

Injured, but she gave her best and triumphed

By **IVAN LOH**

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IPOH: In her family's eyes, Cheong Jun Hoong is a true fighter who fought through the pain of a back injury to become Malaysia's first ever world diving champion.

Her younger sister Jun Yeng, 24, said she was worried for Jun Hoong when her old injury acted up a few weeks ago.

"She has been seeing a physio-therapist for her back. Considering all that, she really did well," Jun Yeng told reporters at her home here yesterday.

"She always does her best no matter what," she said.

Jun Yeng said it was always her sister's dream to be a world champion.

"It came true for her. She was ecstatic over the phone when she called home. It's also the first time I ever saw her cry," she said.

"I think she was also surprised when she looked at the scoreboard after the final dive."

Jun Yeng said the family rarely spoke to Jun Hoong prior to big events as they did not want to distract her.

"We want to let her focus and enjoy the competition. She also does not look at the scoreboard until the final dive. It distracts her."

Jun Yeng said her sister is expected to return to Malaysia on July 24.

"However, I don't think she will be coming home soon as she has to train for the SEA Games," she said, although a mandatory celebration with the family is still on the cards.



Every reason to smile: Jun Yeng (left) and Leow looking at a picture of Jun Hoong's victory on a smartphone at their home in Ipoh.

"The last time we were together was Chinese New Year, when we went to Singapore. I really want all of us to have a celebration together. We'll find a suitable time to have it in Kuala Lumpur."

Jun Hoong's mother Leow Lai Kwan, 51, said she was glued to the television from 12.30am yesterday to watch her daughter in action.

"My husband and I were watch-

ing until 2am. We were so nervous," she said.

"But I thought she looked quite steady and relaxed. It was one of her best performances yet."

Leow said she hoped Malaysians would keep on supporting Jun Hoong.

"I hope she will keep up the good work and most importantly, look after her health," she added.