

# Chapter 10

## Opportunities and Challenges in Wake Sports in Taiwan

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### ABSTRACT

*The Chinese Taipei Waterski and Wakeboard Federation (CTWWF), founded in 1973, has actively trained and certified coaches and waterskiing boat drivers, increased public participation opportunities and security, and developed waterskiing experience standard processes, as well as safety advocacy. Using waterskiing mechanical equipment could help reduce the risk and allow the disabled to participate. The 2009 World Games in Taiwan were not easy to fight for. Taiwan took the opportunity to train waterskiing and wakeboarding athletes to enhance the strength of domestic water sports. For the people of Taiwan to understand the sports better requires taking time to watch them, learning to appreciate the beauty of water sports, and allowing water sports to integrate into people's leisure lives.*

### INTRODUCTION: SPORTS' DEVELOPMENT IN TAIWAN

The following is an attempt to examine the history of the involvement of the Taiwanese people in sport, from the period of the Japanese occupation (1895-1945), the time in which widespread involvement of the Taiwanese in sport began through to the period since 1945, a time of rapid transition within the country. The post war years are divided into three phases: The Early Post-War Years (1945-1969); The Foundation Years (1970-1984); and the Developing Years (1985-present).

### The Period of the Japanese Occupation (1895-1945)

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, Taiwan was nominally controlled by the Chinese Ching Dynasty. In 1895, at the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese War, Taiwan was ceded to the Japanese in the Ma-Kuan Treaty (Taiwan History: Taiwan under the Japanese, 1895-1945, 2014), and the Japanese developed cultural and educational policies in Taiwan. Prior to the Japanese takeover, education had received little attention from the central government on the Chinese mainland.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-7527-8.ch010

There was very little in the way of any type of provision for higher learning (Epstein and Kuo, 1991). Along with education, the Japanese also introduced sport and games to Taiwan. While the Taiwanese were initially suspicious of these strange practices, they had won fairly wide acceptance among the islanders by the end of the first decade of the 20th century. The growth of public school sports and the holding of school meetings, competitive league games and displays of physical culture worked to help change this perception. Both sexes participated in sports such as track and field, lawn tennis, basketball, volleyball, and swimming and additionally boys played rugby, soccer, hockey, and baseball (Tsai, 2001).

### **The Early Post-War Years, 1945-1969**

Following the Second World War Japan ceded rule of Taiwan and in 1945 the island was handed back to the Chinese. The lack of material resources and the poor conditions on the island meant that sport was afforded a low priority. Although, the government did form an unofficial “sports association” within the educational bureau from 1954 to 1958 and from 1961 to 1973 (Tsao, 1998). These organisations lacked funding, government support, and were very loosely structured. Their major purpose was to put together simple nationwide sports events that were mainly for students and only in the most popular events, such as track, baseball and basketball. Due to a very limited budget and an inadequate amount of public sport facilities almost all of the sports events that were staged were held on school grounds. However, most school sport facilities and fields were small and as such it was very difficult to stage any type of large scale sporting event. Generally speaking, the development of sport in this early post war period was constrained by the general economic and political conditions on the island (Winckler, 1994).

### **The Foundation Years, 1970-1984**

The period between 1970 and 1984 was one of the most difficult political periods in the history of Taiwan and this had an impact on the development of sport on the island. In 1973, the government established a sports department within the education bureau. This was an official department with its own financing and it was responsible for all the nation’s sport affairs. In 1974, the department enacted “the five year development plan” and, in 1979, “the complete citizen’s sport education plan”. This latter plan was initially decided by the central government and involved personnel in districts, cities and councils working with related departments to ensure the funding and implementation of the plan. The most important aspect of the project was to ensure that sports facilities were designed and built and to ensure opportunities for school sports, physical education, and sports for the general population were available. Programs were also developed at a national level to prepare athletes to compete internationally. In addition, several track and field areas, stadiums, gymnasiums, and swimming pools were built (Fourth Issue of the Taiwanese Educational Almanac, 1974). Schools were required to offer physical education as a mandatory class. Every grade at elementary school had to have three periods of physical education in the curriculum and each grade in middle school through to college had to have two periods (Fifth Issue of the Taiwanese Educational Almanac, 1974). Sport teachers were given the chance to learn and further their knowledge in the area. It was also an era in which increased understanding of the value and importance of sport by the Taiwanese government occurred (Sixth Issue of the Taiwanese Educational Almanac, 1974). This understanding would lay the foundation for the developments of the next twenty-five years (Wu, 1981).

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