



Tao Li was the lone entrant in the Over-18 200m butterfly final. Swimming alone unnerved her, she said, and she finished in 2:17.89, nearly 5sec off her personal best. ST PHOTO: MUGILAN RAJASEGERAN

■ BY FABIOUS CHEN

IT WAS her final swim meet in Singapore before leaving for studies in the United States.

And Quah Ting Wen marked the occasion in style, winning the Under-17 50m freestyle at last night's National Age Group Championships in 26.51 seconds.

While it was outside her meet record of 25.80sec, she still did enough to see off a strong challenge from fellow national swimmer Amanda Lim (26.54sec).

With the Asian Games qualifying mark standing at 26.38sec, the 2009 Straits Times Athlete of the Year was cautiously

Asian Games slots in sight

optimistic about her chances at the Guangzhou Games.

"It's still too early to say for sure, but I'm really looking forward to the Games," she said.

Meanwhile, all eyes were literally on Tao Li in the night's final event, as the 19-year-old was the only competitor in the Over-18 200m butterfly final.

She finished in 2min 17.89sec, well outside her personal best of 2min 12.63sec, although she later stressed that swimming

alone had an unnerving effect on her.

"My performance today wasn't too good," she admitted. "Being the only competitor definitely played a part; it's quite embarrassing swimming by yourself."

Like Ting Wen, Tao Li has one eye on the November Asiad and its 2:11.45 qualifying mark.

She said: "Based on today's performance, I wouldn't say I am on course for the Games, but I am not far from it."

Last night also saw impressive per-

formances from Koh Hui Yu, Mylene Ong and Ng Tze Kang, who rewrote the meet records for their respective events. Hui Yu (U-14) and Mylene (O-18) broke the 50m freestyle records, while Ng (2:08.39) beat his own heats time of 2:08.84.

But the biggest winners were undoubtedly the invitees from Japan, who won and set meet records in seven of the 10 events they competed in.

This is the second year that foreign teams have been invited to the meet, a trend that Ting Wen hopes will continue.

She said: "We've had a lot of fun at this event; having the invited teams makes this feel like the Singapore Open."