



Zhu flying high after poomsae triumph

YOUNG STAR CAN'T CONTAIN HIS DELIGHT AFTER CLAIMING FIRST INTERNATIONAL TITLE

By GAO CHANGXIN

CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Zhu Yuxiang was exhilarated after winning his taekwondo individual poomsae competition yesterday — so much so that he draped a Chinese flag over his shoulders and sprinted around the court.

“I was so excited. I couldn't help doing that,” Zhu said.

TAEKWONDO

It was also a salute to the audience,” he said, whose non-stop cheering gave him extra confidence.

At the age of 20, Zhu is already the country's leading proponent of poomsae, where taekwondo players demonstrate a set of prearranged actions, like those in gymnastics.

However, the Universiade gold was his first at an international event.

“It's my first gold at a large meet. I will work harder to see if I can do even better,” said Zhu, a sophomore at the Tianjin University of Technology.

It has taken Zhu five years to get where he is now. His parents steered him toward taekwondo because he was too thin and needed to bulk up. They didn't see this coming, Zhu said, even though he fell for the sport



China's Zhu Yuxiang won the taekwondo individual poomsae gold medal yesterday in Shenzhen.

CUI MENG / CHINA DAILY

immediately.

“He was born for poomsae,” said Zhang Ningyu, his coach.

The 20-year-old, who describes himself as introverted, said almost all of his time after class is spent training.

“In taekwondo, I find myself,”

he said. He also thanked his sister Zhu Mengxue, who is two years older, and will make her debut in the event tomorrow in the team competition.

He says she took up the sport out of “jealousy”, and they continually compete against each

other in trainings and at competitions, though sometime they work together in the doubles competitions.

“We train together. We look at each other to see who is doing things better. Sometimes we make bets to see who can put

their leg higher,” he said.

On Friday, Zhu will compete again in the team competition and his morale is obviously high.

“I will save the celebrations for later. I will try my best. The aim is gold,” he said.

Chinese sharpshooter sets sights on new career target

By TANG ZHE

CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Chinese marksman Pang Wei said his Olympic title has become a burden after he finished fourth in the Universiade's men's 50m pistol individual event at Shenzhen Shooting Range yesterday.

“I hope I can pass the domestic selection process to join the London Olympics and achieve good results there, although I feel I'm not as good as I was four years ago,” Pang said.

“I'm trying to bounce back”

Pang won gold in the men's 10m air-pistol competition at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Pang finished 15th in the 50m pistol and ranked 16th in the 10m air pistol at the 2010 World Championships. The 25-year-old did not qualify for the 10m air-pistol final after finishing ninth in the qualifying round at the 16th Asian Games in Guangzhou last year.

Pang attributed his slipping scores to the Olympic title, which he said has put tremendous pressure on him.

“I had little pressure before because I didn't know what an Olympic title meant to me and my mind was quite simple,” Pang said.

“Since winning some titles, I've received more attention and felt more pressure, which isn't necessary ... I need to clear the pressure and distracting thoughts to find peace of mind.”

Pang's compatriot, Mai Jiajie, secured a bronze in the Universiade. South Korean Lee Dae-myung took the gold, while the silver went to Serb Damir Mikec.

Mai ranked first in qualification but third in the final. It was his first international competition.

“I was nervous in the beginning because I was the first one to shoot, and I wanted to win the gold medal,” he said.

He earned fewer than eight points in the first two rounds.

“I am still young and lack experience,” he said.

“I will work harder to improve my mental and physical condition.”

Although he missed the individual title, the host team managed a gold. South Korea's team took second place.

“I'm not satisfied with the team's performance today,” South Korean coach Jang Kap Seok said.

“One of our shooters (Jang Ha Lim) got nervous because he has no international competition experience. Lee has won gold medals in many international competitions. He will go to the Olympic Games, and I am confident he can win the gold medal there.”



ZOU ZHONGPIN / CHINA DAILY

China's Pang Wei reacts after yesterday's competition.