

Settling for silver ‘hurts’ but Wong not giving up



Singapore fencer Maxine Wong (centre) says that her main mistake in her loss to Filipina Samantha Kyle Catantan was her tactics. She admitted that she was too passive, and did not attack the right target. ST PHOTO: ARIFFIN JAMAR

Kimberly Kwek In Hanoi

It was heartbreak again for fencer Maxine Wong, as she fell in the women’s foil final for the second SEA Games in a row yesterday.

Having settled for silver at the 2019 Philippine Games after losing the final to teammate Amita Berthier, Wong, 21, had been hoping to go one better in Hanoi.

But tactical errors against Filipina Samantha Kyle Catantan in the final at the My Dinh Indoor Games Gymnasium cost her dear.

“This being my second SEA Games, I had a bit more experience and I kind of knew what to expect. Having won the silver, I had the goal to win the gold,” said the National University of Singapore undergraduate.

“It hurts to have been so close again, but I’ll go back and continue

to work on what I have to work on and hopefully be better next time.”

Wong had seized a 5-4 lead before her opponent, who seemed to be nursing an injury in her right wrist, called for medical attention.

After a short break, the final resumed but Catantan, a joint bronze medallist in 2019, had to be tended to again for about five minutes, with Wong leading 9-8.

But after the break, the complexion of the final changed, with the Filipina catching up and eventually beating Wong 14-12.

But the Singaporean refused to blame the disruptions for her defeat, saying that it was mainly tactical errors that resulted in the loss.

She said: “For this particular match, my main mistake was my tactics. After the break, I was a little bit too passive and she ended up being able to come and score more. And even when I attacked, I didn’t go to the right target, so it

was a bit of the strategy that was wrong.”

Teammate Cheung Kemei claimed the joint bronze after reaching the semi-finals, in which she fell to Wong.

The pair will have another shot at gold on Tuesday, when they will team up with Denyse Chan and Chloe Ng to defend the women’s team foil title that Singapore won in 2019.

The fencing team also claimed a joint bronze in the men’s epee through Simon Lee. A silver medallist in the team event in 2019, Lee lost 15-8 to three-time defending champion and eventual winner Nguyen Tien Nhat in the semi-finals.

Singapore’s other representative in the men’s epee event, Sito Jian Tong, progressed to the table of eight, in which he lost 15-12 to the Philippines’ Jose Noelito Jr.

kimkwek@sph.com.sg