



Toh Wei Soong congratulating Australia's Matthew Levy after the men's S7 50m freestyle final. The Singaporean clocked 29.01sec to finish second behind Levy. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO

# TOH KNOWS HE 'CAN BE A LOT FASTER'

After winning silver at C'wealth Games, Wei Soong gunning for breakthrough at Paralympics



**Kimberly Kwek**  
In Birmingham

Toh Wei Soong just wants to be the quickest in the pool, and perhaps that was why the para swimmer did not celebrate after winning a silver medal at the Commonwealth

Games on Monday.

Instead, he was his usual calm self after clocking 29.01sec to finish second in the men's S7 50m freestyle at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre. "It's not as fast as I know I can be," said Toh, who owns the national record of 28.65sec.

"I'm not disappointed, I'm not unhappy, but I definitely know this is not the fastest I can be. I can be a lot faster."

Australia's Matthew Levy bagged the gold in 28.95sec, while South Africa's Christian Sadie took the bronze in 29.78sec.

Still, Toh noted that it was his first race in Birmingham as there were no heats for the event.

He was pleased with the changes that he made to his training programme over the last few months and believes these will help him as he works towards the 2024 Para-

lympics in Paris.

One main change, working closely with physiotherapist Roger Fitzgerald, who has been with teams like Australia and Singapore at the Olympics, has been on his breathing and strength.

Toh said: "There are a lot of things I've been working towards in the last few months and unfortunately it didn't come together tonight because if it had, I would've gone a low 28sec... but I chalk that up to not having a heat in the morning, going off after a long taper and never having tested all these techniques in a race setting but you can't overthink it.

"We still have a lot of things we can do, I'm very excited to race and refine these techniques because once we come to that, it's really going to be a breakthrough. If it does, we will see some very great things

in Paris."

Toh, who made his Paralympics debut last year, won a bronze in the same event at the 2018 Commonwealth Games. At the Tokyo Paralympics, he was fourth in the men's S7 50m butterfly, just 0.16 second behind bronze medallist Carlos Daniel Serrano Zarate.

Having come so close to winning a medal, Toh is working with his coach, former national swimmer Ang Peng Siong, to finish on the podium in Paris. Ang said: "He needs to build his strength. Although he's strong with his upper body, there's still plenty of room for improvement there. The other aspect is to build up his core strength, which he needs to stabilise his arms and legs together.

"I believe these Games are a learning curve for him. Next year world para, then Paris 2024. Having the Games here helps acclimatise what we need to do to prepare for Paris."

Toh's medal was the second silver for Singapore at the Birmingham Games. Earlier on Monday, the women's table tennis team won the Republic's first gold, while Teong Tzen Wei was second in the men's 50m fly last Saturday. The men's table tennis team added a silver while the shuttlers took bronze in the mixed team event yesterday.

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