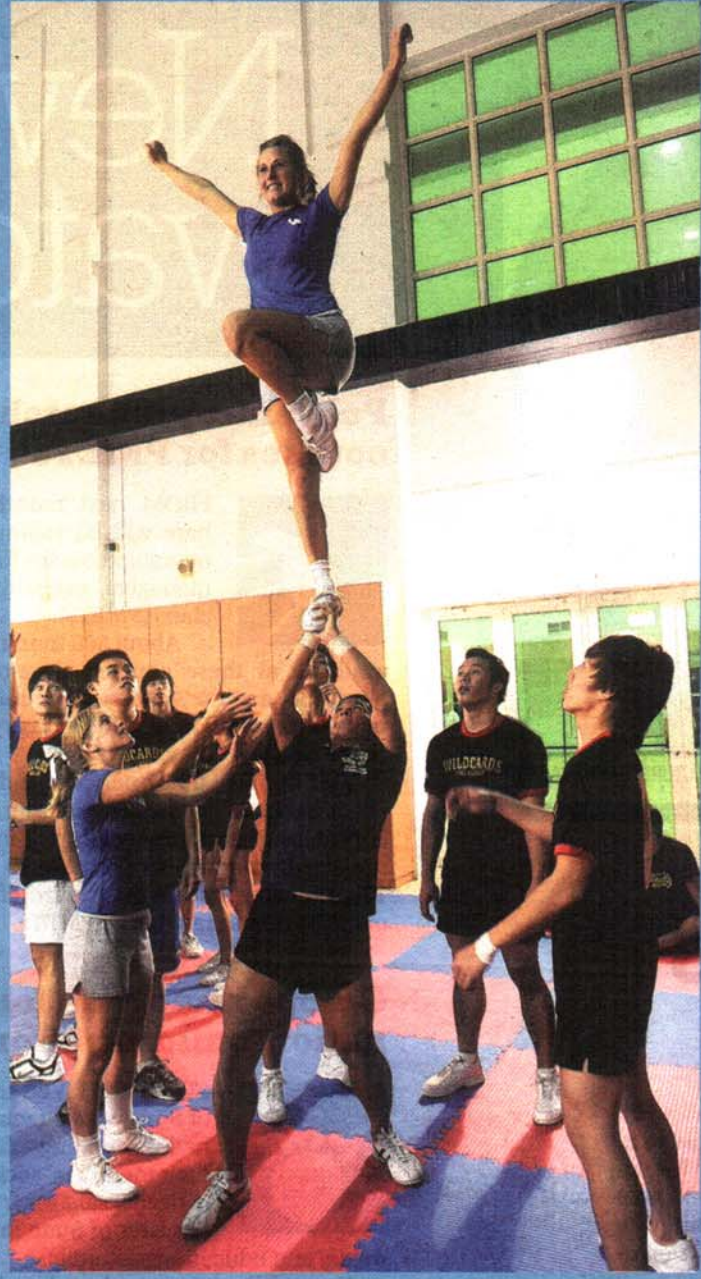


# KENTUCKY

# CHEERS

## US cheerleaders here to conduct workshops



**S**HE has seen videos of their performances online and even watched documentaries about them.

So when Miss Nellie Lim, 21, a Singapore Management University student, heard that she could watch them perform in the flesh, she was over the moon.

Miss Lim was referring to the cheerleading squad from the University of Kentucky. Five members of the squad are here to conduct workshops on cheerleading.

She said: "When I heard that some of the squad members would be coming here, I was thrilled. We hardly ever get to interact with teams from America and, to us, they are celebrities."

Miss Lim belongs to the Wildcards cheerleading squad from the Ulu Pandan Community Club, where the workshops are being conducted.

It began yesterday and ends tomorrow.

The workshops are being held to help promote cheerleading as a sport in Singapore, and also to serve as an avenue for local cheerleaders to expand their talent.

Mr Dominic Gerard Theseira, chairman of Ulu Pandan Youth Group, said that the workshops took three months of planning and \$10,000 to organise.

He estimates that more than 200 cheerlead-

ers from polytechnics, junior colleges and independent cheerleading groups will be attending the workshops.

The Kentucky university's cheerleading squad have won the Universal Cheerleaders Association National College Cheerleading Championship 17 times, which is a record. They won this year too.

They train two hours every day, working either on their fitness or their cheerleading routines.

Head coach Jomo Thompson told The New Paper: "Selection to the squad is very tough. Every year, we have 350 to 450 applications.

"Out of this, 60 will make the first cut, but only 40 will be selected to the final squad."

Mr Thompson said they look for athleticism, flexibility and strength in applicants.

He said he was surprised when he was asked to hold a workshop in Singapore.

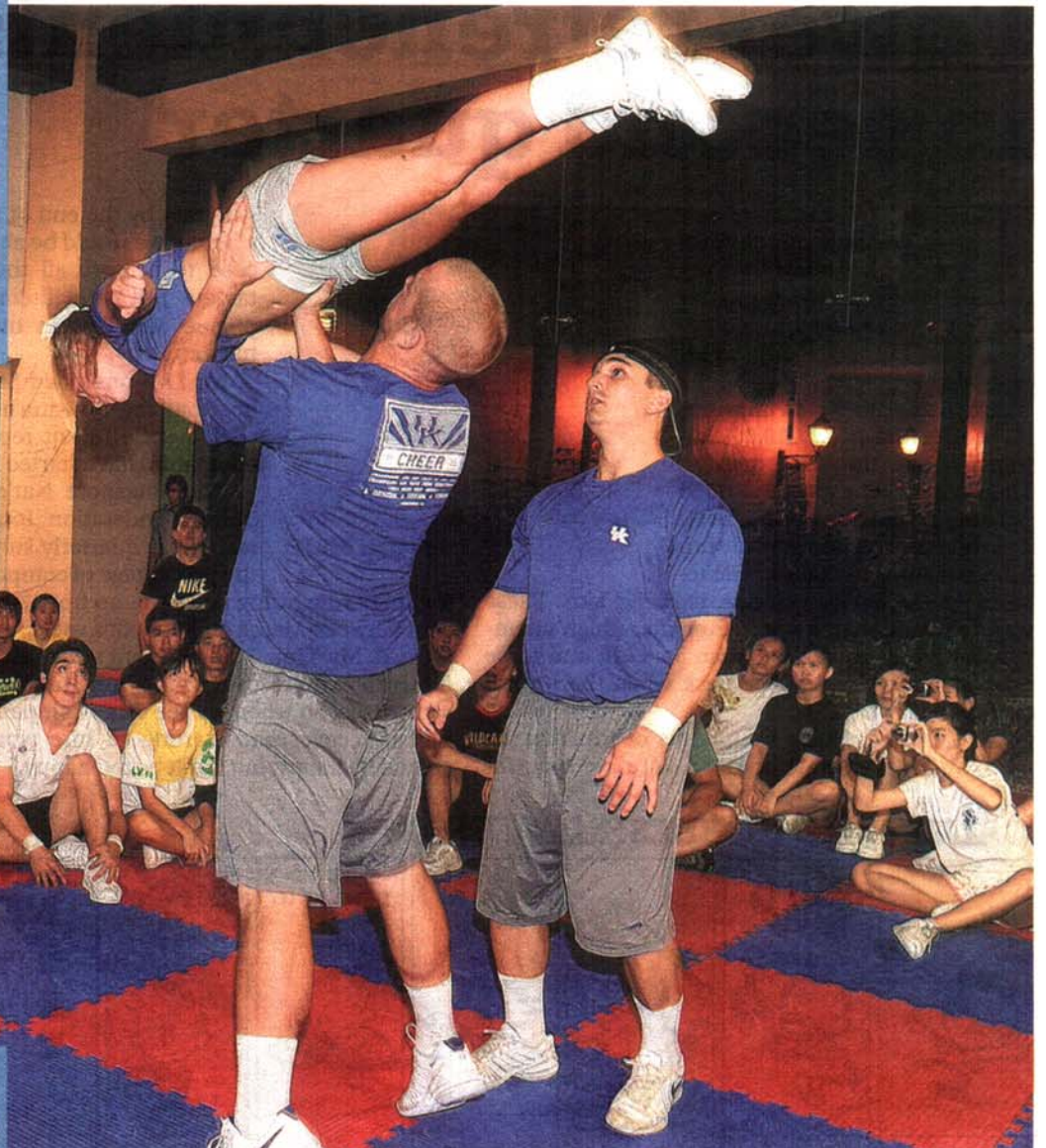
"I never imagined that cheerleading would make it all the way to Singapore."

He has conducted similar workshops in Europe and South America as well.

He added: "The Singaporean cheerleaders are pretty good."

A cheerleading competition will be held at the Ulu Pandan Community Club at 9.20am tomorrow.

- Naveen Kanagalingam, newsroom intern



**HEADS UP:** Cheerleaders from the University of Kentucky demonstrating routines for local cheerleaders.

TNP PICTURES: CHOO CHWEE HUA