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**GYMNASTICS**  
**Seow Ting**  
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**PETALING JAYA:** When the going gets tough, the tough gets going. This aptly describes national rhythmic gymnast Foong Seow Ting (*pic*).

At the Korat SEA Games in December, she was down with an ankle injury. Instead of wallowing in self-pity, she wore a broad smile en route to beating the odds to help the team defend the gold medal.

Now, she faces a tougher hurdle as she tries to balance her studies as a first-year student of the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and her gymnastics career.

But the 21-year-old is not going to let it discourage her and she has vowed to justify her status as the country's top gymnast by churning out consistent performances throughout the year.

"I could have done so much better (in Korat) but my ankle was giving me problem.

"But I refused to let it affect my performances and, fortunately, I persevered," said Seow Ting, who also won four gold medals at the Manila SEA Games in 2005.

Chrystal Lim, the star of last year's SEA Games when she captured four golds, has given up the sport to further her studies.

Seow Ting, however, is ready to stand up to the challenge of doing a balancing act as far as her studies and gymnastics are concerned.

"I will begin my mass communication course at UPM in July. It will not be easy to do both (studies and sports) but I am determined to prove that I can excel in both," said the national champion.

"I do not want to give up the sport because there is so much more that I want to achieve in my gymnastics career.

"There are no major tournaments this year but I hope to raise my standard of performances by doing well in international tournaments.

"I will also take greater measures to stay injury-free this year. I am also changing my routines.

"It will be challenging but I am bent on being consistent this year."

Seow Ting's first assignment this year is the Asia Pacific Alliance Gymnastics Competition in Hawaii from March 25-31.

"Jaime Lee, Brenda Yap and Elaine Tan will join her.

Petite Wan Siti Haniza Wan Izhar will miss the stint because of injury.

Besides rhythmic gymnastics, Malaysia will also take part in the artistic competition.

The sole male representative is Korat SEA Games gold medallist Ooi Wei Siang while two women gymnasts are Chan Sau Wah and Noor Hasleen Fatihin.