOR CHINESE BASKETBALL



China is a strong basketball nation and its national teams have a glittering tally of gold medals to prove it. Infront is helping to build Chinese basketball to the next level, creating potential for new superstars and increasing the popularity of the game among fans at home and abroad.

Spirit of the sport and the team

Basketball is the Number 1 sport in China; the country is an emerging power in the world game. At the 2011 FIBA Asia Championships both the men's and women's teams won gold and secured their entry ticket to the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Attracted to the fast, dynamic, powerful and competitive spirit of the game the fan base comprises a mix of both male and female fans. As one of the most popular televised sports in the country basketball has overtaken football as the preferred domestic sport with viewers. The number of players in the country is huge and 40 per cent of China's children regard basketball as their favourite sport.

The Chinese men's team features popular young talent with previous experience of playing for the NBA including Wang Zhizhi (NBA player from 2001 to 2005), Sun Yue (NBA player throughout 2008/09) and Yi Jianlian (playing in the NBA since 2007).

2011 was a busy year for the Chinese men's and women's teams playing a series of warm-up games against fierce opponents from the USA, Australia, Turkey, Croatia, Iran, Russia and Montenegro amongst others – getting ready for the FIBA Asia Championships in Wuhan, China.

Looking into 2012, the Chinese men and women's team will play a series of matches against strong challengers from Europe, America and Australia, both leading up to and following the Olympic Games in London.

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Key Facts

- Basketball has developed into the most popular sport in China
- Men's and Women's Team currently Number 10 and 7 in FIBA World Ranking
- Infront exclusively offers worldwide media rights for all home games
- Live and delayed TV signal with international sound for most games available on satellite and tape (on demand)
- No less than 20 matches per season produced by CCTV Sports & Entertainment in SD 4/3 format



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Rights opportunities

Infront Sports & Media is the exclusive global marketing partner of the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) for the country's men's and women's national basketball teams – Team China. The role covers all key aspects of marketing, including sponsorship, television, new media/ image rights and the technical development of the Chinese national teams. Infront owns the global media rights for all home matches of Team China.

Media production prospects

Infront China and CCTV Sports & Entertainment (CCTVSE) have formed a strategic partnership in order to support the television coverage of Team China games. A total of no less than 20 home games for the men's and the women's team are scheduled and produced per year with an average of 11 cameras capturing all the action in and around the court.

Background appeal

Infront's unique task is more than commercial. It has promised to help raise China's position in the FIBA world rankings and – based on Team China's performance at the Beijing Olympics and major basketball events – it is succeeding.

This has also been reflected by the eight year extension of the Chinese Basketball Association's (CBA) agreement with Infront for Team China in 2011. This kind of partnership between a Chinese sports body and an international sports marketing company creates a powerful synergy in the promotion of Chinese basketball to the world.

As a result of Infront's parallel role with the CBA, there is a unique opportunity for broadcasters and sponsors to focus on Chinese basketball as a dynamic product. The synergy between Team China and the CBA League can be taken advantage of – exploiting Chinese basketball to its maximum potential as a powerful vehicle to reach Chinese consumers.

In 2011 the Women's team achieved a cumulative audience of 57 million of which 38 million was for live broadcasts. By comparison the men's team achieved a cumulative figure of 51 million and 39 million for live broadcasts.

“Over the past five years, Infront has helped to make basketball the top ‘big ball’ sport in China, competitively and commercially.”

China Daily, 20 March 2011