

# Lai Kwan still the one to beat

**UNIVERSITI** Putra Malaysia's (UPM) Chui Lai Kwan may have become a forgotten figure since she left the national setup under controversial circumstances almost three years ago but she proved she is still a top class talent at the Malaysian Institutions of Higher Learning Games (Sukipt) yesterday.

The former Sea Games gold medallist bettered her own meet record of 27.96 seconds en route to clinching the women's 50m freestyle gold in 26.94s at the Darul Ehsan Aquatic Complex yesterday.

She also took silver in the 200m butterfly (2:51.43s) after placing second behind Universiti Teknologi Mara's (UiTM) Indonesia foreign exchange student Kathriana Mella Gustianjani (2:34.41s).

Lai Kwan ended her second and likely final Sukipt outing with one gold, three silver and one bronze.

The 24-year-old, who bagged an astonishing 13 gold medals amidst a weaker field to subsequently be crowned sportswoman of the Games two years ago, said she was nevertheless happy with her performance and stressed that she was still hungry to compete on the international stage.

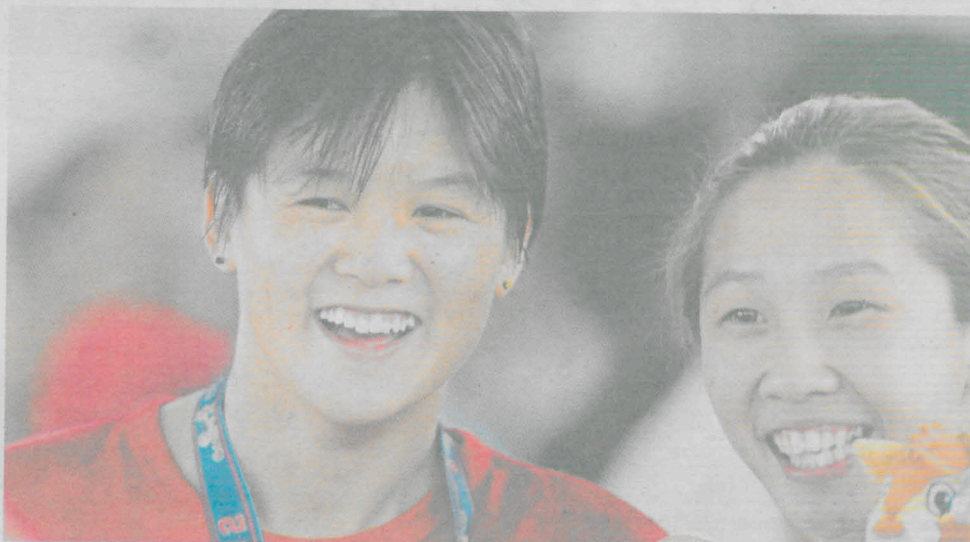
"The 50m free is my favourite event and is what matters most to me. I did not win as many medals this year but overall it was a decent outing for me," said the 50m freestyle national record holder.

"I am not interested in joining the national team anymore as I am happy training on my own but I still do want to compete for Malaysia."

"I want to do well in future competitions and hopefully achieve the qualifying times for the Asian Games. I hope the national body will be fair and select swimmers, from both within and outside the national squad, on merit."

Lai Kwan had quit the national team after a dispute with the Amateur Swimming Union of Malaysia over a leave application in 2011.

Meanwhile, Caroline Chan of Sunway Uni-



**Chui Lai Kwan** (left) after winning gold in the 50m freestyle with bronze medallist **Leung Chii Lin** at the Malaysian Institutions of Higher Learning Games (Sukipt) in Shah Alam yesterday. Pic by Osman Adnan



versity set a new Games record in the women's 100m backstroke when she won the event in 1:10.93s (old record 1:18.07s, Lai Kwan), while distance specialist Khoo Cai Lin (Taylors University) took the 1,500 freestyle title in 18:55.77s.

The men's events saw Inti International College's Chan

Yang better his own record of 24.96s in the 50m freestyle when he clocked 24.14s to defend his title in the event.

UiTM's Gede Siman Sudartawa (Indonesia, exchange student) shaved more than seven seconds of David Hoh's (Taylors) 100m backstroke record of 1:04.84s en route to winning in 56.75s.

Liong Jee Xerc (Kolej Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman) emerged victorious in the 800m freestyle after clocking 10:51.63s and also took the 200m butterfly in a new meet record of 2:21.35s (old record 2:30.53s, Ian Leondy Bell, USM).

UiTM won the men's and women's 4x100m

medley relays in 4:03.73s and 5:11.51s respectively.

National shooter Jonathan Wong Guanjie (UPM) proved his pedigree by winning the men's 10m air pistol gold after firing 195.4 in the elimination format final at the Subang Shooting Range.

His combined scores with teammates Jasmi Mohammad Zin and Liew Tack Fai of 1,674 also gave UPM the team gold.

UPM took two more gold through fencing after Husnul Ariq Bakri and Natasha Ezzra Abu Bakar took the men's sabre and women's foil individual titles respectively.

In the men's karate kumite events, UTM's Karthik Krishnan (Under-55kg), Politeknik Selangor's Deventiren Ananthan (Under-60kg) and UPM's Uriel Yu En French (Under-67kg) all emerged winners in their respective weight classes while the women's category saw Unitar's Nisha Alagasan (Under-55kg) and UPM's Mathiaviani Murugeesan (Under-61kg) come out winners.

With only two days of competition left, hosts UiTM are inching ever closer to the overall title and ended the day as comfortable leaders with 48 gold, 32 silver and 24 bronze. Defending champions UPM are second (37-28-30) while Universiti Malaya are third (13-8-12). By Fadhli Ishak