



# Former star Zaiton named as new Sports Commissioner

**PETALING JAYA:** Former track queen Datuk Zaiton Othman (*pic*) continues to raise the bar.

Yesterday, Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin announced that Zaiton is the new Sports Commissioner, replacing Ahmad Shapawi Ismail, who left to take up the post of National Sports Council (NSC) director general last month.

The 55-year-old Zaiton is the first woman – and also first former athlete – to assume the post. Her

appointment is effective Feb 1.

“I wish to congratulate Datuk Zaiton and hope she will carry out her duties with responsibility and dedication,” Khairy in a statement yesterday.

Zaiton, of Kepala Batas, used to steal the headlines with her feats on the track, especially in her favourite heptathlon event, where she was known as the “Iron Lady” of Malaysian sports.

Zaiton also excelled in the 400m races. Her national record in hep-

tathlon of 5,175 points, which was set at the Manila SEA Games in 1981, still stands after 34 years.

She won three gold medals (heptathlon, 4x100m and 4x400m) as well as a silver (javelin) and a bronze (long jump) in Manila. That same year, she won a heptathlon bronze in the Asian Track and Field Championships in Tokyo, Japan.

The 1982 National Sportswoman, who holds a Physical Education degree from Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (UPM) and a Master’s

degree in Applied Sports Psychology from the San Diego State University, started her career with the NSC in 1989 as a sports officer.

She later served as a Sport Psychology Officer at the National Sports Institute (NSI) from 1992 to 2000.

She had also served in various roles since her return to the NSC and her last appointment was director of organisation and athletes’ affairs.