

2016 Paralympic Games

RARING TO GO FOR 2ND GOLD

ST Live
Q&A session tonight

Have a question for Theresa Goh?

The 2016 Paralympic bronze medallist is taking over The Straits Times' Twitter account from Rio for a live Q&A session.

Tweet your question to @STcom using the hashtag #STaskTG

Sept 15, Thursday, 8pm-9pm*
www.twitter.com/STcom

* S'pore time



Yip will be the first S'porean to win two golds at the same Games if she wins the 50m back

Joan Chew
In Rio de Janeiro

Even as her body gets weaker, her times get better. While this might seem ironic for most people, most people are not Yip Pin Xiu.

The Singaporean para-swimmer with the iron will is set to register another breakthrough at the Paralympics this evening (6.52am, Singapore time, tomorrow).

The 24-year-old, whose muscular dystrophy leads to the progressive weakening of the muscles and has been re-classified from an S3 to an S2 swimmer, will be bidding to become the first Singaporean to win multiple gold medals at the same Games.

She had won a gold (50m back S3) and a silver (50m freestyle S3) on her Paralympic debut at the 2008 Beijing edition.

Last Saturday at Rio's Olympic Aquatics Stadium, she had triumphed in the women's 100m backstroke S2 event, securing the Republic's first silverware in Brazil.

Her winning time of 2min 7.09sec was a world record and her second of the day. Her split timing

of 59.38sec in the first lap was more than a second faster than her previous world mark of 1:00.64 set at the IPC European Open in May.

A third world record in South America will depend on "a really slick start and a fantastic timed finish", said her coach Mick Massey yesterday.

He added that her prospects for this race "are obviously very good", but cautioned against underestimating the para-swimmers who have secured a spot in the final.

Yip's biggest threat for a gold will come from China's Feng Yazhu, who won the 50m back S2 event in London (1:03.00) but was more than 10 seconds slower than Yip in last week's 100m back (2:18.65).

Massey, the former coach of Britain's Paralympics swimming team, said the 50m race demands "a fast, powerful start and controlled techniques".

When asked about the strategy for Yip's second and final race of the Rio Games, he said: "An explosive but controlled start, dominating from 15m and maintaining stroke length throughout (the race), building into the finish.

"Hopefully, all the hours of prac-



Coach Mick Massey says that Yip Pin Xiu needs "an explosive but controlled start" in her bid to win the more technical 50m backstroke. PHOTO: REUTERS

tice on starts and finishes should pay off."

Yip's first race showed her team that she has nailed her sprint speed. Now, she has to deliver what she has spent years perfecting.

Massey agreed that the 100m back result should give Yip the confidence for today's race but added

that "the 50m is a much more technical race than the 100m, so you really have to get everything right the first time".

For Yip who continues to defy her own limits, nothing is likely to stop her.

joanchew@sph.com.sg

Yip's former school to screen race 'live'

When para-swimmer Yip Pin Xiu guns for her second Rio Paralympics gold medal tomorrow morning (Singapore time), she can count on the support of Singaporeans nearly 16,000km away, even though the race is at 6.52am.

And many of them will be in a familiar place - Bendemeer Secondary, her former school.

In collaboration with alumni, it will hold a live screening of its former student racing in the 50m backstroke S2 final in the school hall.

Principal Ling Khoon Chow said: "As a school, it's our duty to support her efforts and celebrate her triumphs. Besides building national pride, this is also a way to show our students that anything is possible with hard work and perseverance.

"Despite her condition, Pin Xiu has worked hard to reach the position she is in now and it's a good learning point for our students that anyone can succeed against the odds."

Yogaraj Panditurai