



Swimmer Wong Zhi Wei (in action at the National Para Swimming Championships at the OCBC Aquatic Centre on March 4) shaved more than five seconds off the Asean Para Games' S13 100m butterfly record in Cambodia on Tuesday. ST FILE PHOTO

Wong, high on confidence, lets fly in APG record time

Su Thet Hnin San

Heading into day three of the 2023 Asean Para Games (APG), swimmer Wong Zhi Wei had yet to win a gold medal.

But his confidence was unaffected as he knew he had yet to compete in his best stroke, the butterfly.

On Tuesday, he duly touched home first in the S13 100m fly in 1min 3.87sec at the Morodok Techo Aquatic Stadium in Cambodia, breaking the Games record of 1:09.63 set by Nakprom Tussakorn of Thailand in 2008.

Indonesia's Marinus Melianus Yowei (1:08.21) was second, with Vietnam's Nguyen Duc Hau (1:19.55) third.

Wong, 21, had won a bronze in the SB13 100m breast on Sunday and a silver in the SB13 50m breast on Monday. Earlier on Tuesday, he also

earned a silver in the S13 100m free.

At the 2022 APG in Indonesia, he won two golds (S13 50m and 100m free) and a silver (SB13 100m breast).

After striking gold in Phnom Penh, he said: "I'm feeling pretty good. Fly was always my best stroke. I was gunning for gold. Overall, I'm quite satisfied with the results, though I could have paced it better."

His final event will be Thursday's S13 50m free, in which he is eyeing a podium spot.

The rest of the year will see Wong preparing for the Asian Para Games in October in Hangzhou, where he is targeting his first medal at the continental meet.

In August, he will return to school where he is pursuing a degree in psychology at the National University of Singapore.

Singapore won two more gold medals on Tuesday, via the Soon si-

blings Sophie and Colin. This was the second time they had triumphed on the same day at these Games, after clinching the Republic's first two golds on Sunday in the SB13 100m breast.

Sophie won the women's S13 100m fly (1:22.41), 38sec ahead of her only rival Firstania Amir of Indonesia, while Colin prevailed in the men's S13 100m free in a Games and national record of 59.72sec, ahead of Wong (1:00.130) and Marinus (1:01.550).

Colin, who also won a silver in the S13 100m back, said: "I feel really happy and honoured to have won another two medals today."

"It was a bit tougher today as my events were almost back-to-back and I was not feeling too confident. But I managed to pull off a surprising performance."

This was his third gold in Cambodia, having also won the SB13 50m breast on Monday.

Sophie, 25, said: "It's always a great feeling to hear the national anthem being played. I'm glad to have added to Singapore's medal count."

There were four more silver medals on Tuesday. Swimmer Danielle Moi finished second in the women's S14 100m fly.

Two came from boccia, via Jeralyn Tan in the BCl female category and Aloysius Gan in the BC3 male, while sprinter James Ang finished second in the men's T13 400m after clocking a national record of 51.22sec. He was 1.72sec behind Thai champion Jakkarin Dammunee and 2.08sec ahead of Indonesia's Slamet Jati.

Five bronzes were won on Tuesday, with Moi earning her fourth medal at these Games in the women's 200m medley, in which she set a national record with her 2:53.65 effort. Adding to the tally were boccia players Toh Sze Ning (BC3 female) and Gareth Ho (BC3 male) and table tennis mixed doubles TT1 pair of Dinie Asyraf and Claire Toh.

The Republic are sixth of 11 countries in the medal table after racking up seven gold, 13 silver and 11 bronze medals. The APG will end on Friday.

jamsan@sph.com.sg