

A perfect combination

On target: Johnathan Wong of Malacca won the gold medal in the men's 10m air pistol individual event in the Tun Hanif Trophy Shooting Championships at the Subang Shooting Range yesterday. — SAM THAM / The Star



Johnathan's real sharp in mind and shooting

SUBANG: Malacca shooter Johnathan Wong is one tough cookie – and an intelligent one at that!

Despite a lack of training as he's busy with his first-year aerospace engineering studies at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Johnathan showed nerves of steel to pip Johor's Eddy Chew by a mere 0.5 point to the gold medal in the men's 10m air pistol individual event at the Tun Hanif Trophy Shooting Championships at the Subang Shooting Range yesterday.

The final reached a climax when Johnathan and Eddy were tied on 188 points after the 19th series shot.

In the final shootout, Johnathan scored 8.7 points (for a 196.7 total) to win the gold as Eddy could only manage 8.2 points (for a 196.2 total). Perak's Siau Zianyi scored 173.7 points to take the bronze medal.

The 22-year-old Johnathan was simply relieved to win the gold in the final shootout.

"I was out of breath and my mouth was dry in the 19th shot when Eddy and I were tied at 188 points. I thought that I would lose because I was nervous and my hands were shaking going into the final shot.

"But I told myself to stay calm ... I was more than happy to score 8.7 points to win the gold medal," said Johnathan, who will be making his debut in the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in July.

Johnathan admitted that it wasn't easy to juggle between studies and training.

"I did not train the whole of last week because I left my gun in Langkawi when I went there for one week of centralised training earlier this month.

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week. Besides, I am busy preparing for my university examinations, which are scheduled for June. But I requested to have the exams next month so that I can train full-time for the Commonwealth Games and go for international competitions," said Johnathan, who will be going to Europe in early June to compete in the two legs of the World Cup in Munich and Slovenia as preparation for the Games.

"I have to study for six subjects and it is not easy to major in aerospace engineering.

"Despite my hectic schedule, I still hope to do well in my studies and shooting career," said Johnathan, who won three bronze medals – the 10m air pistol team and 50m free pistol individual and team in last year's Myanmar SEA Games.

Meanwhile, the Terengganu trio of Raja Ahmad Firdaus Raja Mohd (550 points), Safirredzuan Salim (540) and Mohd Amirul Hisyam Luxman (524) accumulated 1,614 points to set a new national junior record in the boys' 25m standard pistol team event.

They bettered the previous record by seven points (1,607) set by Pahang's Mohd Wisnu Awaluddin, Mohd Aiman Aisamuddin Hassanuddin and Amirul Azrai Ishak at the same venue in March, 2012.