



The World Games 2025

August 7 - 17 @ Chengdu, China



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Photo Credit:
Gert Jan Boon
Krit Suttipithuk
Marco Spelten
Winanda van Zwamen



The World Games



An international multi-sport event comprising sports that are not contested in **the Olympic Games**. They are usually held every **4** years.

The World Games 2025 is the **12th** World Games.

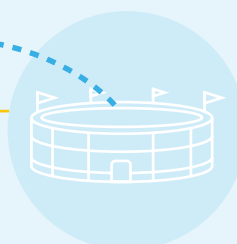


The World Games 2025
Chengdu, China August 7-17, 2025.

Korfball @ The World Games



Indoor Korfball has been on the programme of The World Games since **1985**. Beach Korfball is part of the official program for the **1st** time.



Korfball @ The World Games 2025

Indoor Korfball
Longquan High School Gymnasium
8-12 August 2025

Beach Korfball
Xinglong Lake Beach Arena
15-17 August 2025

Mascots



SHU BAO
Giant Panda

Celebrating Chengdu's
"Beautiful Landscapes"
and "Fiery Passion"

*Golden
Snub-nosed
Monkey*

JIN ZAI



Rising Sun



Endless green mountains



Facts & Rules: Indoor Korfball



- Korfball is a dynamic and fast paced, mixed-gender team sport.
- It is specifically designed for men and women to play together.
- There are Attack Zone & Defense Zone.
- Once two goals have been scored, the teams change zones, with attackers becoming defenders and vice versa.
- During a game, each squad can have up to 7 male players and 7 female players.
- A team is allowed a maximum of 8 players on the field: two players of each gender in a zone.



- The players in attack zone try to score by throwing the ball through the opposition's korf.
- However, a player may not try and take a shot if they have been 'defended'. This is when the opposition player positions themselves in between the attacker and the korf and within an arm's length from them.
- Once received the ball, a player may not dribble, walk or run with it but can move one foot with one remaining planted to the ground.
- Only minimal body contact is allowed. Tackling, blocking and holding are not allowed.
- Defending players of the opposite gender is not allowed. Use of players of particular genders at certain times can be a tactical play.

Facts & Rules: Beach Korfball



Beach Korfball was officially introduced by the International Korfball Federation (IKF) in 2017.

It was developed to:

- Expand the reach of korfball into more informal and accessible settings (like beaches),
- Increase youth and public engagement during summer or festival seasons,
- Provide a fast-paced, spectator-friendly format.



- There are 2 poles on the court, and players alternate between attacking and defending each pole similar to basketball.
- During a game, each squad can have up to 3 male players and 3 female players.
- A team is allowed a maximum of 4 players on the court: two players of each gender.



Unlike the indoor format where each goal counts as one point, beach korfball has two points for goals scored from the designated long-range shooting area.

Grouping: Indoor Korfball

Group A



NETHERLANDS



CHINESE TAIPEI



PORTUGAL



CHINA

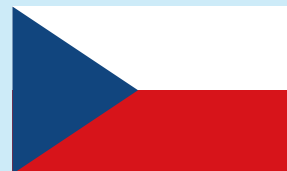
Group B



BELGIUM



GERMANY



CZECHIA



SURINAME

Grouping: Beach Korfball

Group A



POLAND



NETHERLANDS



BELGIUM



AUSTRALIA

Group B



CHINESE TAIPEI



HUNGARY



UNITED STATES



CHINA

Match Schedule: Indoor Korfball

8-12 August 2025 | Longquan High School Gymnasium

Friday, 8 August

14:00	 BEL - CZE 
15:45	 NED - POR 
18:00	 GER - SUR 
19:45	 CHN - TPE 

Monday, 11 August

14:00	3rd A - 4th B	SF3
15:45	3rd B - 4th A	SF4
18:00	1st A - 2nd B	SF1
19:45	1st B - 2nd A	SF2

Saturday, 9 August

14:00	 CZE - SUR 
15:45	 CHN - POR 
18:00	 BEL - GER 
19:45	 NED - TPE 

Tuesday, 12 August

14:00	L SF3 - L SF4	For 7th place
15:45	W SF3 - W SF4	For 5th place
18:00	L SF1 - L SF2	For Bronze medal
19:45	W SF1 - W SF2	The Final

Sunday, 10 August

14:00	 SUR - BEL 
15:45	 CHN - NED 
18:00	 CZE - GER 
19:45	 POR - TPE 

Match Schedule: Beach Korfball

15-17 August 2025 | Xinglong Lake Beach Arena

Friday, 15 August

14:30		POL	-	BEL	
14:50		NED	-	AUS	
15:10		TPE	-	USA	
15:30		CHN	-	HUN	
17:30		NED	-	BEL	
17:50		POL	-	AUS	
18:10		HUN	-	USA	
18:30		CHN	-	TPE	

Saturday, 16 August

14:30		POL	-	NED	
14:50		TPE	-	HUN	
15:10		CHN	-	USA	
15:30		BEL	-	AUS	
17:30		1st A	-	4th B	QF1
17:50		1st B	-	4th A	QF2
18:10		2nd A	-	3rd B	QF3
18:30		2nd B	-	3rd A	QF4

Sunday, 17 August

10:00	L	QF1	-	L	QF4	SF3
10:20	L	QF2	-	L	QF3	SF4
10:40	W	QF1	-	W	QF4	SF1
11:00	W	QF2	-	W	QF3	SF2
12:20	L	SF3	-	L	SF4	7/8
12:40	W	SF3	-	W	SF4	5/6
13:00	L	SF1	-	L	SF2	3/4
13:20	W	SF1	-	W	SF2	1/2



INDOOR KORFBALL



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Detlef ELEWAUT

TEAM MANAGER

Oliver VANDENHOECK

OFFICIAL 1

Johannis SCHOT

OFFICIAL 2

Kevin ONGENA

OFFICIAL 3

Ruben Jeroen M TIREZ

PLAYERS

25	Nick Francois I. VERWERFT	3	Amber ENGELS
27	Jordan DE VOGELAERE	4	Lisa Jeanne E VAN GORP
28	Siebe DE LEY	5	Lisa Godelieve E PAUWELS
29	Jarre DE LEY	6	Lise VAN MALDEGHEM
30	Thomas THIJS	7	Joke VAN MALDEGHEM
35	Joppe BELLEMANS	8	Britt SAEY
36	Kian AMORGASTE	10	Eline DENIE



Photo Credit: Marco Spelten

Belgium Diamonds Set Their Sights on Gold at The World Games 2025

Captain Jordan de Vogelaere leads a team built on love, dedication, and a hunger to win.

With The World Games 2025 just around the corner, the Belgium Diamonds indoor korfball team are laser-focused on one goal: the top of the podium. Under the leadership of captain Jordan de Vogelaere, the team is entering the tournament with confidence, unity, and a strong belief in their identity.

“We aim for the gold medal,” says de Vogelaere without hesitation—a bold but expected statement from one of the sport’s most respected leaders. Belgium, a powerhouse in korfball, knows what it takes to compete at the highest level. But even with talent and tradition on their side, the road to TWG 2025 hasn’t been without its challenges.

“The biggest challenge for us is getting everyone physically and mentally fit,” Jordan shares. “This tournament demands perfection, and we know we need to be at our absolute best.”



Photo Credit: Marco Spelten

Preparation began in earnest back in June 2024, with the European Championship serving as a key checkpoint. While the core of the team has remained consistent—only changed in two positions—the emphasis has been on refining their chemistry and sharpening their edge.

One of the most striking things about the Belgium Diamonds is their unity. “I’m proud of everyone’s dedication to maximizing the team’s potential,” says Jordan. “Everyone in our team is equal.” It’s a culture that values every player, not just the stars—something evident in his response to which players fans should keep an eye on: “Everyone,” he answers with a smile.

Many of the Diamonds were practically raised on korfbal courts, with roots that run deep into family traditions. “Almost every player has one or both parents who played korfbal, or they started playing at



Photo Credit: Marco Spelten



a very young age,” explains the captain. That early start has created a team rich in experience and instinctive understanding of the game.

While injuries have tested their resolve, the squad heads into TWG 2025 healthy and united, thanks to strong support from their medical staff. Behind every victory are hours of unseen effort, recovery, and sacrifice—and this group knows that better than most.

As they arrive in Chengdu, one thing is clear: the Belgium Diamonds aren’t just here to participate. They’re here to win—and to do it their way, with love, grit, and the belief that their best is yet to come.



Photo Credit: Marco Spelten



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Xiangcheng MA

OFFICIAL 1

Bernard Willem Juliaan CRUM

OFFICIAL 2

Tao WANG

OFFICIAL 3

Hao YIN

OFFICIAL 4

Qiang HUANG

PLAYERS

11 Dongjie ZHANG

1 Xin ZHANG

12 Yuguo FAN

2 Jing ZHAO

14 Xi WANG

3 Qing WANG

15 Jingyuan SUN

5 Xin LI

17 Fei XIAO

6 Yuran FU

19 Xuyang LI

8 Yuxuan HU

20 Ruiyang SHEN

10 Yuzhu ZHANG



China's Korfball Team: A Story of the Home Team

As the world's best korfball teams prepare to take the stage at The World Games 2025 in Chengdu, one squad is making waves not just for their ambition—but for the spirit that binds them. Team China, led by captain Hu Yuxuan from Zhengzhou University, is aiming high: “Top six, and if we can, a medal.”

It's a bold goal, but not an empty one. This is a team forged in adversity and driven by something far deeper than just winning.

Rebuilding After Disruption

Like many national teams, China's korfball program suffered during the pandemic. “Training wasn't consistent,” Hu says. “And now, we're in a period of transition—merging the experience of veteran players with the energy of newcomers.”

That balance is delicate, but powerful when it works. Since early June, the team has been in full training mode—pushing through tactical drills, fitness sessions, and video analysis. But what sets them apart isn't just



the effort. It's how they show up for one another, day after day.

Sacrifice, Sweat, and Solidarity

Under the guidance of coach Ma, players juggle full-time jobs, family responsibilities, and academic commitments just to make it to training. Some drive hours from other cities after work. Some, like Zhang Xin—a mother of a six-year-old—squeeze in sessions between parenting duties. Others, like Wang Qing, returned to camp just days after her wedding, while Sun Jingyuan flew back from overseas doctoral studies just to prepare with the team.

These are not athletes in a professional league with elite support. These are everyday heroes—teachers, researchers, students—fueling their dreams with raw commitment.

"We've all made sacrifices," Hu reflects. "But we're united by our love for korfball and our belief in this team."

Generations Lifting One Another

The team's age range is wide, but that's exactly what makes them strong. "Some of us have played for 15 years, others just started," Hu says. One rising star is 19-year-old Fan Yuguo, who's only been playing for under two years but already shows incredible potential. This will be his first international tournament—and he's ready to embrace it with fearless determination.

And then there's the emotional backbone of the team: the mentorship culture. Hu tells of one moment in a game where hesitation crept in. He didn't shoot. "My senior, Jie-ge, said: 'Be confident. Just shoot. If you miss, I'll rebound for you.' That stuck with me."

It's these little moments—the pep talks, the shot corrections, the late-night film reviews—that define

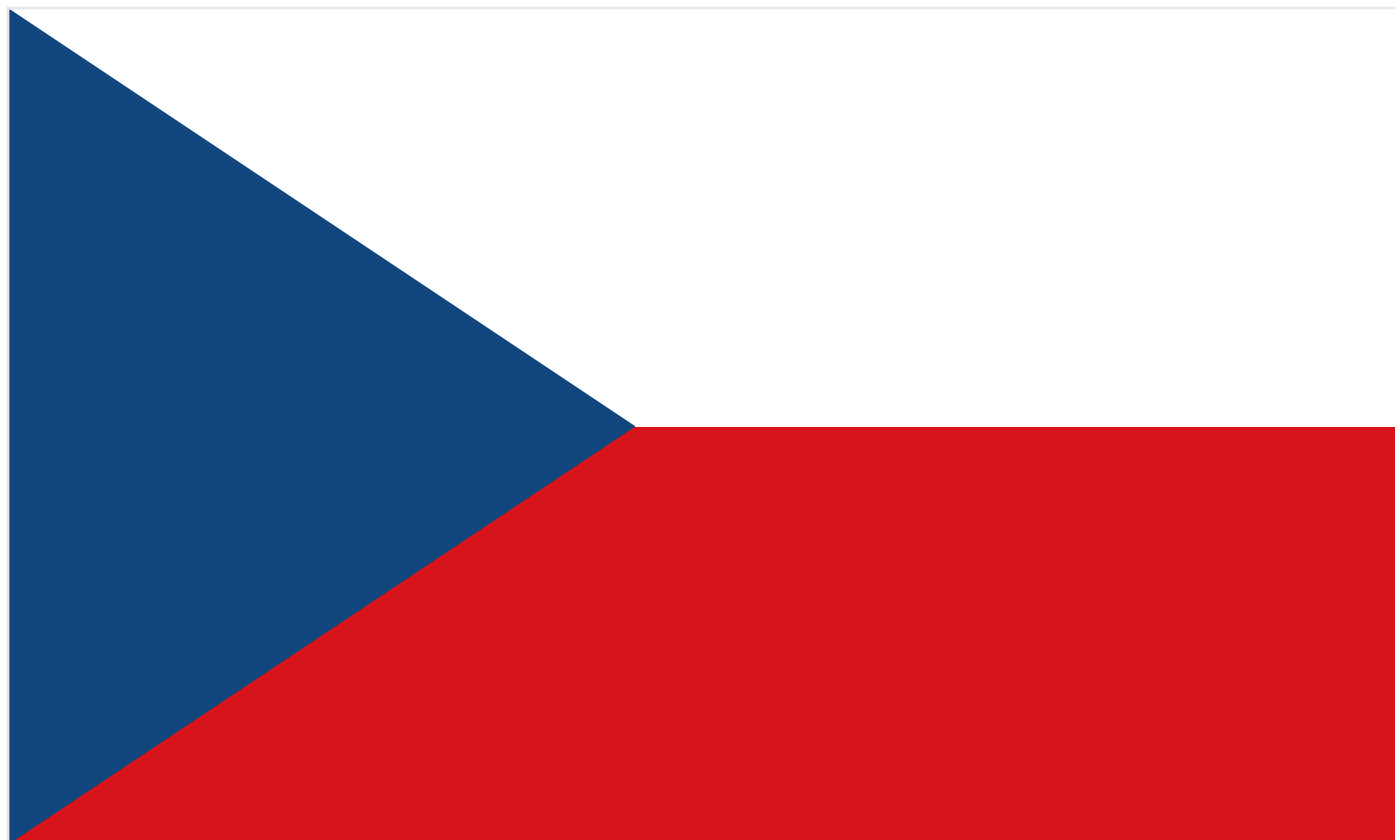
the team's DNA. "Our seniors carry us," Hu says. "Not just with advice, but with their belief in us."

More Than a Team

Team China isn't just chasing victory. They're rewriting what success looks like in sport—measured not just in scores, but in sacrifice, unity, and legacy.

"We're not just a team," Hu says. "We're a family. Every pass, every rebound, every win—we do it for each other."





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Ivo KRACÍK

OFFICIAL 1

Vít HOVORKA

OFFICIAL 2

David KONEČNÝ

PLAYERS

13	Petr PEŠÁK	1	Lenka BURIÁNKOVÁ
23	Lukáš HOLÍK	2	Sofie VOJNOVÁ
27	František VALENTA	3	Sára SAHATCIU
29	Petr ŠNAJDR	6	Eliška ZIEGLEROVÁ
30	Petr GALÍČEK	7	Klára NOVÁKOVÁ
36	René KŘUPAL	8	Nela KUBŮ
39	Rostislav KORTUS	17	Jitka PAVLÍČKOVÁ



Czechia: Blending Youth and Experience on a Medal Mission

For the Czech Republic, The World Games 2025 isn't just another tournament—it's a chance to turn years of hard work into something tangible. A medal.

"We're aiming for the podium," says head coach Ivo Krcák. "We know what we're capable of, and this team has what it takes."

That belief comes from more than just talent. It's built on months of preparation, years of shared experiences, and a powerful blend of ambition and chemistry. The team began preparing for Chengdu in April, but the last two months have been all-in—intensive training sessions, tactical sharpening, and friendly matches to push themselves against international competition.



A Team of Contrasts, United by Purpose

One of the most interesting things about this Czech squad is its range. The youngest player is just 18. The oldest is 40. That 22-year age gap isn't a gap at all—it's a bridge between generations, and it's working.

"It's a great balance," Kracík says. "We have fresh energy from the younger players and calm leadership from the veterans. They respect each other and push each other. That's what makes it special."

Most of the players first picked up a korfball in school, some of them just kids with no idea they'd one day represent their country on a world stage. Now they're in Chengdu, preparing to face the very best, with passion in their hearts and medals on their minds.

Watch Out for Holík and Pavlíčková

While Coach Kracík won't play favorites, he does nod to two names to keep an eye on: Lukáš Holík and Jitka Pavlíčková. "They've been outstanding in training and have the ability to make a difference when it matters most," he says.



Holík brings sharp instincts and a scoring touch. Pavlíčková plays with quiet control and fierce determination—someone who leads by example. Together, they embody the team's three defining traits: passion, spirit, and ambition.

Staying Healthy, Staying Focused

With a string of friendly matches lined up before the tournament, Kracík knows how quickly momentum can be lost.

"We're training hard, but we're also careful," he says. "The goal is to arrive in Chengdu in top shape, both physically and mentally."

"I'm proud of how well they work together," Kracík says. "They support each other. They believe in each other. That's the foundation of our team."





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Wilco Teun VAN DEN BOS

TEAM MANAGER

Jochen SCHITTKOWSKI

OFFICIAL 1

Timon Jonathan ORTH

OFFICIAL 2

Alice FÜSSGEN

OFFICIAL 3

Dominik Michael WERTHMANN

PLAYERS

10 Maurice GRAMMEL

1 Lea WITTHAUS

11 Theo NOWAK

2 Madeline GUST

13 Pascal WECKENDRUP

3 Johanna GNUTT

14 Jan Robert HEMING

4 Jana KIERDORF

15 Thomas FREUND

5 Hannah HEILMANN

16 Steffen HEPPEKAUSEN

6 Anna Sophia ORTH

19 Lucas WITTHAUS

8 Julia STRACH



Team Germany Eyes the Podium: Making a Shot for Bronze

Led by long-time captain Jan Robert Heming, Germany's korfball squad brings experience, heart, and a quiet fire to Chengdu.

After a solid run at the last edition of The World Games, Germany returns to the world stage in Chengdu with a clear goal: third place. Ambitious? Yes. But impossible? Not at all.

"We know the competition is incredibly strong," says Jan Robert Heming, Germany's long-serving captain. "But the last World Games showed us that with the right mindset and preparation, this goal is within reach."

A Team Forged Over Years

One of Germany's biggest strengths is its familiarity. This isn't a group thrown together for a tournament—

this is a team built over years of playing side by side. Many of the players have been representing Germany together for a long time, creating a chemistry that shows on and off the court.

"There's a deep sense of trust and understanding among us," Heming explains. "We've really grown together as a team."

And it shows—not just in the gameplay, but in the way they move, communicate, and fight for every point. Their korfball is tidy, structured, and built on collective effort, not flashy individual moments. That's intentional.

"We don't focus on individual players," Heming says firmly. "Everyone has something they bring to the table, and that's what makes us strong. We're a real team, in every sense."

The Final Push

Germany's preparation for The World Games began early in the year, and now they're entering the home stretch. With just a few training camps left before the tournament kicks off, every session counts.

"Our biggest challenge is making the most of these last few camps," Heming says. "We have limited time together, so the focus is on sharpening our tactics and building momentum."

Most of the squad grew up playing korfbal from a young age and are now balancing the demands of adult life with elite sport. Some are still studying, but most have already entered the workforce—meaning vacation days are used not for travel or rest, but for training and competition. It's a sacrifice every player has made willingly, with eyes fixed on one prize: a place on the podium.

Built on Team Spirit and Fighting Drive

Asked to sum up his squad in three words, Heming doesn't hesitate: "Team spirit. Ambitious. Fighting spirit."

It's a description that fits. Germany may not always be the loudest or flashiest team in the tournament, but they're always in the mix. Always competing. Always

grinding. It's that quiet resilience that's carried them this far—and it's what they're counting on again in Chengdu.

No dramatic comeback stories. No headline-grabbing adversity. Just a group of dedicated athletes who've been putting in the work for years—training late, traveling often, and carrying the pride of a nation on their shoulders.





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Ard KORPORAAL

TEAM MANAGER

Hendrikus Wilhelmus VAN EWIJK

OFFICIAL 1

Leon BRAUNSTAHL

OFFICIAL 2

Samantha SCHORN-JONKMAN

OFFICIAL 3

Maaïke Doortje Mienieke WILLEMSSEN

OFFICIAL 4

Ananda Anne Marij HINDRIKS E/V VAN VEGCHEL

OFFICIAL 5

Agatha Maria Johanna JANSEN

PLAYERS

11 Olav VAN WIJNGAARDEN
13 Wobbe Ran FABER
14 Harm Hendrik Jan VISSCHER
15 Carlo Imar DE VRIES
16 Alwin OUT
18 Julian FRIESWIJK
19 Bo OPPE

1 Jessica LOKHORST
2 Esther Teuntje Jacomijntje CORDUS
3 Nikki Imani BOERHOUT
8 Danielle Afua BOADI
9 Fleur HOEK
10 Sabine VERHOEF
12 Marije VISSER



Photo Credit: Winanda van Zwamen

“The Netherlands: Champions with a Purpose”

When it comes to korfball, one team sets the global standard—the Netherlands. As the reigning powerhouse of the sport, the Dutch National Indoor Korfball Team heads to The World Games 2025 (TWG 2025) with a clear ambition: GOLD. But as head coach Ard Korporaal and star player Olav van Wijngaarden reveal, the Dutch mission goes far beyond standing on top of the podium.

More Than Just Winning

“Our main goal is of course to win the gold medal,” says Olav without hesitation. “But we’ve also set other goals—to score more, to play better, and to deliver a high-level performance for our supporters.” For a team that already operates at the top tier of the sport, this relentless drive for improvement is what makes them so formidable.

Coach Korporaal adds: “The greatest challenge for us is ourselves. Even though we’re considered the best, the players are still pushing to get better every day.”

Indeed, the Dutch team is a masterclass in korfball artistry. “We have players with incredible defending, some with beautiful technique—watching this team play is a spectacle in itself.”



Battle-Ready—But First, Some Rest

With the Dutch national league just wrapped up, the team is balancing fatigue with preparation. The league is known as the toughest korfbal competition in the world, and its demanding pace has left the players needing both physical and mental recharge.

“We trained a little before the league,” Olav explains, “but now that the season is over, our full focus turns to The World Games.”

Beyond Gold: Giving Back to the Game

The team is full of people juggling everyday lives with elite-level sport. “Our players are between 18 and 30 years old,” says Korpelaar. “They have studies, jobs, families, relationships—just like anyone else. But

together, they’re about to write a big story this August.”

While the Dutch team aims to cement their dominance, they’re also on a mission to lift others. “We want to win. But we also want to help other teams,” says Olav. “By sharing our experience, we can grow the game together.”

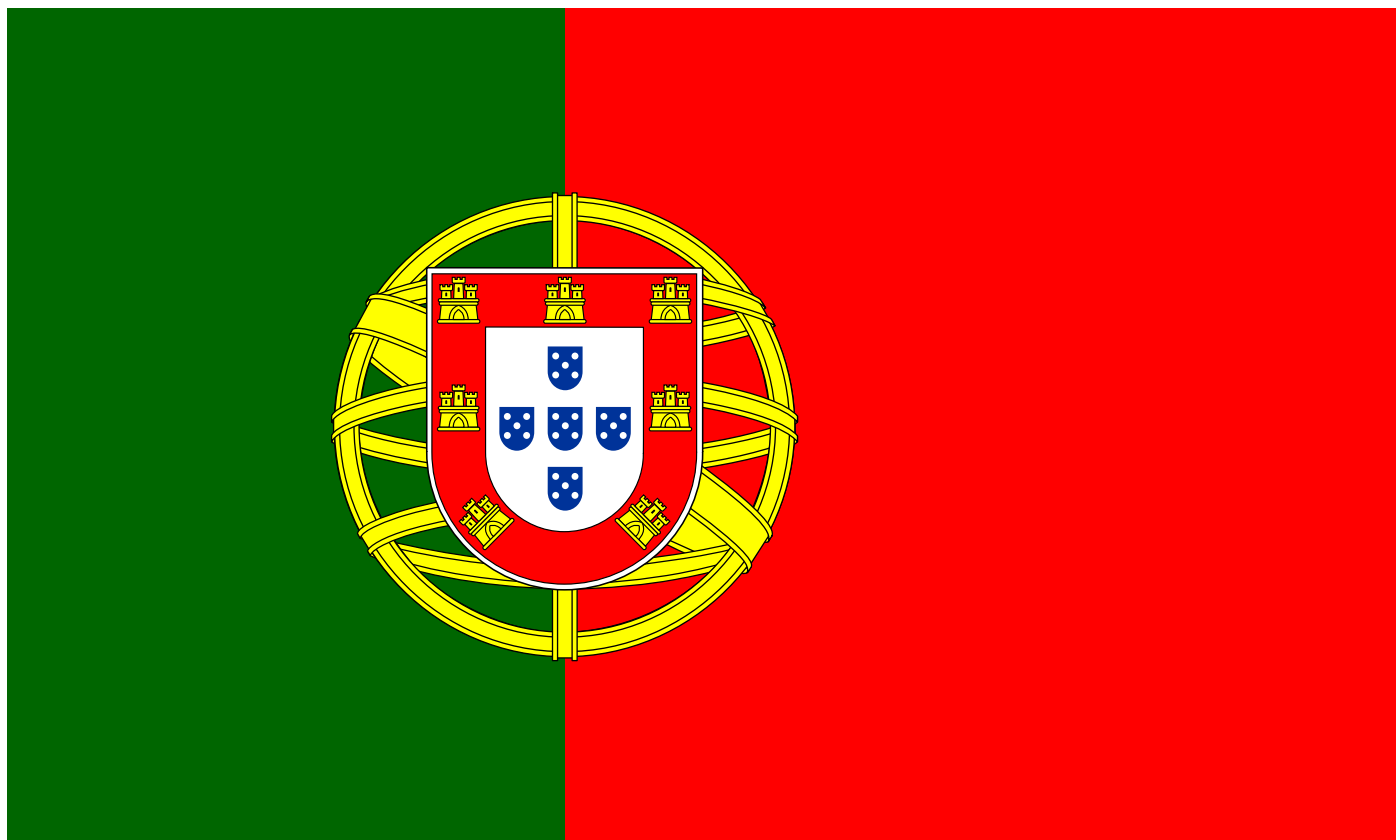
A Team to Watch—and Learn From

The Netherlands enters TWG 2025 not just as the favorites, but as the benchmark. Their combination of skill, humility, and purpose makes them more than just champions—they are ambassadors for the sport.

Get ready to witness greatness. The Dutch aren’t just coming for gold—they’re coming to inspire.



Photo Credit: Winanda van Zwamen



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Carla Sofia SANTOS ANTUNES

TEAM MANAGER

Carla Maria MENDES G. SERDOURA LOURENÇO

OFFICIAL 1

Pedro AMARO CORREIA

OFFICIAL 2

Madalena NUNES ABREU MATOS TANQUEIRO

PLAYERS

9	Tomás SERDOURA LOURENÇO	1	Celise Melissa ROCHA RIBEIRO
10	Tiago Miguel DE CASTRO VASCONCELOS ALVES LUZ	2	Catarina FERREIRA FRADE
11	Hugo Alexandre VALDEZ FERNANDES	4	Luise Rosa PAULO PAZ COSTA RUIVO
12	Afonso SERDOURA LOURENÇO	5	Inês AFONSO CAROCHO AGUIAR SANTOS
14	Tiago GUIMARÃES SERUCA FERRO	6	Beatriz PIMENTEL PEREIRA
15	Jean SILVA AYRES	7	Catarina Edilene GOMES CORREIA
16	Júlio DURÃES RUIVO	8	Beatriz BRITO SOARES ROSA



Portugal's Passion Project: With limited resources but unlimited spirit

In a world of big names and big budgets, Team Portugal is proof that heart still matters. Led by national coach Carla Antunes, this small but fearless squad is ready to take on the world's best at The World Games 2025—and do it their way.

"Our goal is to play the best korfbal we can and secure a top-6 finish," says Antunes. "That may sound modest to some, but for us, it's a statement of belief. We know what we're capable of."

A Balancing Act: Big Dreams on a Tight Budget

Portugal's journey to Chengdu hasn't been paved with luxury or ease. The team began its preparation back in January, carefully crafting a program that balances ambition with reality.

"The biggest challenge is creating the best possible preparation program with the budget we have," Antunes shares. "We don't have the same resources as some of the bigger nations, but we make every session, every opportunity, count."

And they do it with smiles, sweat, and a deep sense of purpose. Whether it's late-night training sessions or long travel days, the athletes show up—not just for themselves, but for Portuguese korfbal.

A Mix of Wisdom and Youth

What makes this team special is its blend of experience and youthful energy. Veterans bring the calm, the clarity, the steady hands in high-pressure moments. The younger players bring the spark—the hunger to prove themselves on the world stage.

"It's a dynamic mix," says Antunes. "They push each other, learn from each other, and grow together." "This team is skilled, united, and determined," she says. "We succeed because of our connection—not because of individual brilliance."

Fuelled by Passion, Not Paychecks

Unlike some elite teams, Portugal's players don't have professional contracts or major sponsorships. They

train, they work, they study—and they do it all with korfball at the center of their lives.

“It’s not always easy,” Antunes admits. “But what keeps us going is the team spirit. The athletes represent Portuguese korfball with passion and pride. That’s what I’m most proud of.”

And that passion shows. In their discipline. In their sacrifices. In the way they carry the Portuguese flag into every match with quiet pride and relentless energy.

A Story the World Needs to See

The real story of Team Portugal is the one we often overlook: the daily grind. The dedication without recognition. The refusal to give up—despite limited support, despite financial obstacles, despite the odds.

“This team is here because they love the game,” says Antunes. “That’s what the world should know.”





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Jairus Richenel NICATIA

TEAM COACH

Ivan Rayen KARSTERS

TEAM MANAGER

Robert Raphael JANSSEN

OFFICIAL 1

Delano Lorenzo BRAUMULLER

OFFICIAL 2

Daniël Henri KONING

PLAYERS

15	Randell Ashwin VAN DER STEEN	2	Sandy Cynthia Shirin RAMLAL
16	Kamil Rajandre HIRALAL	3	Sterre Arianna LEIDER
17	Wayne Eric STIENSTRA	4	Dominique Laureline VAN DER STELT
18	Thomas Niels VISSER	5	Tamera Anastacia VAN DER STELT
19	Trojan Benjamin PINAS	6	Shera Rochella DESAUNOIS
20	Vladimir Raymundo SLOT	7	Sharona Estelle Cecilia Ismene VAN DER KOOYE
21	Shane Farish Roy AMATREDJO	8	Iske Tianne Si Amoi VAN GINKEL



Suriname's Korfball Dream Marches On: Chasing Medals and Inspiring the Next Generation

When you watch Suriname's korfball team take the court in Chengdu, you're not just watching a team play for victory. You're watching a team play for something bigger—pride in their roots, belief in their mission, and the dream of growing the sport back home.

"Our goal is to compete for a medal," says head coach Ivan Karsters. "But more than that, we want to show Suriname—and the world—what's possible when people come together with passion and purpose."

A Team Forged by Distance, United by Culture

TeamSU is one of the most unique stories in international korfball. Many of the players were born and raised in the Netherlands, but all share deep family ties to Suriname. That bond drives them to wear the Suriname jersey with pride—one that's more than symbolic. It's emotional.

"Most of us grew up in Dutch clubs," explains team captain Randell van der Steen, "but this team gives us a chance to connect with where we come from. It's personal. Every game we play, we play for something that matters."



But creating chemistry across borders isn't easy. Players live in different cities—and even different countries—so organizing training sessions, camps, and matches requires serious commitment, and serious coordination. That's where the fun—and sometimes chaos—comes in.

"Fun. Chaotic. Passionate," laughs Randell, when asked to describe the squad in three words. "But I wouldn't change a thing."

Grinding Towards Greatness

Suriname's TWG journey began back in September with a broad squad and big dreams. The coaching staff spent months narrowing down the list, integrating new talent, and building a system that fits. Training camps were intense. Practice matches weren't just for sharpening tactics—they also raised money to help fund the team's trip to Chengdu.

"This is not a professional setup with huge budgets," Ivan points out. "But what we lack in resources, we make up for in heart."

The team is still a work in progress, especially with several new faces adjusting to the playing style. But both Ivan and Randell believe the pieces are falling into place.

"We're building strategies based on our players' strengths," says Randell. "Once we truly click, we'll be a real threat."

Players to Watch—and Stories to Remember

All eyes will be on Vladimir Slot—World Championship 2023 top scorer and a player who seems to find the

korf no matter the defense. "He hasn't lost his touch since Taipei," says Randell. "He's a scoring machine."

But TeamSU is far from a one-man show. Captain Randell himself is the emotional engine of the team—full of fire, positivity, and leadership. Iske van Ginkel brings versatility and calm under pressure. And newcomer Sterre Leider may be quiet off the court, but when the whistle blows, she turns into a fierce competitor.

Then there's Dominique van der Stelt, whose journey back to the squad is nothing short of inspirational. A serious injury kept her out of the previous World Championship. Many doubted she'd return—but she did. Stronger, smarter, and ready to help Suriname chase their dreams.

There's also a unique kind of absence on the team—one that speaks to the closeness of this group. Key player Isaura Hilgen and beloved team manager Susan Bijsterbosch won't be in Chengdu. But they've got a great reason: both are expecting babies. And while the team will miss them deeply, their growing families are a celebration shared by all.

More Than a Medal

Coach Ivan puts it best: "Winning a medal would be a huge moment for us—but it's also about what comes after. It would help put korfball on the map in Suriname. It would inspire kids to pick up the sport. It would show what's possible."

This is more than just sport. It's identity. It's unity. It's proof that with belief and effort, even a small team can dream big—and dare to make it real.





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Fang-Yi HSIEH

TEAM MANAGER

Ting-Yin YU

OFFICIAL 1

Jui-Hsin LIANG

OFFICIAL 2

Bo-Yu SUNG

OFFICIAL 3

Wei-Chiang HUANG

PLAYERS

11	Yuan-Hao CHEN	1	Ya-Wen LIN
12	Chieh-Sheng CHANG	3	Ya-Hui CHO
13	Shao-En CHIU	4	Pei-Yun WU
15	Chun-Ta CHEN	5	Cin CHEN
17	Chen-Yu KAO	7	Shu-Chi CHANG
18	Tsung-Yu TSAI	9	Kai-Yeh LO
20	Ching-Chen HSU	10	Ya-Han CHAN



All Eyes on Chinese Taipei: Ready to Surprise the World

With speed, smarts, and heart—Chinese Taipei returns to The World Games aiming higher than ever.

In the world of korfball, few teams turn heads quite like Chinese Taipei. Known for their lightning-fast pace, razor-sharp reflexes, and clever tactics, this Asian powerhouse brings a unique energy to every court they step on. And for The World Games 2025 in Chengdu, they're back with one goal: to climb higher, challenge the seemingly untouchable Dutch, and maybe—just maybe—make history.

"We're one of the few teams with a real chance to challenge the Netherlands," says head coach Hsieh Fang-Yi (Bird). "And this time, our goal is to go even further."

But ambition doesn't make the path easier. Coach Hsieh is honest about the challenges. "Our biggest issue is not having a proper venue for long-term training," she says. "Some players are working full-time jobs, so scheduling consistent sessions is tough. It affects team chemistry."

Another hurdle is bridging the gap between generations. "Some of our more experienced players stick to traditional gameplay, while younger ones hesitate to speak up. That makes in-game tactical shifts harder. But we're working through it in training."

Despite their physical disadvantage against taller European squads, Chinese Taipei is doubling down on what they do best—speed, creativity, and finesse. And they're putting in the work early. Unlike previous tournaments, where training began just two or three months out, this squad started their TWG prep in February 2024. The mission? Show a sharper, more synchronized version of themselves—and bring the “Asian style” of korfball into the spotlight.



This year's lineup features some standout newcomers. Wu Pei-Yun, who stunned audiences at the U21 World Championship, brings relentless movement and deadly accuracy. Young guns Chen Yuan-Hao and Hsu Ching-Chen are also on the rise, showing impressive growth and hunger.

Then there's Tsai Tsung-Yu—the son of former national player Tsai Chih-Chang—carrying not just his family's legacy, but hopes for the team's future.

But perhaps the most inspiring story belongs to Cho Ya-Hui. She missed the last World Games due to injury and spent the years since battling through rehab and doubts. Now, she's back—stronger, wiser, and determined to leave her mark. And Hsu Ching-Chen, once a skinny middle schooler overlooked by many, has quietly transformed into one of the team's key contributors through sheer perseverance.

Chinese Taipei isn't just chasing the world—they're building their own style. “We're not here to copy Europe,” Coach Hsieh says. “We want to create something original. Our own mix of agility, strategy, and flair.”

And that's exactly what they'll bring to Chengdu: a team that plays fast, thinks fast, and never backs down. “We might not be the tallest or the strongest,” says Hsieh, “but we have the fastest feet, the strongest will, and the fiercest spirit. That's what makes us special.”



BEACH KORFBALL

Australia



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Pui Man Amy CHOW

PLAYERS

15	Robert Andrew REICHMAN	3	Emily Rose HUTCHESSON
22	Christopher Alexander HUTCHESSON	13	Amy Louise KUBANK
26	Rhys David KUBANK	34	Louise Patricia ROBERTS



Australia Beach Korfball Team Gears Up for The World Games

As the countdown to the The World Games ticks on, Australia's beach korfball team is embracing the challenge ahead with open arms—and open hearts. For Rhys Kubank, Emily Hutchesson, and the rest of the squad, this tournament isn't just another competition; it's the culmination of years of effort, sacrifice, and unwavering camaraderie.

"We've been playing together for about three years now in international tournaments," said Kubank. "But our focused preparation for The World Games really kicked off at the start of this year." With Australia set to face off against some of the best beach korfball nations in the world, the team knows it will need every ounce of experience gained from their pool matches to charge into the crossover rounds with confidence.

One of their toughest hurdles? The weather. "Training in winter while preparing for a tournament held in hot, humid conditions definitely adds an extra layer of difficulty," Hutchesson noted with a smile. "But we're pushing through. That's what we do."

This Australian squad isn't just defined by their skill on the sand, but by the diverse paths that brought them here. Many of the players first honed their athletic abilities on basketball courts before falling in love with korfball's unique mix of strategy, speed, and teamwork. Now veterans of the sport, they've developed into a tight-knit unit—described in three words: diverse, enthusiastic, and focused.



Support and encouragement flow freely within this group. “What makes me proudest is the way we always have each other’s backs,” Kubank shared. “It doesn’t matter what’s happening—we lift each other up, every single time.”

That unity is perhaps best seen in the family ties running through the team. Australia boasts not one but two sets of siblings playing side by side, a rarity in elite sport and a testament to the close-knit nature of the group.

Another layer of adversity comes from the team’s grassroots foundation. “We’re a fully self-funded team,” said Hutchesson. “Balancing full-time jobs with intensive training and tournament prep isn’t easy, but we’re passionate about representing Australia on the world stage.”



Asked who the standout player might be at the tournament, Kubank chuckled. “Honestly, we all bring something different. There’s no one star—everyone contributes in their own way.”

In a world where elite sport is often defined by flashy headlines and big sponsorships, Australia’s beach korfball team offers something refreshingly real: hard work, heart, and an unshakeable sense of team spirit. As they take to the sand in 2025, this group of determined athletes hopes to inspire others—not just with their play, but with the story behind it.



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Kevin An C DE WAELE

TEAM MANAGER

Detlef ELEWAUT

OFFICIAL 1

Nathan VAN LANGENDONCK

OFFICIAL 2

Inge Joanna VAN ACKER

PLAYERS

13	Ruben Willy VERGAERT	2	Elin LOOS
17	Axel VAN GENECHTEN	3	Lauren SOMERS
20	Cédric SCHOUMACKER	4	Paulien Lieve L RYCKX



Photo Credit: Marco Spelten

Belgium's Beach Korfball Team Is Ready to Make Waves in Chengdu

When the sun blazes down on the sands of Chengdu for The World Games 2025, one team will be there with gold in their sights and grit in their hearts—Belgium's national beach korfball squad.

Led by captain Paulien Ryckx, the team isn't shy about their ambition: "As Belgians, we aim high. We're going for a medal—ideally one with a golden colour!" she says with a confident grin. And with the legacy Belgium holds in korfball's indoor format, no one is questioning their potential.

But beach korfball is a different beast. With only six players—three men, three women—there's nowhere



Photo Credit: Marco Spelten

to hide, no time to rest, and no backup plan. Every player is essential, and every moment matters.

Training with Purpose

Preparation for the tournament kicked off in earnest in early June, just after the end of Belgium's outdoor korfball season. But in truth, this team has been building towards TWG for years. Beach korfball is still a relatively young discipline, and Belgium has been among the nations pushing hardest to professionalize it.

The team reflects that evolution. "We're a mix of different ages, backgrounds, and levels of experience in beach korfball," Ryckx explains. "Some of us have played multiple world championships; others are new to the sand but bring top-level indoor skills."

That variety is part of what makes this group special. And while their training is serious and focused, the atmosphere is anything but stiff. "We always train with a smile," Ryckx says. "We enjoy what we do. There's ambition, yes—but there's also a lot of respect and fun."

Team First, Always

Ask Ryckx what makes her most proud, and she doesn't hesitate. "Our team spirit," she says. "We're six people, and there's no 'bench.' Everyone plays. Everyone is key."



That unity was tested early on when Ruben, one of the team's top male players, suffered an ankle injury at the end of the outdoor season. It cost him the start of the TWG prep program. But he's back now—recovered, ready, and determined to make up for lost time.

"He didn't want to miss this chance," Ryckx says. "And now he's bringing even more fire."

A Childhood Dream, Grown on Sand

Most of the squad started playing korfball as kids—between the ages of 5 and 7—and now compete in Belgium's top indoor league. That solid foundation gives them the technical finesse, tactical awareness, and athletic drive to make a serious run for the podium.

This team brings a rare combination: experience sharpened by competition, enthusiasm fueled by newcomers, and a collective mindset that values every pass, every block, every play.

Belgium's beach korfball team isn't just aiming to win. They're looking to make a statement—about what's possible when different generations come together, when resilience meets passion, and when a team becomes more than the sum of its players.





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Hao LIU

OFFICIAL 1

Zhen HUANG

OFFICIAL 2

Hao YIN

OFFICIAL 3

Qiang HUANG

PLAYERS

9 Linxu HE

4 Jingyi YIN

10 Jiaxingwang JIANG

5 Hui NIU

16 Bingchen LI

11 Wenjing LI



China's Beach Korfball Team: a Hometown Dream in Chengdu

When The World Games 2025 kick off in Chengdu, few teams will carry as much heart—and heat-tested resolve—as the Chinese national beach korfball team.

Led by Head Coach Liu Hao, the team is aiming high: a top-four finish in one of the sport's most intense and unforgiving formats. "We've trained for a year," says Liu. "The sheer physical toll of this game. The sand, the sun—it tests every part of you."

He's not exaggerating.

Trained by the Sun, Forged in the Sand

In the searing outdoor heat—where temperatures on the training ground regularly hit 40°C—the Chinese team has prepared for months on end, pushing through conditions few others endure. Players have battled peeling skin, dehydration, and even heatstroke. But in a sport governed by strict anti-doping regulations, even a mild fever means no medication—only cold towels and willpower.

"This is what makes our athletes extraordinary," Liu says. "They stay strong, stay focused, and keep showing up—every day."

The Pride of 2024

That spirit already paid off. At the 2024 World Beach Korfball Championship, China earned their spot in The





World Games by winning six out of nine matches. Even more impressive? Star player Yin Jingyi was named Best Female Shooter of the entire tournament—the only athlete across all nations to earn the title.

Now, alongside Niu Hui (No. 5) and He Linxu (No. 9), Yin will lead China into battle on home soil.

Local Roots, National Dreams

There's something special about this squad: it's truly local. The entire team is built around elite athletes from Sichuan University, with coaches who are alumni of the same institution. "This is a Chengdu team playing in Chengdu," Liu proudly notes. "We're not just representing China. We're representing our home."

The players' backgrounds speak to years of hard-earned experience:

- Niu Hui began korfball in 2014. With 11 years under her belt, she's claimed multiple national championships and an Asian Championship bronze medal.
- Yin Jingyi is a 15-year veteran of the game. A multiple-time national champion, she has also earned Best Female Shooter at numerous international events.
- He Linxu, who joined in 2018, has already climbed podiums with national championship wins and silver medals.

A Team Built on Mission and Unity

Coach Liu sums up his team with three words: resilience, unity, mission. And that mission—competing at the highest level, on home sand—is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"There are no shortcuts in beach korfball," Liu says. "But we believe in our preparation. We believe in each other. And we believe in making Chengdu proud."

Come the opening whistle, the Chinese team won't just be playing for medals. They'll be playing for every drop of sweat shed under the sun, for every blister and sunburn, for every hour of training far from the spotlight—and for a crowd cheering not from across the globe, but from just across the street.

This isn't just a team. It's a hometown story in the making.





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Barnabás András HACK

TEAM MANAGER

Olivér Rudolf JAKAB

OFFICIAL 1

Bence DR. CSELIK

OFFICIAL 2

Attila ERDEI

PLAYERS

8	Kristóf Tamás BELLUSZ	4	Anna VÁGÓ
10	Szabolcs CSERNÁK	7	Noémi JAMRIK-MAJOR
11	Zsolt Ferenc MAJER	9	Diána VASZKÓ

The Netherlands



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Roelof KOOPMANS

TEAM MANAGER

Agatha Maria Johanna JANSEN

PLAYERS

14	Jasper Arend VAN DER EIJK	1	Mandy KOELMAN
15	André ZWART	2	Lynn BIJKERK
23	Jesper TOLSMA	3	Jessie HEUVELING



Photo Credit: Gert Jan Boon

Dutch Beach Korfball Team Sets Sights on Gold

When it comes to beach korfball, few countries can match the pedigree of the Netherlands. But for head coach Roelof Koopmans and team captain André Zwart, past success means nothing unless it's matched—and bettered—on the sand in Chengdu this summer.

“Our goal? That answer can be very short: GOLD,” the two say, in perfect sync. It's not a boast—it's a standard. One that comes with the weight of representing the birthplace of korfball on the world stage.

But even with that clear focus, this Dutch squad isn't just chasing medals. “We also want to make beach korfball better known,” Koopmans adds. “Not just in the Netherlands, but internationally. The sport deserves more attention.”

A Team Rebuilding, A Culture Growing

The road to Chengdu didn't begin years ago, as you might expect. In fact, this specific group only kicked off its preparations on April 13th—a mere four months before The World Games. But if there's one thing Dutch korfball is known for, it's the ability to build chemistry quickly.

“We want to grow closer together, improve our teamwork,” says Zwart. “That's what it takes to be more than just a group of good players—you need to be a team.”

For Koopmans, the challenge lies in assembling the right mix of experience, fitness, and chemistry. “My task is to decide who's going to be on the team. That's not easy. There's a lot of talent, and I want the strongest possible group in Chengdu.”



Battle-Tested and Unshaken

This team has already proven its mental toughness. Last year, at the World Championship in Thailand, the Dutch fell to Chinese Taipei in the group stage. It was a rare stumble for a country used to dominating the korfball scene.

“That was a tough call,” André admits. “But we set the disappointment aside, regrouped, and came back even stronger in the final.” The result? A tournament win and a ticket to The World Games.

That resilience—turning a setback into fuel—is what makes this squad special. It’s also what makes Zwart so proud to wear the orange jersey. “Representing our country at The World Games is a huge honor,” he says. “And to do it with a group so motivated and driven... that’s something you never take for granted.”

All Eyes on... Everyone

When asked which players fans should keep an eye on, Koopmans grins. “All of them,” he says. And he means it. The Dutch team doesn’t rely on one or two stars; it thrives on balance, cohesion, and the kind of fluid play that makes beach korfball such a spectacle.

There are, however, standout stories within the squad. Mandy Koelman, for example, is a very experienced korfball player, well-known in the Dutch korfball scene. She was part of the team that won the World Championship in Thailand in 2023 and in Chengdu she is ready to compete again. Her experience will be a cornerstone for the team.

Then there’s Jasper van der Eijk—one of the youngest on the roster. A painter by trade, Jasper brings more than just talent to the court. “His mindset, his drive... it’s infectious,” Koopmans says. “In a short time, he’s become a key part of our team, both in quality and spirit.”

Thirty Years and Counting

As for Zwart himself? He’s been with his club, LDODK, since 1993. That’s over three decades of korfball—indoor, outdoor, beach—you name it.

“Most of us started young,” he says. “It’s part of who we are.” And now, with years of playing, winning, and evolving behind them, they have one final task ahead: to prove once again why the Dutch are at the top of the sport.

In Chengdu, they’ll step onto the sand not just to compete—but to define what beach korfball can be.

Together. Motivated. Enthusiastic. That’s how they describe themselves. And this summer, the world will get to see exactly what that looks like in action.



Photo Credit: Gert Jan Boon



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Maciej Krzysztof ZAK

PLAYERS

10	Rafał DIADIK	1	Tamara SIEMIENIUK
11	Jędrzej MASZTALERUK	2	Izabela Dominika KOŁODZIEJCZYK
12	Kamil Mateusz NOWACKI	6	Natalia KLIMCZYK



Poland's Beach Korfball Team Eyes Breakthrough Performance

When Poland steps onto the sand at The World Games 2025 in Chengdu, it won't just be another appearance at a global tournament—it'll be the latest chapter in a story of quiet grit, sharp ambition, and a team built from the ground up.

Head coach Maciej Żak knows the odds. He knows how deep the competition runs and how unforgiving the format can be. But more importantly, he knows his team.

"Our goal is clear," Żak says. "We want to reach the knockout stage—and yes, we're aiming for a podium finish. But beyond that, we want to show the world how far beach korfball has come in Poland."

More Than Just Sand and Strategy

Poland's rise in beach korfball hasn't happened overnight. It's been a steady climb, one forged through packed training camps, international matches, and a willingness to fight through growing pains. Since qualifying for the 2025 Games, the team has spent over a year preparing—mentally, physically, and tactically.



And they've got the results to show for it. Most notably, Poland made history by winning the first-ever World Beach Korfball Championship in 2022. More recently, they clinched silver at the 2024 IKF Beach Korfball World Cup in Belgium, pushing even powerhouse Netherlands in the final.

Those results weren't flukes. They were earned—one sprint, one dive, one team huddle at a time.

A Team Built on Experience and Drive

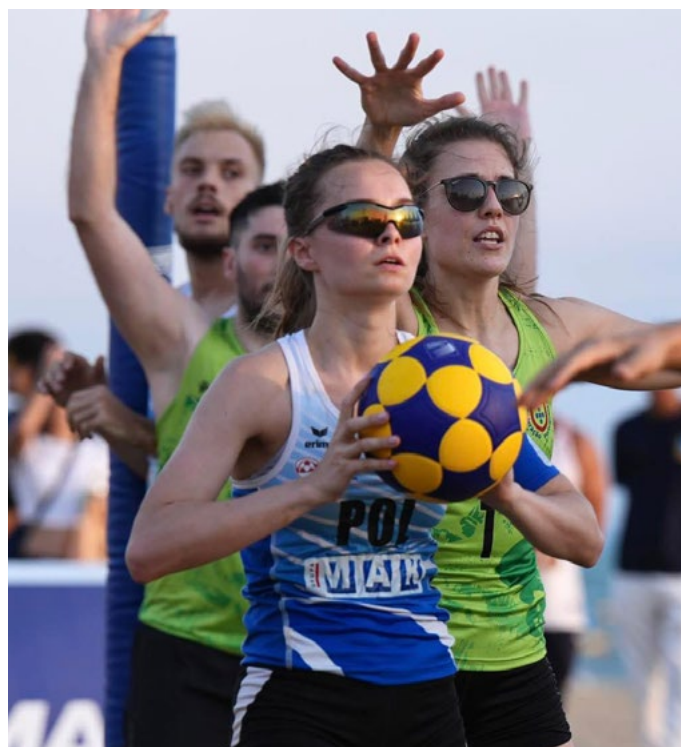
Resilient. Experienced. Ambitious. Those are the three words Żak uses to describe his squad.

"Our strength is in our collective effort," says Żak. "We don't rely on stars. What defines us is unity—how we move, think, and play together."

That doesn't mean there aren't moments of brilliance. There always are. But they come from every corner of the court. Whether it's a perfectly timed interception, a seamless transition play, or a clutch shot under pressure—it's Poland's cohesion that makes them dangerous.

A Quiet Fire Burning

"The story of our team is one of passion and perseverance," Żak says. "This sport is still growing in



Poland. We're not the biggest, we don't have the most resources—but what we do have is a team of players who give everything they've got."

Behind the medals and match scores are hours of travel, training in all kinds of weather, and balancing life's commitments off the court. Many players have pushed through personal hardships—though Żak prefers to keep those private. "What matters is that we're here now, healthy, focused, and hungry," he adds.

More Than a Game

This team knows they're playing for more than just themselves. They're carrying the hopes of a korfball community that's growing steadily back home. Every shot they take, every match they win, is a signal to young Polish players: this is possible.

With a little over a year of preparation, a squad filled with seasoned leaders and fresh energy, and a coach who believes in their ability to surprise the world, Poland's beach korfball team isn't just heading to Chengdu to compete—they're going to belong.

And if things go their way, they may just be standing on the podium by the end of it.





Team Squad

TEAM COACH

Chun-Cheng FENG

TEAM MANAGER

Ting-Yin YU

OFFICIAL 1

Shih-Chieh LIN

OFFICIAL 2

Yi-Hsien HSU

OFFICIAL 3

Chia-Hsiang CHEN

PLAYERS

2 Ying-Ting HUANG

3 Jia-Yi WU

6 Chia-Chuan CHANG

4 Shu-Ping CHU

9 Ming-Kai WANG

5 Yi-Wen WANG



Chinese Taipei Beach Korfball Team Aims for Gold at The World Games 2025

As beach korfball makes its historic debut at The World Games 2025, the Chinese Taipei national beach korfball team is setting its sights high—with one clear goal: winning the first-ever gold medal in this new discipline.

“Our objective is crystal clear,” says Head Coach Michael Feng. “We’re here to fight our way through the strongest teams in the world and bring home the first

beach korfball gold in The World Games history. More than just a medal, we want the world to see Taiwan and witness the strength and resilience of our team.”

But the journey toward that dream is filled with challenges. As this is the first time beach korfball is included in The World Games, there’s no blueprint to follow—and few opponents at home that can match the intensity, style, and pace of what they’ll face on the world stage.

“To get real match experience at that level, we’d need to travel to Europe,” Feng explains. “That’s not always feasible. So right now, we’re training hard behind closed doors, pushing ourselves through intense simulations and refining every detail to make up for the lack of international exposure.”

Despite the odds, there’s a quiet fire burning in this team—a fire forged from discipline, unity, and sheer willpower. When asked to describe his team in three words, Coach Feng doesn’t hesitate: “Hardworking, full of potential, and united. No matter how tough the



environment, our players never give up. They may be young, but every single one of them has the potential to shine on the world stage.”

And shine, they will. Keep an eye on these standout players:

- Shu-Ping Chu, the “Magician Shooter,” known for impossible-angle shots that defy logic.
- Chia-Chuan Chang, dubbed the “Prince of the Sand,” who moves with elegance and grit on the court.
- Ying-Ting Huang, the “Silent Shooter,” calm and steady—until he strikes with unstoppable force.
- Yi-Wen Wang, the “Tactical Brain,” with razor-sharp vision and precise playmaking.
- Ming-Kai Wang, a fearless young star with limitless potential.
- Chia-Yi Wu, the “Beach Sprinter,” whose blistering speed leaves defenders in the dust.

But for Coach Feng, it’s never just about a few individuals. “Every single player is essential,” he emphasizes. “There is no one unimportant. Each one is a unique light in this team.”

Most of the team’s players started their korfball journey in primary or junior high school. Along the way, they’ve faced plenty of setbacks—but never gave up. “They’ve grown through hardship,” says Feng. “Now, they’re ready to stand in the spotlight and let the world see them for who they truly are.”

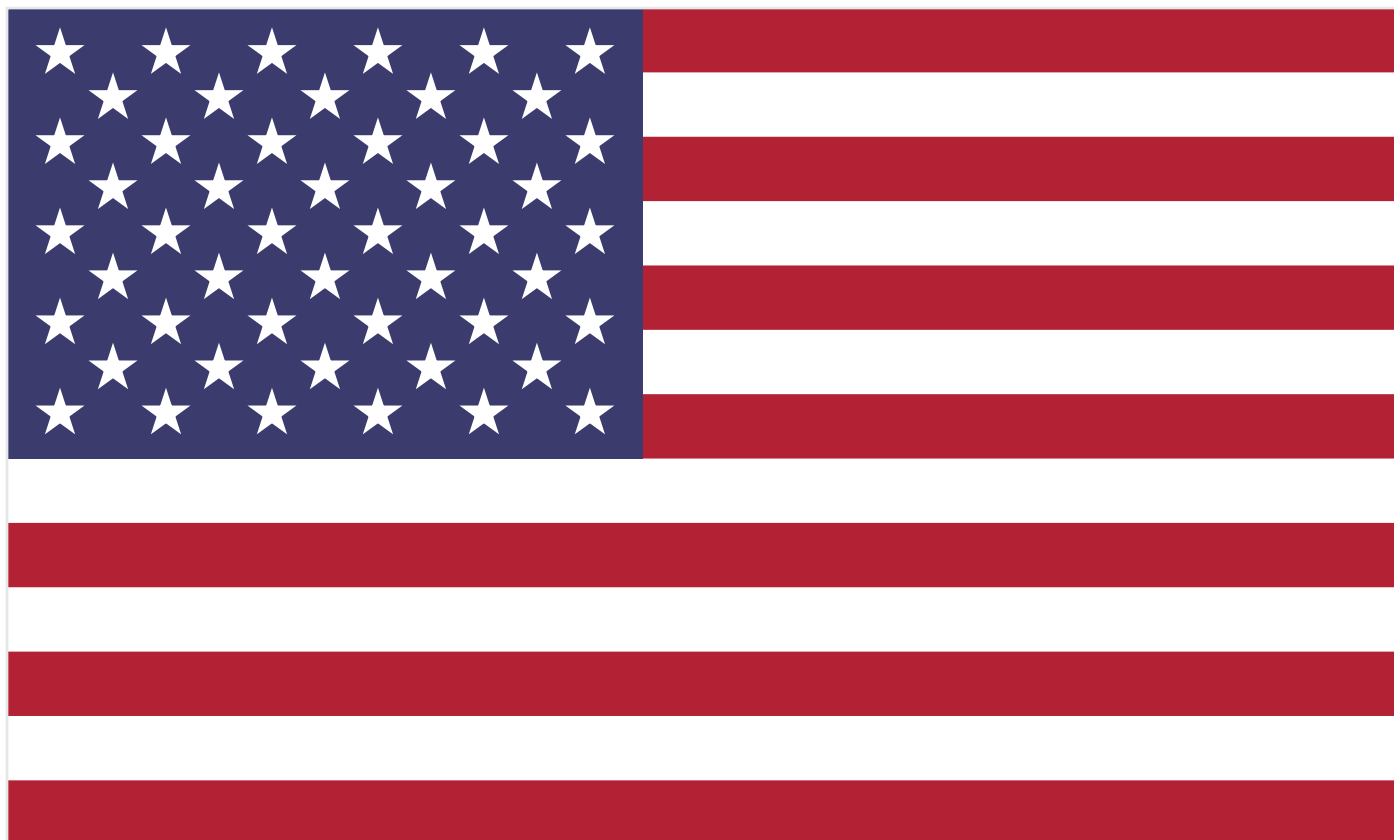
What makes this story even more compelling is the uphill battle beach korfball faces in Taiwan. With limited access to proper facilities and unpredictable weather, training is often grueling. Blistering sun, sudden rain, and the relentless resistance of sand are all part of their daily routine. But none of it has stopped them.



“No complaints. No excuses,” Feng says. “We embrace the difficulties and keep moving forward. That’s not just how we train—it’s who we are. Even if the conditions aren’t perfect, we will show the world our best.”

As the countdown to The World Games in Chengdu begins, one thing is clear: Chinese Taipei’s beach korfball team isn’t just chasing gold. They’re writing their own story—one built on heart, grit, and an unshakable belief in each other. And come game day, the world better be ready.

United States of America



Team Squad

TEAM COACH

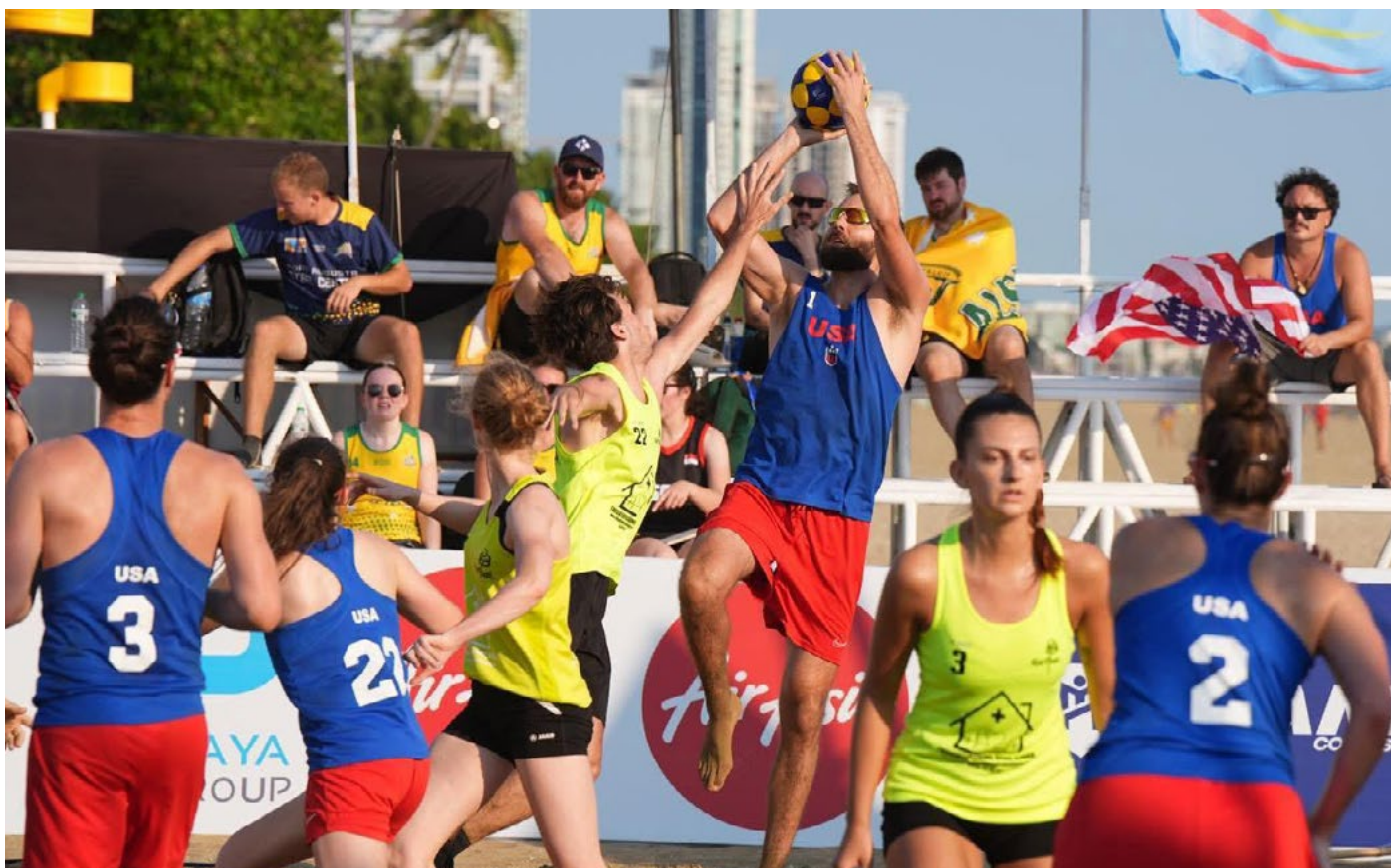
Erik Frank A. VAN DEN BULCK

OFFICIAL 1

Juliana Wen Jie THONG

PLAYERS

1	Willard James JOHNSON	4	Lindsey Marie CLEARY
3	Sean Joseph HERMES	17	Lariel Joy Mateo BAUTISTA
11	Jeffrey Todd MERRELL	22	Ashley Leina'ala GRAHAM



From PVC Hoops to the World Stage: Team USA's Beach Korfball Journey

Four years ago, a group of American athletes stood in a Seattle park, staring at a homemade korfball hoop cobbled together from PVC pipes, cardboard, and raw determination. They'd never played the sport before, and weren't even sure they were pronouncing "korfball" correctly.

Now, that same group is headed to Chengdu to represent the United States at the 2025 World Games—ranked among the top eight beach korfball teams in the world.

"It still feels a little surreal," says Jeffrey Merrell, one of the team's founding members. "When we started in 2021, the goal was just to field a team for the World Championships in Morocco. We didn't think a few years later we'd be competing at the highest level."

Building a Dream—Literally

With minimal korfball infrastructure in the U.S. at the time and no regulation hoops to train with, the team had to get creative. They hit up a local hardware store, bought pipes and cardboard, and built two makeshift hoops by hand. For months, they practiced and played on those DIY creations.



"We eventually got proper equipment from a former U.S. player in L.A.," recalls Ashley Graham, one of the team's leaders. "But those first few weeks really bonded us. And let me tell you—real hoops are a lot less forgiving than cardboard ones."

From the Ground Up

Most of the U.S. squad has a basketball background, with many having played at high school or collegiate levels—and even a few with professional experience. That gave them an athletic foundation, but learning the nuance and rhythm of korfball, especially on sand, was a whole different challenge.

"There's a lot more movement off the ball, and you can't rely on just raw physicality," says Jeffrey. "It's a very cerebral game. We're still learning every time we step on the sand."

To gain experience and exposure, the team has traveled the world over the past few years: Portugal, Thailand, Poland, Belgium—anywhere they could compete and grow.

"We don't have many teams to train against in the U.S.," Ashley says. "That's why we flew to Portugal this May for a team training camp. It's all part of the commitment."

Heart, Hustle, and Healing

One of the most inspiring stories on the team belongs to Lariel, who tore her ACL just 10 months ago. She

could've stepped away. Instead, she pushed through an intense rehab process and is now back—faster and stronger than ever.

"Watching her come back has been a massive motivation for all of us," Jeffrey says. "She's the definition of resilience."

All Eyes on Chengdu

Heading into The World Games, Team USA isn't just dreaming of showing up—they're gunning for a medal. But more than that, they want to raise the profile of beach korfball in a country where almost no one has even heard of it.

"This sport is fast, fun, and unlike anything else," says Ashley. "We're proud to be ambassadors for something so unique. Hopefully, our story inspires a few more people back home to pick up a ball—or a PVC pipe—and give it a shot."

Korfball has been part of the U.S. sports landscape since 1969, with the U.S. Korfball Federation (USKF) officially formed in 1978. While the sport has seen its ebbs and flows over the years, including a proud bronze medal at The World Games 1985, recent growth in beach korfball has sparked fresh momentum. This beach revival has not only brought new energy but also helped kickstart wider development efforts, with the USKF now actively promoting indoor korfball, adaptive korfball, and urban korfball across the country.





<https://korfball.sport/twg2025>