

# A splashing start



**Bright beginning:** Cheong Jun Hoong in action during the women's 1m springboard preliminaries at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, on Friday. — Reuters

## Determined Jun Hoong enters 1m springboard final

By LIM TEIK HUAT

**PETALING JAYA:** Missing the last World Aquatics Championships in Kazan, Russia, two years ago must have made Cheong Jun Hoong more determined to prove a point.

On Friday, the pint-sized diver from Perak made heads turn with a strong performance to qualify for the women's 1m springboard individual final on the opening day of the 2017 edition of the world meet in Budapest, Hungary.

Jun Hoong, who had to pull out of the last world meet in Kazan after injuring her heels while training in China, chalked up the third highest overall score of 272.75 points at the end of the five-dive preliminary competition.

The top 12 divers from the preliminary round advanced to the final with Australia's Keeney Maddison finishing on top with 283.80 points.

China's Chen Yiwen finished just ahead of Jun

Hoong with 277.20 points. The world meet served an early shock as the second Chinese diver Chang Yani missed out on the final after placing 14th with 243.30 points.

Malaysia's second diver Nur Dhabitah Sabri missed out after finishing 17th with 242.35 points. Jun Hoong's impressive form is a welcome boost to her efforts to secure her first world championship medal after a historic performance at the Rio Olympics last August.

Jun Hoong partnered Pandelega Rinong to take silver in the women's 10m platform synchro final – the first medal for the Malaysian contingent in Brazil.

Jun Hoong-Pandelega will also be chasing a medal in the women's 10m platform synchro today.

Jun Hoong, however, is also a versatile diver as she bagged the bronze in the 1m springboard individual at the 2010 Asian Games in

Guangzhou and she also competes in the 3m springboard individual.

"It's a bonus if she wins a medal but I will be happy as long as she gives her best performance.

"Her main focus is the 10m platform synchro with Pandelega.

"Except for the second attempt, the rest of her dives were consistent," said head coach Yang Zhuliang.

There were more cheers as Malaysia's Ooi Tze Liang-Chew Yiwei also reached the men's 3m springboard synchro final yesterday.

Tze Liang-Yiwei finished eighth with 384.69 points in the preliminaries to make the cut for the top-12 final.

Tze Liang and Amsyar failed to reach the men's 1m springboard individual final earlier after finishing 25th (325.70) and 30th (313.00) respectively.