

Tin dispels doubts to finish 2nd in Czech meet

Deepanraj Ganesan

Singapore chess player Tin Jingyao, 23, admits he is his own harshest critic.

Once the Republic's youngest grandmaster, he tells *The Straits Times* that he has not met his own expectations in the past year, with some forgettable results.

This has led to self-doubt creeping into his psyche.

But on June 23, Tin's confidence returned as he clinched second place at the Teplice Open in the Czech Republic.

Seeded 12th in the international event – featuring over 200 players,

including several grandmasters – Tin had a score of 7.5 out of 9 with seven wins, a draw and a loss.

He was tied with Dutch grandmaster Max Warmerdam and German grandmaster Alexander Donchenko, but he finished second to Warmerdam owing to tiebreaks, while Donchenko was third.

His return to form comes after a series of “not so great results” at the Las Vegas National Open in June, Sunway Sitges Chess Festival last December, and November's US Masters, where he was ninth, 34th and 18th respectively.

This was after one of his career highlights at the El Llobregat Open in December 2022, when he beat American grandmaster Hans Nie-

mann en route to finishing second in the tournament.

He said: “Over the past year, I have seen some good results and also some not so great results. And I feel that overall, I did not meet my own expectations.

“There is a bit of self-doubt when that happens. I questioned myself if the good results in the past were a one-off.

“But this result in a very competitive field instils the confidence in myself again. And in chess, confidence is important.

“If you believe in your form, it can take you through matches and it will show in the moves you make. Momentum is so important in chess.



After a spell of failing to live up to his own expectations, Singapore chess grandmaster Tin Jingyao is feeling confident again.

“I know I can play at this level.”

The National University of Singapore computing student plans to use that momentum to attack the rest of 2024. He will compete in the Aug 1-6 Fide World Rapid and Blitz Team Championships and the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in November.

Singapore Chess Federation chief executive Kevin Goh said:

“This result is an encouraging one but we are aware of Jingyao's quality, so it did not come across as a surprise.

“Jingyao was seeded 12th going into this event but we know that he is underrated mainly because of the lack of tournament exposure.

“We hope that with this performance, fellow Singaporeans players will be inspired and not be easily intimidated by opponents who might be ranked better on paper.”

Highlighting the potential of Tin and Siddharth Jagadeesh – who at 17 became the fifth and youngest Singaporean grandmaster on May 21 – Goh called for more support for them, with possible medals at

the SEA Games at stake.

Tin won a silver and two bronze medals at the 2021 Hanoi Games, but chess was not in the 2023 edition and its inclusion in 2025 is uncertain.

Goh said: “Jingyao will certainly be a medal contender at the SEA Games but winning medals is only part of the process while they continue to push themselves into the world elite.

“This requires him and Siddharth to work on fine margins, making adjustments to their preparation, working on their weaknesses so they can be even more all-rounded players and be more unpredictable in their approach to the game.

“Both players are incredibly motivated and we are looking for sponsors who could help them make that additional push.”

gdeepan@sph.com.sg