

Dream 2012 award for duo



Tao Li (far left), Singapore's first ever swimmer to enter an Olympic final during the Beijing Olympics in 2008, is a fourth-time winner while Pang Xue Jie (left), a player in the national Olympic table tennis team, is a third-time recipient of the Dream 2012 award. -- ST PHOTO: LIM WUI LIANG, ALBERT SIM

TWO of Singapore's most promising Olympians, Tao Li, and Pang Xue Jie from the Singapore Sports School (SSP), have been awarded the Lord Sebastian Coe/British Chamber of Commerce 'Dream 2012 Award' for 2009/10.

Tao Li, 19, Singapore's first ever swimmer to enter an Olympic final during the Beijing Olympics in 2008, is a fourth-time winner while Pang Xue Jie, 16, a player in the national Olympic table tennis team, is a third-time recipient of the Dream 2012 award.

Launched by the British Chamber of Commerce, Singapore in July 2005 following London's successful bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Dream 2012 is endorsed by Lord Coe.

He is the only man to win back-to-back Olympic gold in the 1,500m and the Chairman of the 2012 London Olympic who was instrumental in securing London's win to host the Games.

Into its fourth year, the Award is the Chamber's seven-year commitment to help outstanding Singaporean sporting talents, who have demonstrated potential to qualify for the London 2012 Olympics, the British Chamber of Commerce said in a press statement.

Eighteen Dream 2012 awards have been presented to nine of Singapore's top athletes from sports ranging from athletics and sailing to swimming and table tennis.

Terry O'Connor, President of the British Chamber of Commerce said: 'The Chamber is committed to help Singapore develop and promote the Olympic spirit and dream.'

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'The local sporting talents need the support; they make many sacrifices in their lives in terms of time, personal life and finance to represent the nation.'

'The aim of the Award is to aid the athletes in lightening their financial burdens and to allow them to focus on their physical and mental training to realise their dream. We congratulate Tao Li and Xue Jie in winning the award again.'

Paul Madden, British High Commissioner and Patron of the British Chamber of Commerce said: 'We are looking forward to hosting a spectacular Olympic Games in London 2012, and we hope to see a strong Singaporean contingent there, including of course Tao Li and Xue Jie.'

'In the meantime, Singapore's Youth Olympics next year will be a great showcase for young sporting talent.'

Accepting the Award on behalf of the SSP and the athletes, Clive Rushton, Head Swimming Coach of the SSP said: 'The Sports School is very appreciative of the continued support from the British Chamber of Commerce and both Tao Li's and Xue Jie's Olympic preparation will benefit greatly because of it.'

'They are two of the Sports Schools' 2012 hopefuls and will lead the charge for Olympic glory.'

Tao Li, who has been a recipient of the Award for the past four years since its inception, said: 'I'm thrilled to receive this award again this year. It is recognition for all the hard work I've put in through the years to get to where I am today. This Award personally encourages me to try even harder to qualify for the 2012 Olympics and fulfil my dream of an Olympic medal knowing that I have the support of everyone.'

SPORTSWORLD

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Tao, Pang get Dream Award

SINGAPORE swimmer Tao Li and national table tennis player Pang Xue Jie have been awarded the Lord Sebastian Coe/British Chamber of Commerce "Dream 2012 Award".

The award is aimed at helping outstanding Singaporean sports talents realise their Olympic dreams by providing financial aid to potential Olympians.

The Singapore Sports School students each received \$3,500.