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Football player Chan Pak-hei on target as he gets US university scholarship

Junior reporters

By Ariel Conant | March 17, 2016

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Chan Pak-hei is grateful for the opportunity to prove himself overseas.



Ariel Conant

REPORTER A reporter with Young Post since 2014, Ariel covers the Liberal Studies and Economics pages, along with everything from art to extreme sports

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Getting into university is tough for Hong Kong students. Exams, grades and schoolwork all add to the pressure of university admissions. But Chan Pak-hei got his university acceptance not by scoring high marks on tests, but by scoring on the football pitch.

Pak-hei, 19, a student at Yan Oi Tong Tin Ka Ping Secondary School, has received a full athletic scholarship to Campbellsville University in the US.

"Getting a full sports scholarship to a US university is extremely rewarding," Pak-hei says. "I've read that only 5 per cent of all US high school athletes can compete at the university level and less than 1 per cent receive a scholarship."

Pak-hei is used to high levels of competition when it comes to football. He has been playing for 15 years, and has spent the past few years on the Hong Kong national team. "I was able to train with the best players in Hong Kong on a daily basis," he says. "Through this training, I was able to become one of the top players in my age group. I received many hours of training



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to develop my football skills and speed."

But Pak-hei worries that even with all his experience, playing in the US may still prove challenging. "I've heard that football in the US is extremely physical and fast," he says. "I will need to improve my fitness and athleticism."



Despite the challenges ahead, Pak-hei still feels lucky to have been accepted to university based on something he loves. "Since I know that you rarely get such a scholarship, I will need to work extremely hard to impress my university coaches," he says. "I am motivated to make a name for myself in the US."

Pak-hei believes there are opportunities for local students to look beyond the narrow limits of academics. "Especially in Hong Kong, people do not believe that football

players can also be good students," he says. "I want to inspire others to believe that you can play sports and study at the highest level if you put your mind and heart into it. I also believe that you need to be optimistic because there will always be people doubting you."

Bench Notes

What song/movie title best describes you when you're playing your sport?

Good Time by Owl City & Carly Rae Jepsen

"It's always a good time."

If you could have any superpower for 24 hours, what would you choose and how would you use it?

Time travel. There are many moments and people that I miss.

If you could have an unlimited supply of anything, what would it be and why?

Food. I love eating and I would like to try different types of food from around the world.

Ten years into the future, you are a famous athlete. What company would you sign on as spokesperson for, and what product would you promote?

Adidas. I would like to promote football boots and the other sports products made by the German company.

This article appeared in the Young Post print edition as "Pak-hei keeps the ball rolling"











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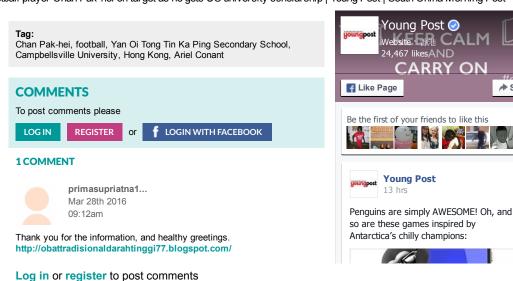
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