

Ready for a long-awaited test

✓ **KIMBERLY KWEK**

The upcoming Women's World Floorball Championships will be Mindy Lim's third, but the lead-up to the Nov 27-Dec 5 WFC in Sweden has been drastically different from the previous two.

The team have had to grapple with the uncertainties and challenges that came with the pandemic as team sports like floorball were hit hard by the safety measures that limited the number of people for group sports activities.

But with their last competition being the 2019 Women's WFC, where they achieved a historic 12th-place finish, Lim is raring to go.

She said: "I'm thrilled and excited because it's been quite a while since we've played at such a high level.

"But at the same time, I'm anxious because the training has been very moderate in terms of intensity, I don't know how the team and I will react when we're playing at high intensity."

The 24-year-old still has fond memories of her last WFC outing two years ago as they overcame higher-ranked opponents to come in 12th, but she is not placing too much pressure on herself and her teammates on matching the result, given the challenges they have faced in the past two years.

For their group-stage games in Uppsala, world No. 14 Singa-

S'pore's women floorballers raring to play at world c'ship, after 2 years of no competitions due to Covid



Mindy Lim sees this year's Women's World Floorball Championship in Sweden as a chance for the team to prepare for the 2023 edition in Singapore. TNP PHOTO: **ARIFFIN JAMAR**

pore are pooled with Estonia (11th), Russia (17th) and Norway (ninth).

Lim mainly sees this tournament as a chance for the younger players to learn from the top teams in the world and for the team to prepare for the major competitions in 2023, such as the Women's WFC in Singapore and the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games.

She hopes that she can use her experience at previous WFCs to help new players navigate a competition of this stature.

Lim, an auditor at KPMG, said: "I want to play my best and not have any regrets. Team-wise, because of Covid, there are a lot of things that could be

affected like team cohesiveness.

"We used to have bonding sessions but we haven't had these because of Covid.

"So this World Championship is a good platform for those who are new to be exposed to a higher level of play.

"The next World Championship is in Singapore and we want to be ready for that."

The changing Covid-19 measures and lack of competitions have posed difficulties for the coaching team as well, but they have tried to adapt and keep players motivated.

During periods when the team were not able to train in person, national coach Lim Jin Quan would conduct training

sessions over Zoom, going through different match scenarios.

In training, they have also replicated the routine players follow during competitions, such as the one-hour court session before games.

Said the coach: "The other European teams have been training as per usual, their lives have been back to normal.

"The struggle is that we don't have the environment that they do, so we try to mimic it as much as we think and assume it to be.

"For everything we do, we want to make sure we are prepared so we can fully utilise the experience when we're there."

Given the circumstances, he added that if the team managed to match the result of the previous WFC, he would consider it progress.

The national team are now in Finland for a training camp, where they have also been playing friendly matches against local club teams.

Newcomer Heng Ying Ying, who is set to make her international debut in Uppsala, is relishing the chance to play against top opposition.

The National University of Singapore undergraduate said: "It has been a great learning experience, to find out what works and what does not, especially after two years of no 5v5 games."

kimkwek@sph.com.sg