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Headline: Yip nets first Rio gold with a world record



Yip (above), who could not see any of her five challengers in the water, only knew she had won when she saw the Singaporean crowd jumping. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Yip nets first Rio gold with a world record

There was never any doubt.

Dominating from start to finish, Yip Pin Xiu won Singapore's first Rio Paralympics gold in style early yesterday morning – setting a new world record time of 2min 7.09sec in the 100m backstroke (S2) final.

The 24-year-old, who suffers from muscular dystrophy, which affects her eyesight, admitted that she could not see any of her five challengers in the water.

She relied on mental strength to push her all the way to victory – the fruit of four years of labour,

which includes at least 12 training sessions weekly.

The Singapore Management student slashed 2.7sec off her own world mark yesterday to easily beat China's Feng Yazhu (2:18.65) and Ukraine's Iryna Sotska (2:21.98).

"When I touched the wall, the first thing I saw was the Singaporean crowd jumping and, at that moment, I knew I was first," said Yip, who became the country's first and still only Paralympic gold medallist after she won the 50m

backstroke (S3) in Beijing in 2008.

"Pin Xiu, you have made Singapore very proud today," posted Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on his Facebook page, sharing the sentiments of President Tony Tan Keng Yam.

"Her amazing achievement reminds us that with hard work, determination and grit, we can overcome the odds and come out on top," PM Lee added.

Swimmer Joseph Schooling, who brought home Singapore's first

Olympic gold when he won the 100m butterfly at the Rio Games last month, also posted his congratulations on Facebook.

Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu added that a public celebration has been planned for Singapore's Paralympians when they return from Rio.

Yip's next race is the 50m backstroke (S2) on Thursday.

**Wang Meng Meng**

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