

# Sweet revenge for China over ROK

REVAMPED ROSTER POWERS WOMEN'S SQUAD TO CONVINCING WIN AGAINST ARCHRIVAL

By TANG YUE  
CHINA DAILY

GUANGZHOU — The Chinese women's badminton team realized its biggest dream at the Guangzhou Games on Sunday — and it didn't involve standing atop the podium.

With a new lineup and huge support from the home crowd, China defeated the Republic of Korea (ROK), 3-0, in a highly-anticipated matchup in the semifinals, six months after its unexpected loss to the same team in the Uber Cup final in Kuala Lumpur.

"Last time, we overestimated ourselves and ended up on the losing end," China's head coach, Li Yongbo, said while recalling the showdown that ended the team's 12-year stranglehold on the event.

"In Guangzhou, we adjusted the squad and asked the players to go out on the court as the underdogs. That helped them feel relaxed and calm on the court."

Li dropped then world No 1 Wang Yihan, who lost the opening singles match in the Uber Cup final, from the squad for this Asiad.

Wang Xin, who won the only match in China's 3-1 loss in Malaysia, played in Sunday's opener at the Tianhe Gymnasium and defeated Bae Youn-joo in straight sets — a player she defeated twice in their most recent encounters.

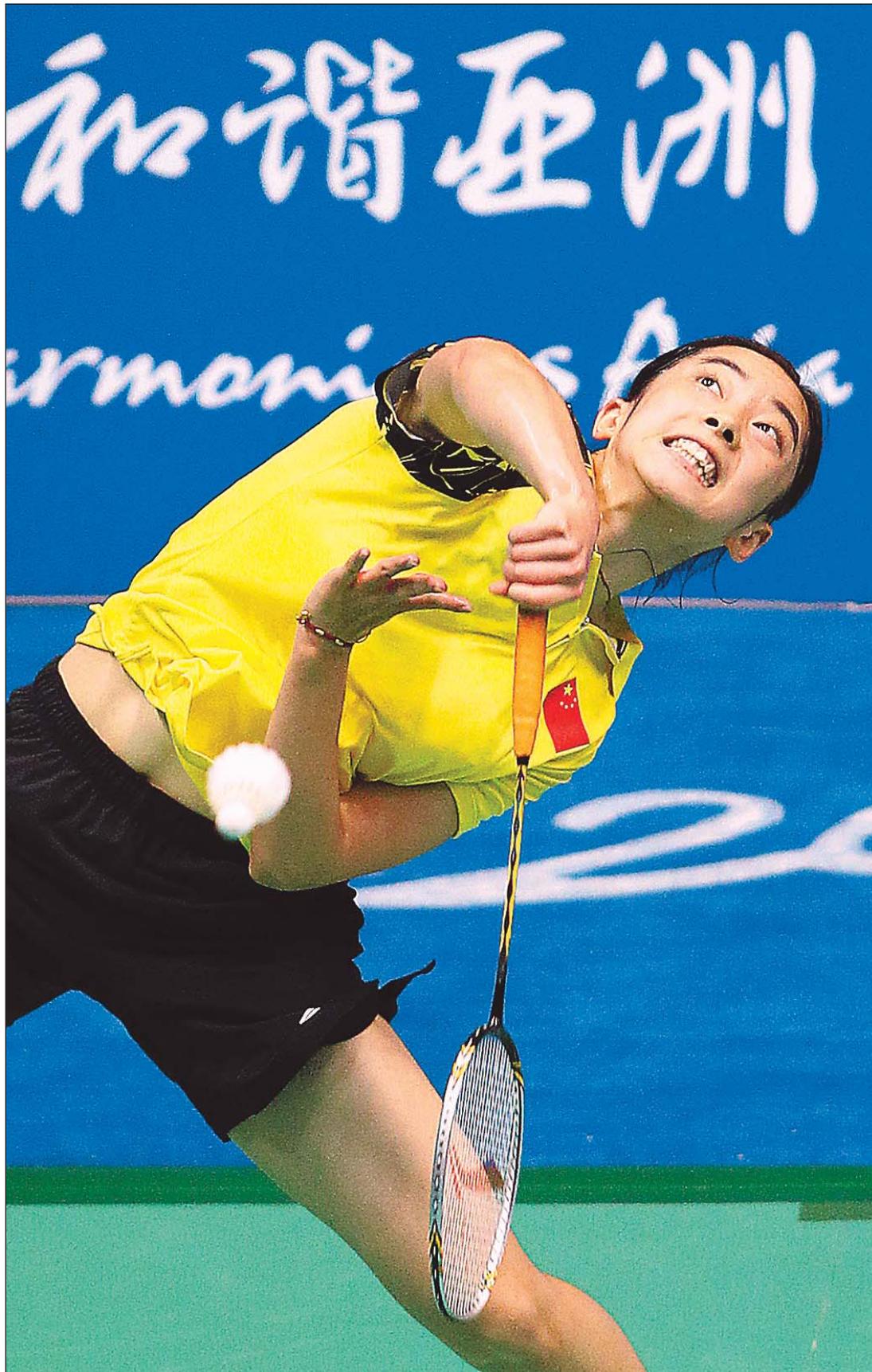
"I feel so relaxed after winning the match. I knew there were great expectations on my shoulders. I had to win the opening match for the team," said the 25-year-old Wang.

"The first set was tough, but the second was easier. I always felt well and at ease. My ability has improved, so I gradually got control of the match."

China also altered its women's doubles pairing after it suffered two losses at the Uber Cup. Wang Xiaoli and Yu Yang played the first doubles match, defeating Lee kyung-won and Ha Jung-eun 21-12, 21-19.

Wang Shixian, 20, in her first appearance for China in a team event, locked up the victory by downing Bae Seung-hee 21-18, 18-21, 21-14.

"I think she could have played



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Wang Shixian of China returns a shot in Sunday's badminton team semifinal against the Republic of Korea.

even better and won the match with more ease," coach Li said of Wang. "But she is young and it is the first time she has played in a team event for China, so I am already satisfied with her effort today.

"Our ultimate goal is not revenge ... we have set our sights on the London Olympic Games. I'm glad that we have given more players experiences at a major event; that will benefit our preparations."

China will compete against Thailand for its fourth consecutive title at the Games.

Thailand surprised Indonesia 3-1 in Sunday's other semifinal showdown.

## Hidayat no match for Super Dan

By TANG YUE  
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GUANGZHOU — China badminton superstar Lin Dan emerged victorious over Indonesian archrival Taufik Hidayat on Sunday night in the men's team competition to earn a place in the final.

But Hidayat seemed rather non-plussed after his side's 3-0 semifinal capitulation.

"I don't think this is very bad because Lee Chong Wei lost too," Taufik said of the Malaysian world No 1 who was upset by Thai Boonsak Ponsana in the quarterfinals of the team event, which Thailand won 3-2.

"I enjoyed the match (with Lin) very much. If I win, I win. If I lose, it's no problem for me. I'm not like I was three or four years ago, where I was thinking, 'I need to get a title,'" Hidayat said.

After a quick 21-13 loss in the first game, Taufik had two game points in the second, before losing to Lin, 23-21.

"I should have taken more control of the match. I was leading in the second game, but I made a lot of mistakes and lost control," said the 29-year-old.

"Lin Dan was infinitely better than I was. I think I am in my best condition now, but he was better."

It was their fourth meeting in the team event at the Asian Games. Eight years ago, in Busan, then 19-year-old Lin, who only played in the team event, lost to Hidayat as China was downed by Indonesia 3-1 in the semifinals.

At the 2006 Doha Asiad, Lin won both encounters — in a group match and the semifinals — en route to the championship.

In men's singles, Hidayat has won their only encounter — the final in Doha, where he defended his title.

In the other two China-Indonesia team semifinal matches on Sunday night, Fu Haifeng and Cai Yun defeated Markis Kido and Henra Setiawan 2-1 in the doubles while Chen Jin downed Simon Santoso in straight sets.

China will battle the Republic of Korea, which defeated Thailand 3-1 in the semis, in the final on Monday.