

S'pore girls claw their way back to claim team title

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THEY started the day in fifth place – 313 pinfalls behind leaders Japan in the girls' team event.

But against all odds, Singapore's Bernice Lim, Gina Lim, Krishna Darshini and New Hui Fen stormed back to claim gold at the 15th Asian Youth Bowling Championships in Kuwait yesterday.

The quartet had signalled their intent when they combined for 960 pinfalls to get the second block of three games under way.

"We had a good start as a team, and we just carried on from there," said Bernice, whose total score of 1,377 was the highest in the eight-country field.

That approach saw Singapore through, as their 5,150 total pipped runners-up Japan by eight pinfalls.

South Korea were third with 5,117 pinfalls.



The girls' team of (from left) Krishna Darshini, Bernice Lim, Gina Lim and New Hui Fen started the day in fifth place at the Asian Youth Championships but they stormed back to beat Japan by eight pinfalls. PHOTO: SINGAPORE BOWLING FEDERATION

"After the first block, we didn't think it was possible to win the gold," revealed the 18-year-old.

"No one expected it. We just continued to go through our routines and make the most out of every shot."

The key, she added, was having fun on the lanes – a point that was brought home by national coach William Woo.

"The Japanese and Koreans were sensing we were close and they felt the pressure," said Woo.

"So I told the girls, 'Look at them, they are feeling the stress. Why not put a bit more stress on them while we enjoy ourselves?'"

There was more joy for Bernice, as her performances earned her gold in the all-events.

Her 4,242 pinfalls – an average of

235.6 – took her, and the Republic's, medal haul up to three golds.

She had earlier won the girls' doubles title with Hui Fen.

Bernice will have the chance to make it four golds when the Masters event begins today.

Hui Fen, 18, and Krishna, 16, also qualified for the Masters, which will feature the top 16 keglers from the all-events.

Singapore's boys finished fifth out of 15 countries in the team event.

Singapore Bowling Federation president Jessie Phua could not be more proud of her bowlers.

"The young bowlers in our pipeline are really awesome," she said. "They just need more competition and experience to be battle hardened for bigger challenges ahead. Skills-wise, they are not far off."

LIN XINYI



(From left)
Gina Lim,
New Hui
Fen, Darshini
Krishna
and Bernice
Lim bowled
a record-
breaking
total of 5,150
pinfalls to
clinch the
team gold

PHOTO: S'PORE
BOWLING

Bernice and Co are on a roll

SINGAPORE – Singapore now lead the medal standings at the 15th Asian Youth Tenpin Bowling Championships.

Yesterday, the Republic added two more gold medals, at the Cozmo Bowling Centre in Salmiya City in Kuwait yesterday, after the quartet of Bernice Lim, Gina Lim, Krishna Darshini and New Hui Fen claimed the girls' team gold medal.

Bernice, Gina, Krishna and New rolled six-game totals of 1,377, 1,194, 1,286 and 1,293 pinfalls respectively for a combined 5,150 pinfall total, bettering the previous record of 5,136 set by Malaysia in 1999.

Japan took silver (5,142) with South Korea settling for bronze (5,117).

Bernice also clinched her second gold – and third overall after last Thursday's girls' doubles gold with New – in the girls' all-events with a 4,242 18-games total,

breaking the previous mark of 3,766 set by Australia's Maxim Nable in 1999.

It means Singapore now lead the medal standings with three golds, with South Korea second on two gold, two silver and two bronzes, and Hong Kong third (1-0-1).

"I'm quite overwhelmed as I wasn't expecting to do this well. I was just aiming for a team gold," Bernice, 18, told MediaCorp in a phone interview from Kuwait last night. "We enjoyed ourselves as a team, and went through our usual routine and own game, and not pressure ourselves.

"Along the way, our coaches made very small adjustments (to match up to the lane conditions), so it wasn't too difficult."

Bernice will be aiming for more medals in the girls' masters event today.

"I'll just keep doing the same routine and hopefully it'll work. I'm aiming for a top three finish," she said. **TANYO-HINN**

Visit www.abf-online.org and www.singaporebowling.org.sg for full results.