

Written by John Crumlish
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Hong Kong Olympian **Stone (Wai Hung) Shek** (shown here with his longtime coach **Sergiy Agafontsev**

) told IG that, in order to successfully defend his vault title at next month's Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia, he will rely on his customary consistency and mental strength.

"I think the most important thing is to focus on the stability of my skills and try to have a good psychological quality," said Shek, who upset 2012 Olympic vault champion **Yang Hak-Seon** of Korea to win vault at the 2014 Asian Games in Incheon, Korea. "The result cannot be under my control, but what I can do is to train hard to get a good performance."

Shek's vault victory in Incheon ironically launched him into a challenging phase of his career, starting with a right shoulder injury that he suffered at the 2015 World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland. The injury sabotaged Shek, who competed at the 2012 Olympics in London, as he tried to qualify for the 2016 Olympics in Rio.

"After the competition in Glasgow, the doctor found out there was partial tear on my supraspinatus," Shek said. "But unfortunately, before the Rio test event (the second Games qualifying meet, in April 2016), I had already torn it apart but I still wanted to qualify for the Olympics. Therefore, I tried everything to reduce the pain. I got injections, like PRP (platelet-rich plasma) and steroids. I did lots of physiotherapies but it didn't help a lot. I still wanted to fight for the opportunity even though I couldn't get the qualification. I had tried my best at everything."

Shek, who underwent surgery on May 9, 2016, credits his support team for his successful rehabilitation.

"There is a good physical trainer at the SI (Hong Kong Sports Institute) to help me design a

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complete training program,” he said. “I also have to do a certain amount of physiotherapy with assistance by a good physiotherapist. Indeed, Sergiy helped me a lot on the progress of my recovery.”

Shek plans to compete on vault, parallel bars and high bar in Jakarta as well as at this fall's Worlds in Doha, Qatar. His intended vaults are a Dragulescu (double front-half) and a Lopez (double-twisting Kasamatsu).

“These are not new skills for me,” said Shek, who placed sixth on vault at the 2014 World Championships and seventh on vault at the 2011 Worlds. “What I want to do is make them more stable and perfect.”

While Shek may best be known as a standout vaulter, he wants to make his high bar routine more competitive, as well. He recently posted a clip on social media of him training a Cassina (full-twisting back layout to regrasp), which is his first G-skill on any apparatus.

“I like performing high bar as well, and that's why I would like to develop some new skills in this apparatus,” Shek said. “This G-skill was not in my training program. I just tried to do it and succeeded. I will try to train other new skills, too.”

Shek said he is hopeful that he can continue the success he achieved while under Agafontsev's direct tutelage in the past.

“Last year, the head coach promoted a new plan and so our male team coach was changed,” Shek told IG. “Sergiy is now coach of the female team. But in fact, he still cares and helps us a lot. I hope that some day he can come back to our team and train us again.”

Read “Ready to Rock,” a profile on Shek earlier in his career, in the July/August 2012 issue of *International Gymnast* magazine. To purchase back issues, or subscribe to the print and/or digital editions of IG magazine, [click here](#)

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