

Silver cheer for pair

PANDELELA Rinong-Cheong Jun Hoong marked their first return to the pool since their success at the Rio Olympics last August by winning a silver medal in the season-opening Beijing leg of the World Series yesterday.

The Malaysians posted a 316.08 total to take second spot in the women's 10m platform synchro.

Pandelela-Jun Hoong were second from the second dive onwards to finish ahead of bronze medallists Kim Kuk Hyang-Kim Mi Rae of North Korea, who garnered 313.92 points.

China's rising stars Chang Yani

and Ren Qian, were well ahead after the fourth dive to take the gold with a 340.26 series.

Chang Yani and Ren Qian are being groomed by China to replace Chen Ruolin-Liu Huixia, who won the gold in the same event in Rio.

Pandelela-Jun Hoong created history in Rio by winning Malaysia's first ever silver in the sport before both decided to take a break to recover from injuries and also catch-up on studies.

"I am very happy for Pandelela and Jun Hoong but of course, they need to tighten routines to regain their Olympic form," said



Cheong Jun Hoong (left) and Pandelela Rinong

national coach Yang Zhuliang yesterday.

"I hope the medal will serve as a motivation to do better in upcoming competitions. I am not planning to increase the pair's level of difficulty this year. They, however, need to improve their entries."

In the 3m springboard synchro final, Wendy Ng-Nur Dhabitah Sabri could only manage six position with a 268.62 total.

China's new combination of Shi Tingmao-Xu Zhihuan won the gold with 319.20 points ahead of silver medallists Anabelle Smith-Maddison Keeney of Australia on 298.68.

Russians Kristina Ilinykh-Nadezhda Bazhina took third with 294.00.

Wendy will return to the pool today for the 3m springboard individual competition. **Ajitpal Singh**