



XXI Commonwealth Games

Gold Coast 2018 (April 4 - 15)

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Ying How believes Malaysia can finish strongly in last three days

LET'S go for the final push.

Chef de mission Huang Ying How is confident Malaysian athletes will be able to pull off a strong finish in the last three days of the Commonwealth Games to meet the six-gold medal target and a top-10 finish.

So far, Malaysia have a medal haul of 3-3-7 and are lying 12th out of 71 nations.

"We started well by winning two gold medals in weightlifting and I'm hoping for a good end," said Ying How.

"Badminton, squash, diving, rhythmic gymnastics, shooting, athletics and lawn bowls are still ongoing and I expect some medals.

"Diving and badminton will have their finals on April 14 and 15 respectively and we're looking at golds.

"I'm happy with the performances of our athletes so far, there are many positive showings. Discipline among athletes, coaches and team managers is very high. No cases or issues reported," he said.

Olympic Council of Malaysia (OCM) president Tan Sri Tunku Imran Tuanku Jaafar said there was better quality in the athletes' performances this year.

"There have been excellent performances, some have been disappointing and some have been unlucky to achieve their personal bests.

"In OCM, we've always stressed the importance of total medals. Our silver and bronze medallists have done equally well as gold medal

winners. We've won medals from different sports - that's good," said Tunku Imran.

Malaysia's medal contributors are weightlifting (two golds, one bronze), diving (one gold, two bronzes), badminton (one silver), powerlifting (one silver), rhythmic gymnastics (one silver, one bronze), shooting (one bronze), squash (one bronze), athletics (one bronze).

Podium Programme director Tim Newenham said finishing in the top 12 was achievable.

PM praises Pandeleta and Jun Hoong

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak praised national divers Cheong Jun Hoong and Pandeleta Rinong for delivering Malaysia's third gold medal at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

"Congratulations @cheongjunhoong and @Pandeleta_R! Third gold for Malaysia at #GC2018

TeamMAS#NgarakuKebanggaanku," he said on his Twitter account yesterday.

The elite diving pair amassed 328.08 points in the women's synchronised 10m platform to pick up the gold medal while compatriots Leong Mun Yee-Nur Dhabitah Sabri won the bronze after collecting 308.16 points.

The silver was won by Canadian pair Meaghan Benfeito-Caeli McKay with 312.12 points. — Bernama

Wobbly finish

Slip-up costs Pandeleta individual medal



Way off the mark: Cheong Jun Hoong competing in the women's 10m platform final at the Aquatic Centre yesterday. She finished fifth with a score of 332.85.

DIVER Pandeleta Rinong will go home with one medal for the first time in eight years after a slip-up in the women's 10m platform individual.

The Sarawakian had looked good to add another medal after topping the qualifying but a bad start (55.50) and a wobbly finish (64.0) put paid to the three-time Olympian's medal hopes at the Optus Aquatic Centre.

From a bronze-medal position, Pandeleta dropped to fourth with a score of 340.20.

Reigning world champion Cheong Jun Hoong finished fifth with a score of 332.85 and 15-year-old Kimberly Bong ended 10th with 294.20.

England's Lois Toulson benefited from Pandeleta's blunder to take bronze with 344.20.

Melissa Wu gave the home crowd much to cheer as she delivered Australia's first diving gold with 360.40 while Canada's Meaghan Benfeito came second with 359.75.

The 25-year-old Pandeleta, who won a gold in the 10m platform synchro with Jun Hoong on Wednesday, has bagged two medals in every Commonwealth Games since her debut in 2010.

She won a gold and silver at the 2010 New Delhi Games and a silver

and bronze at the 2014 Glasgow Games.

A disappointed Pandeleta admits that she is to blame for the slip-up.

"My first and last dives could have been a lot better. My form was better in the preliminaries,"

said Pandeleta, whose last major individual medal was a bronze medal at the 2015 World Championships.

"Jun Hoong and I did well in synchro and we couldn't really recover in time. My level dropped a little.

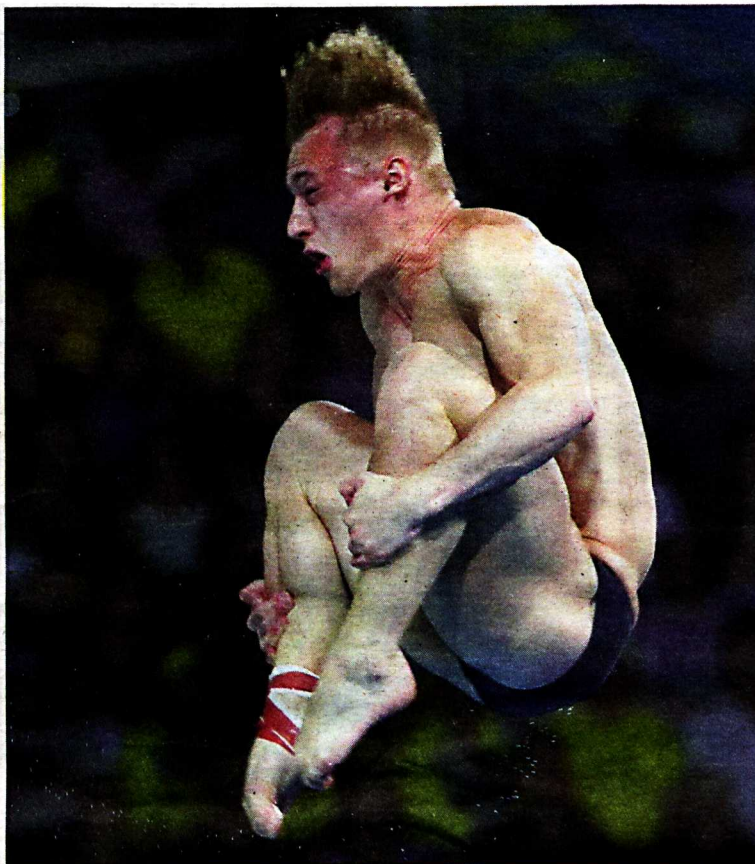
"But that's the nature of sport. Sometimes we win and sometimes we lose. What's important is that we don't give up."

Meanwhile, defending champion Ooi Tze Liang struggled from the start to finish 10th with a score of 373.75 in the men's 3m springboard individual event.

Chew Yiwei rued a penalty deduction on his third dive as he finished 11th with 347.20.

Tze Liang said he would get over the disappointing individual performance to focus on his partnership with Yiwei.

"I'm not sad at losing. It happened and I prefer to look ahead and focus on doing my best in the synchro event," said the Penangite.



Hair-raising experience: England's Jack Laugher competing in the men's 3m springboard final yesterday.

Laugher does a dive double as Melissa bags gold

ENGLISH diver Jack Laugher boasted that he had been "on fire" after winning the 3m springboard for his second gold medal of the Commonwealth Games.

The Olympic silver medallist racked up a total of 519.40 points from his six dives to secure a whopping 66.7-point victory over Canada's Philippe Gagne with Australian James Connor taking bronze yesterday.

In the night's other final, Australia's Melissa Wu stunned defending champion Meaghan Benfeito of Canada with her final dive to win her first major individual title in the women's 10m platform in dramatic fashion.

Laugher is now chasing a Gold Coast hat-trick after winning the 1m title earlier in the week.

"I was on fire from the start and because I wanted that title so much it meant that I really tried quite hard," said the 23-year-old.

"I'm really proud of my score, first time finally competing outdoors and almost what I got in Rio."

Laugher's score was just four points off his silver medal performance behind China's Cao Yuan at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Melissa trailed Rio bronze medallist Benfeito by 8.95 points heading into the final round of the women's platform, but peeled off a back 2½ somersaults with 1½ twists dive to snatch gold.

For Melissa, a silver medallist at the 2010 Delhi Games, it was her first individual gold after successes in synchro finals.

"I'm so proud to be able to do it before all those Australians supporting me in the crowd," said the 25-year-old.

"I'm just super happy. I've had a pretty tough year with injuries, so to be able to have such a good result means so much to me and gives me motivation and inspiration to keep pushing through." — AFP