

A NEW SHOOTING STAR

Ting Yew, 15, aims high after winning gold at Aussie Youth Festival

■ BY MAY CHEN

LIKE many teenage boys, 15-year-old Tan Ting Yew loves to visit arcades for the shooting games they offer.

Like most teenagers, he is not exceptionally good at them.

What is different about him, however, is that he excels at a real shooting range and even has a medal to show for it.

At the recent Australian Youth Olympic Festival (AYOF), he won the men's 10m air pistol event.

With only four shooters going into the final round, only seven points separated the top three.

Ting Yew ended with 691 points to win from Australia's Alfio Casagrande (672.9) and Malaysia's Jonathan Wong (670.1).

The biennial event featured 1,550 youngsters aged between 13 and 19 from 27 nations who competed across 17 sports.

It was the first time that Ting Yew, a Sec 3 student from West Spring Secondary, had represented Singapore.

He edged out shooters from Australia and Malaysia, as well as a fellow Singaporean in the competition.

"It felt really good, since representing Singapore has always been my goal," he said.

Before the AYOF, he also tasted success at the inter-school level. In 2007, he led his team to overall title in the C Division air pistol.

He went on to break the national schools record in the same category with a score of 546 last year despite a runner-up finish.

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Tan Ting Yew's target is to represent Singapore at July's Asian Youth Games and next year's Youth Olympic Games. ST PHOTO: DESMOND FOO

His skills and achievements may suggest that he had been trained from a tender age, but Ting Yew only started shooting about two years ago.

His West Spring coach believes that he has the ability to do even better.

"He is not like other young shooters," said his coach, Abdul Rahim, a retired military instructor. "He has great technique and discipline."

On top of his studies, the captain of West Spring's shooting club also trains at least three times a week with the national team.

"It is tough because I often have a lot of homework and learning to catch up on," he said.

"Shooting is like a magnet that attracts me. I can't explain why, but I just love shooting."

He hopes to represent Singapore in the Asian Youth Games in July, as well as the inaugural Youth Olympic Games next year.

If he keeps up his progress, his wish might just be granted.

According to Eddie Lim, head of the

national youth team, Ting Yew is the best shooter among his peers now.

Said Lim: "He has a good chance of representing Singapore again."

When that happens, Ting Yew can rely on his AYOF experience.

He said: "I've learnt to stay positive and believe in myself throughout the competition, instead of being pessimistic and stressed."

"Shooting is all about myself, the target and my pistol. I just need to concentrate on my game."

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