



Guo demonstrating his serving technique to players of Inti College.

MALAYSIA must draw up a systematic development programme at grassroots level if they are serious about making an impact on the world table tennis scene.

Former world champion Guo Yuehua, who was in Malaysia for a short stint, said Malaysia must develop a big pool of young talent to take over from the seniors.

The 45-year-old Guo said Malaysia had to start immediately if they hoped to succeed at world level.

"I am not only referring to players but also coaches. The coaches must instill discipline in the players at an early age.

"The young players must also be sent for training camps in China regularly.

"China has many provinces and clubs. They have intensive training programmes.

"Sparring with the young players in China will benefit Malaysians," said Guo after a series of friendly matches with players from Inti College Malaysia in Bandar Baru Nilai on Tuesday.

Guo played against current national players and felt that the Malaysians had good basic skills.

"The last time I watched a Malaysian team was about 20 years ago.

"I see a lot of potential in the current team. But they seem to lack match temperament. But this can be cor-

Expert: Groom young table tennis players

rected if they play more competitive matches against top players," explained Guo.

During his career, Guo won the men's singles in the World Championships in 1981 and 1983. He was also a member of China's gold medal winning team in the 1977, 1981 and 1983 World Championships.

He does not rule out the possibility of taking up a coaching job in Malaysia.

"I am impressed with the facilities here and also I find the people here very warm and hospitable. If there is a good offer, I am prepared to coach in Malaysia," said Guo.

Inti College president Tan Yew Sing said their objective of bringing Guo to Inti College was to encourage their students to take up the sport.