

# Ramlan hails Peng Kean's indomitable spirit

By RAJES PAUL

**KUALA LUMPUR:** In just two months, London Olympic Games debutant Yu Peng Kean has gone from a high to a low in his fencing career.

But his perseverance to withstand pain and determination to overcome a knee injury has won the respect and admiration of National Sports Institute (NSI) medical division head Datuk Dr Ramlan Aziz.

In fact, Ramlan has hailed Peng Kean as a good role model for other athletes battling with injuries.

The 21-year-old Peng Kean gave fencing in the country a huge boost when he qualified for the London Olympics on merit in August.

To make it an even more commendable and memorable Olympic debut, the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) student fought his way into the second round before losing to

eventual gold medallist Aron Szilagvi of Hungary in the sabre event.

However, upon his return, Peng Kean had to go under the knife for both his injured knees, ruling him out for six months.

Peng Kean had competed at the London Games despite the injury and Dr Ramlan said that not many knew of his agony.

"He was already carrying an injury before the Games. He suffered from a torn ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) and meniscus. He braved the pain during the Games and, for me, his ability to persevere was remarkable. Despite his condition, he did well in his first Olympic Games," said Ramlan.

"After the Games, he came for treatment and we found that his right knee was also bad. We decided that it was best for him to operate both his knees, which he did at the Damansara Specialist Hospital.

"He is following the rehabilitation programme religiously and is very determined to make a comeback. I do not see any sign of him giving up. If all goes well, he should be back on his feet by early next year.

"It's good to see that he is a very respectful athlete and nice. I see great potential in him and I am confident that he will make a strong presence at the next Olympic Games."

Ramlan has seen many athletes with serious injuries and it always delights him when his patients show indomitable spirit to overcome adversities.

Besides Peng Kean, he had been directly involved in handling shuttler Lee Chong Wei, cyclist Azizulhasni Awang and diver Pandelega Rinong – to mention a few.

"Chong Wei's case was by far the most challenging one that I have ever handled. My reward is always their safe and optimal return to sport



**In pain:** Yu Peng Kean tore his anterior cruciate ligament before the start of the Olympic Games in London.

and hopefully subsequent success," said Ramlan, who also acts as the Sports Minister's special advisor.

Chong Wei recovered from an ankle injury in three months to win a silver medal at the London Games while Pandelega made a quick recovery from a right shoulder injury just

two days before the Games to win a bronze medal.

Azizul went through a seven-month rehabilitation programme in 2011 under Ramlan's watchful eyes to mount a strong challenge in London. He put up a creditable show to finish sixth in keirin.