

# Silver feels like Atienza's 'biggest win'

Aloysa Atienza driving in yesterday's final round of the SEA Games individual event at Heron Lake Golf Course in Vinh Phuc. Her silver is the first by a female Singapore golfer at an overseas Games in 31 years.

PHOTO: SNOG



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## Jeremiah Ong

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For three days and 54 holes, Aloysa Atienza kept her cool. But after sinking her final putt yesterday for a seven-under 65 that secured her a silver in women's individual golf, she finally allowed herself to savour the moment.

The National University of Singapore civil engineering undergraduate, making her Games debut, finished on seven-under 209 at the Heron Lake Golf Course, seven shots behind gold medallist Natthakritta Vongtaveelap (68) of Thailand while Malaysian Jeneath Wong (69) was third on 211.

Atienza, 23, said: "I tried my best to stay emotionless and zen the entire round. Everything just poured out after I made the final putt. Getting silver today felt like the biggest win I've ever had."

Fellow Singaporean Hailey Loh

closed with a 73 and was sixth on 217 among 20 participants. Teammate Inez Ng withdrew from the final round after testing positive for Covid-19 on Saturday.

She was isolated with mild symptoms and will remain in Hanoi for recovery. Team Singapore's medical team is monitoring her condition closely, said the Singapore National Olympic Council.

Atienza and Loh will compete in the team event which starts today.

In the men's division, Malaysia's Ervin Chang (69) won the gold after beating Indonesian Amadeus Christian Susanto (68) in a play-off after both were tied on seven-under 209. Thailand's Weerawish Narkprachar (70) was third, one stroke back. Singapore's Ryan Ang (71) was eighth on 214, followed by Hiroshi Tai (72) on 215. Brandon Han (74, 230) and Wong Qi Wen (80, 236) were 22nd and 27th respectively in the 35-player field.

Atienza is Singapore's first fe-

male golfer to finish on the podium since Koh Sock Hwee's bronze on home soil in 2015. The last to bag a medal at an away Games was Kee Bee Khim – a silver – at the 1991 edition in Manila.

Atienza said: "I was confident and feeling really great about my game overall. With the help and guidance of Matthew Ballard (national coach) and Joshua Ho (high performance manager) and all the training camps and overseas tournament exposure the last couple of months, everything came together really well this week."

She hopes her performance will provide a spark. "I hope winning this silver medal will inspire the up and coming junior girls... Maybe it's a bit of motivation for them that they can be in my shoes or even win a gold medal soon."

She will also head into her next few tournaments – the Porter Cup, Women's Western Amateur and Donna Andrews Invitational – with a spring in her step. She added: "My goal is to turn pro in the next year or so. I hope that I keep this momentum going and do well for the upcoming events."

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