



Singapore 3Å?3 Basketball at the Commonwealth Games 2026: Menâ??s Team Makes Historic Play-In

Description

In a historic first for Singapore basketball, the national menâ??s 3Å?3 team have secured a play-in berth at the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games â?? making them the first Singapore 3Å?3 side to advance past the pool stage at a Commonwealth Games. While the womenâ??s team exited at the group phase, both squads delivered performances that reflected tremendous growth for the sport here. Singaporeâ??s 3Å?3 basketball Commonwealth Games 2026 campaign has been a milestone chapter in the nationâ??s sporting story.

Menâ??s Team: A Historic Breakthrough

The menâ??s quartet of Ching Zhen Yu, Faizal Zahid, Nur Aufa Emil Putra, and Xu Duanyang played five group-stage matches at the SEC Centre, and the manner in which they fought through adversity was a genuine coming-of-age moment for Singapore basketball. They opened their campaign on 25 July with a hard-fought 19â??16 victory over Kenya â?? a result that had plenty of drama. With under 30 seconds left and Singapore holding a slender 17â??15 lead, Xu drove into the paint and buried a high-arcing hook shot over a Kenyan defender who averaged 1.97 metres. Zahid then sealed it with a clinical finish from Nur Aufaâ??s looping pass.

From there, results were mixed but the quality of opposition was stark. A 20â??22 loss to Jamaica was decided by a game-winning two-pointer from Malik Lawrence Anderson with just over a minute remaining. A 21â??15 defeat to Malaysia â?? a side stocked with players from the professional Major Basketball League Malaysia â?? was followed by a morale-boosting 21â??7 hammering of Fiji. The group stage closed with a 21â??13 loss to defending champions England, though Singapore had raced into a 3â??0 lead and stayed competitive throughout.



Xu Duanyang attempting a layup against Kenya. Photo: Commonwealth Games Singapore / Lim Weixiang via Sport Singapore

Despite the two defeats, Singapore progressed to the play-in round by virtue of scoring 88 points across their five pool matches – just enough to pip Kenya’s 82 points as the tiebreaker. Their reward: a play-in clash against top seeds New Zealand.

Captain Nur Aufa Emil Putra, speaking after the England match, captured the team's mindset perfectly. "Our energy never drops from our previous games; it just gets higher and higher," the 24-year-old said, having dusted himself off after taking a nasty elbow to the face. "As a leader, I have to be more responsible for the tempo that our team goes at."

Women's Team: Experience Gained Against World's Best

The women's quartet of Han Xingyue, Jermaine Lim, Matilda Lai, and Lydia Ang competed in a tough six-team pool that included 2022 silver medallists England, hosts Scotland, and a strong New Zealand side. Results were difficult -- losses to England (7-22), Scotland (15-21), Tonga (10-14), and New Zealand (16-22), with a confidence-boosting 21-8 win over Papua New Guinea -- but the statistics tell a more encouraging story.

Jermaine Lim finished the tournament with a perfect 100 per cent free-throw conversion rate, while the team recorded a tournament-high 25 drives -- seven more than the nearest competitor, England. Matilda Lai ranked sixth in two-point shooting percentage at 43 per cent, and captain Han Xingyue finished joint-second for blocked shots with five across the pool stage. The women did not advance, but they left Glasgow knowing exactly where to improve.



Singapore captain Nur Aufa Emil Putra attempting to block a shot by England's Dwayne Lautier-Ogunleye. Photo: SpexSG / Andy Chua via Sport Singapore

Building Momentum Ahead of the Asian Games

The preparation that went into Glasgow 2026 was meticulous. Head coach Lazar Rasic took both squads to his native Serbia for a training camp, where they tested themselves against seasoned European club opposition. The men came within a point of beating Serbian powerhouse Novi Sad (21â??20) and lost 17â??18 in overtime to Stockholm at the FIBA Novi Sad Challenger. The women registered an impressive 16â??10 win over Belgium in Bucharest and pushed Czechia all the way in Baku before a 17â??18 overtime loss.

That preparation followed the menâ??s teamâ??s historic SEA Games silver medal in Thailand last December â?? Singaporeâ??s best-ever result in 3Ã?3 basketball at a major multi-sport event at the time. The Commonwealth Games play-in berth surpasses even that milestone.

For both teams, the Glasgow experience is not just an end in itself â?? it is preparation for the Asian Games in late September and early October, where the 3Ã?3 basketball competition will be contested by Under-23 sides. Singapore fans who have been watching [Team Singaporeâ??s impressive showing across multiple disciplines](#) at these Games will hope the basketball squads carry this momentum forward. Singaporeâ??s 3Ã?3 basketball Commonwealth Games 2026 debut has set a new benchmark â?? and the sport is only going to grow from here.

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