



Star Sport

Against all odds

Agony turned to joy for diver Cheong Jun Hoong as she now has a World Aquatics Championships medal in her collection. She partnered Pandeleda Rinong to claim the bronze for Malaysia in the women's 10m platform synchro final in Hungary. The Malaysians, who were the silver medallists at the Rio Olympics last year, posted a five-dive total of 328.74 points. "I'm very happy for Jun Hoong and Pandeleda. They beat the odds to come back from injuries to finish on the podium after only two weeks of training," said national coach Yang Zhuliang. >41



Just reward: Cheong Jun Hoong (right) and Pandeleda Rinong showing off their bronze medals after finishing third in the women's 10m platform synchro at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, on Sunday. — AP

Joy for Jun Hoong

Diver ignores back pain to win bronze with Pandeleda



World's best: (from left) Pandeleda Rinong, Cheong Jun Hoong, China's gold medal winners Ren Qian and Si Yajie and silver medal winners Kim Mi-rae and Kim Kuk-hyang of North Korea posing on the podium after the women's diving 10m synchro platform final at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, on Sunday. — AP

By LIM TEIK HUAT

PETALING JAYA: Agony turned to joy for diver Cheong Jun Hoong as she now has a World Aquatics Championships medal in her collection.

On Sunday, Jun Hoong-Pandeleda Rinong put up a consistent performance to claim the bronze in the women's 10m platform synchro final at the World Championships in Budapest, Hungary. It was Malaysia's fourth bronze in the history of the championships.

The Malaysian pair, who were the silver medallists at the Rio Olympics last year, posted a five-dive total of 328.74 points to shut out Canadians Meaghan Benfeito-Caeli McKay (315.78). China's Ren Qian-Si Yajie earned a stunning 83.52 points in their last dive for a 352.56 total to deny North Korea's Kim Mi-rae-Kim Kuk-hyang the gold in the 12-pair final.

RESULTS (All finals)

Men
1m springboard individual: 1. Peng Jianfeng (Chn) 448.40, 2. He Chao (Chn) 447.20, 3. Tocci Giovanni (Ita) 444.25.
Women
10m platform synchro: 1. Ren Qian-Si Yajie (Chn) 352.56, 2. Kim Mi-rae-Kim Kuk-hyang (Prk) 336.48, 3. Pandeleda Rinong-Cheong Jun Hoong (Mas) 328.74.

The North Koreans settled for the silver with 336.48 points.

Both Jun Hoong and Pandeleda were struggling with injuries in the run-up to the World Championships. Jun Hoong had back muscle spasms while Pandeleda injured her right shoulder during the Diving World Series campaigns in April.

They were only cleared to compete in the platform synchro a few days before the start of the world meet.

Jun Hoong also showed remarkable com-

posure in bouncing back from a disappointing performance in the 1m springboard final on Saturday. She was placed last among the 12 finalists.

"I'm very happy for Jun Hoong and Pandeleda. They beat the odds to come back from injuries to finish on the podium after only two weeks of training," said national coach Yang Zhuliang.

"Jun Hoong performed better than Pandeleda today but her back is sore now," added Zhuliang.

The 27-year-old Jun Hoong said she felt blessed to get the bronze.

"Normally, I don't look at the scoreboard. I always focused on my own dives and didn't look at the results until the end. I'm glad we are rewarded for our sacrifices," said Jun Hoong, who will join Pandeleda in the women's 10m platform preliminary round today.