



Syafiq Ridhwan Abdul Malek in action during training at Endah Parade Centre to prepare for the Asian Championships. Pic by Goh Thean Howe

New-look Syafiq raring to go

SYAFIQ Ridhwan Abdul Malek is looking leaner and meaner since trading late night suppers for cycling and jogging, and as a result, he has lost 17kg from his strict training regime.

And the 27-year-old said he is bowling better. "I used to get tired easily in training when my weight was 103kg but since losing the excess fat, I've been bowling better," said Syafiq at Endah Parade Centre in Sri Petaling yesterday.

"I cycle between 60 and 70 kilometres three times a week in Putrajaya or Genting Sempah. Furthermore, I jog on the treadmill three or four times weekly. My game and focus have got better. I will maintain my weight for as long as I can."

Syafiq is part of the six-member men's squad also comprising Alex Liew, Zulmazran Zulkifli, Adrian Ang, Aaron Kong and Muhd Nur Aiman Khairuddin for the Asian

Championships, which starts in Hong Kong on Tuesday.

The bowler started cycling as a hobby and his passion for it grew after he started upgrading his bicycle parts.

He declined to reveal the value of his bicycle but according to national coach Holloway Cheah, he has spent more than RM15,000.

The final year student of Universiti Putra Malaysia aims to emulate his one gold medal success on his debut appearance at the 2010 Asian meet.

"We have been training very hard here to familiarise ourselves with the oiling patterns. Based on our results of late, I believe we are one of the strongest men's teams at the Asian meet. South Korea are our main rivals," Syafiq said.

The 12-member men's and women's squad will leave for Hong Kong on Saturday. **By Ajitpal Singh**