

Sean sets national U-20 pole-vault mark

BY MAY CHEN

POLE vaulter Sean Lim's fine form continued yesterday when the Hwa Chong Institution student soared 4.61m to raise the national Under-20 mark.

Once ratified, his winning effort at the Singapore Junior Athletic Championships at the Bukit Gombak stadium will rewrite Solomon Tan's 2003 record of 4.60m.

Last month, Sean had vaulted 4.50m to rewrite his national U-17 record.

The 16-year-old has now set his sights on Mok Hay Foo's national Open record of 4.66m set in 1993 - which he will attempt to break at this weekend's annual Swift meet.

Coach David Yeo said: "It (the national Open record) is definitely within reach. Today, we raised the bar after he cleared 4.61m at the first try, but conditions weren't ideal. It was very hot."

Said Sean, who has used three separate poles - each different in length and weight - this season: "It takes time to get used to the stiffer poles. I was inconsistent when I started because subconsciously, I was a little scared, so I held back a little."

However, Yeo remains confident in his ability and has even planned for the Asian Youth Games-bound athlete to cross the five-metre mark by next July.



Sean Lim cleared 4.61m to raise the national U-20 pole-vault mark by 1cm yesterday.

Said the coach: "Every athlete has a bit of fear when there are changes because you never know how things will turn out."

"But he is adapting well to the changes."

In the boys' U-20 javelin event, Victoria Junior College's Koh Thong En, 18, posted 55.19m to better the national U-20 record set by Huang Huaren in 1992. But, he had to settle for the silver medal.

Singapore permanent resident Akid Chong Mohd Isham, 19, of Nanyang Polytechnic, threw 60.47m to take the gold.

Other records

Boys:

- Tan Zhi Hao (Hwa Chong Institution): U-17 javelin, 53.18m (previous record 51.48m)
- Wayne Yap [Raffles Institution (JC)]: U-20 high jump, 2.01m (equalled meet record)
- Stefan Tseng (Auckland University of Technology): U-20 triple jump, 15.80m (14.21m)

Girls:

- Mariam Shazana Jalalludin (AUT): U-20 triple jump, 11.50m (11.19m)
- Nurshaishireen Rahim (Singapore Sports School): U-17 triple jump, 11.05m (11.04m)



Mariam Shazana Jalalludin on her way to a championship record in the girls' Under-20 triple jump with her 11.5m effort at the Bukit Gombak Stadium yesterday. ST PHOTO: ALBERT SIM