

# Lethal weapon

STAR 2/8/2017 p.2

NATIONAL shooter Johnathan Wong Guanjie may be a sharpshooter but he admits that he is not a master of shooter video games.

"My friends used to tease me that if I'm so good at shooting, I must excel at Counter-Strike (or any other video games)," said Wong, 24.

"But the truth is, I'm not good," added the Melaka-born Olympian who competed in the men's 10m air pistol event at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Wong started shooting at the age of 13. He recalled that at that time, the Melaka Shooting Association was looking for young talents as part of the state government programme for Sukma (Sukan Malaysia). The association representatives went to Wong's eldest sister's school to look for potential candidates.

"My sister joined the sport, and eventually dragged me along as my family deemed I was not being productive at home," quipped Wong, who has two elder sisters and a younger brother.

At that time, he thought "it was cool to fire a pistol" and signed up.

He enrolled into Majlis Sukan Negara (MSN) in 2009 as a junior national athlete.

Two years later, he officially joined the senior squad, where he has remained until now.

Wong will be taking part at the SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur.

Presently, he trains two sessions daily, for six days a week. After training, he has gym or physical sessions.

In May, he flew to South Korea for a training stint and competition, hooking up with that nation's athletes for a month.

Said Wong: "I hope this SEA Games will be memorable for all Malaysians. Hopefully, I can contribute a gold medal and bring pride to our nation. Also, I hope the SEA Games will be enjoyable for all athletes from participating countries."

Normally, after a great win, one would celebrate.

Wong said: "I would treat myself with something nice to eat, or even go for a movie, after all the hard work!"

Said Wong: "When I joined the sport, I thought it was mainly for fun. However, when I actually got to shoot a pistol, it wasn't what I expected it to be.

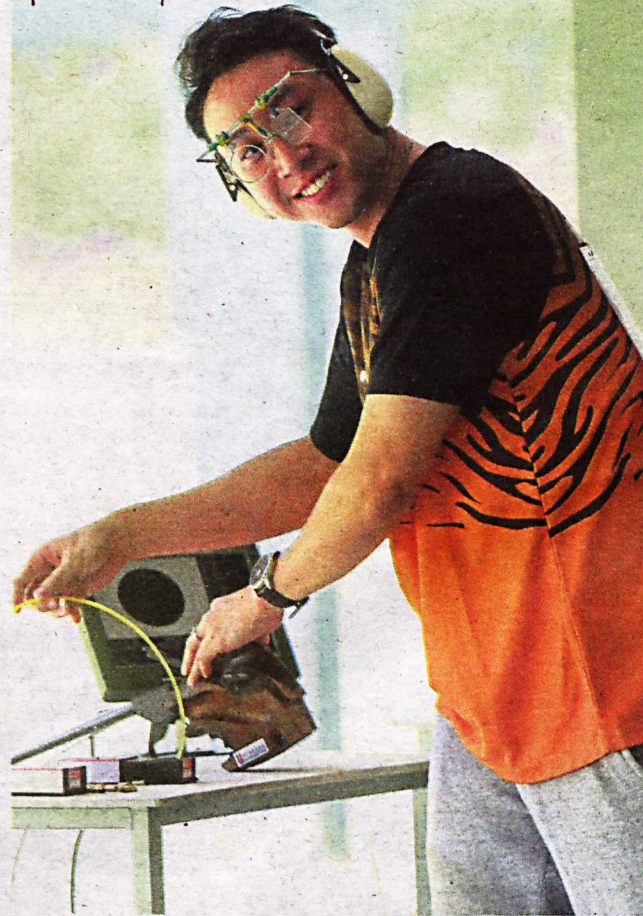
"The pistol was heavy and I found it hard to take aim. And training was hard work. But after some time, I eventually got better at it."

As a sport shooter, training mainly focuses on shooting. Nevertheless, the most important thing in shooting is discipline.

"We practise the same action over and over again, and perfect the shots. Without discipline, there will not be consistency in our shots," Wong said.

Patience is crucial in shooting.

He explained: "In every shot we fire, we can't expect the perfect result in the first attempt, but we need to keep practising the correct method. As my coach says, we will shoot a 10 only after we focus on



Wong trains six days a week. — FILEPIC

executing all the correct steps."

Being a national shooter and student is indeed tough for Wong, who is a fourth-year aerospace engineering student of University Putra Malaysia in Serdang.

"But it all comes down to time management and prioritisation," he said.

Whenever an important game is

coming up, he will "slow down" his studies, and instead, put more effort in his sport. Due to his busy schedule in shooting, Wong has lengthened his academic duration by taking fewer subjects per semester.

"Proper time planning for classes and training ensures that I will have sufficient time for both," he concluded. — Majorie Chiew

# Making a splash

IT was like having the rug pulled from underneath her feet ... or being blindsighted and getting hit by a curve ball. Nothing could be more demoralising at that point in her career, but Malaysian Olympian synchronised swimmer Zylane Lee was dealt a crushing blow when partner Katrina Ann Hadi opted to retire from the sport suddenly.

"It was very demotivating when she retired without any notice. We were preparing for the Olympic qualifiers and my dreams just went down the drain in a split second. I only got the chance to work with her for a year ... at that time we were still getting used to each other's approach," shared Lee, recently.

Rather than let fate knock her off her saddle, the 25-year-old soldiered on with a new partner, meaning, there was some returning to the ol' drawing board.

Her new wingwoman is Gan Hua Wei, an 18-year-old who brings a different style to the table, coaxing Lee to make some adjustments, though a collective goal remains – winning the ultimate accolade at KL 2017, the 29th SEA Games in Malaysia. So, how is the new pair getting along?

"So far, so good. Both Katrina and Hua Wei have their own talents. We are working towards